

SISTER M. ERWIN HRASCH O.S.F. (Mary) 655

Born: August 24, 1906
Parents: George and Anna Marcin (Tomasko) Hrasch
Postulancy: September 1, 1924
Novitiate: August 12, 1925
First Profession: August 12, 1927
Final Profession: August 12, 1930
Died: Sunday, June 4, 1989 at 12:25 p.m. at
Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL



Ministry:

1926 - 1933 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grades 3, 5, 6 and 7
1933 - 1940 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Grades 7 & 8
1940 - 1942 Sacred Heart, Chicago, IL, Grade 8 girls
January 1942 Most Pure Heart of Mary, Shelby, OH, Grades 5 & 6
1942 - 1944 Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL, Grades 7 & 8
1944 - 1945 St. Michael, Sigel, IL, Grades 5, 6, 7, & 8
1945 - 1947 St. John, Joliet, IL Grade 8
1947 - 1948 St. Bernard, Joliet, IL, Grades 5 & 6
1948 - 1953 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grades 6, 7 & 8
1953 - 1955 Sacred Heart (Huron St.), Chicago, IL, Grades 5 & 6
1955 - 1961 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grade 8, Superior & Principal
1961 - 1962 St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, OH, Grade 8
1962 - 1968 Assumption, Chicago, IL, Grades 7 & 8 and Superior &
Principal
1968 - 1971 SS. Cyril & Methodius, Chicago, IL, Grade 8, Superior &
Principal
1971 - 1976 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grade 5, Teaching Reading
1976 - 1978 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Tutoring
1978 - 1989 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Wednesday, June 7, 1989 from 2 - 7 p.m. with a prayer service
at 4:15 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Wednesday, June 7, 1989 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Thursday, June 8, 1989, Resurrection Cemetery.

Survived by: Brothers: Steve and Ralph
Sisters: Katherine Dzurisin, Theresa Dzurisin and Jean Nanninga

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

On Sunday, June 4, 1989, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, our Sister Erwin Hrasch was born to life eternal. She was very frail these past years. She remained in a semi-coma condition for two weeks before her death. Thursday before she died her devoted family kept vigil and prayed at her bedside. Anointed with a final blessing she died as she had lived her life, quietly and gently.

Mary was born in Streator, Illinois on August 24, 1906 to Anna and George Hrasch. She was one of thirteen children. It was in her family home at Streator that she received her first lessons in the meaning of a loving, caring community. She remained very devoted to her family, enjoyed visiting them, concerned and prayerful about them. She is survived by her sisters Katherine, Theresa and Virginia Jean, and her brothers Steve and Ralph. She will be dearly missed by them.

Sr. Erwin entered the Congregation when she was eighteen. She wrote that on her first communion day she began her daily prayer that she would be given the grace of a vocation to religious life. She was greatly influenced by our Sisters in Streator. She loved her religious life and lived to celebrate her diamond jubilee of sixty years as a religious in 1987.

Sr. Erwin was a dedicated teacher for fifty years, eighteen of those years at St. Joseph School in Joliet, IL. Along with teaching seventh and eighth graders, she often served as principal of the school. She wrote about her teaching ministry in these words. "I enjoy helping the slow learner. If I can help some poor child reach a goal, then I feel I have reached mine too." We can only imagine how many lives were touched by this gentle, loving, dedicated woman.

Sr. Erwin enjoyed living with her sisters in community. She was extremely sociable and loved sharing her stories with others. She was a superior for many years. Those who knew her in those years speak of her gentle, kind ways, her sensitivity to others' feelings, her generosity in sharing her gifts with less fortunate Sisters. Community living was at the heart of her vocation. In 1971 she wrote. "Community living enriches religious life. We share joys and hardships and disappointments of daily living. None of us is too young nor too old to contribute to the welfare of our sisters. Community living makes our ministry more fruitful. I make an earnest effort to accept each Sister as an individual person. I try to be congenial at all times by giving assistance in need and companionship in daily living. I aim to fill the vacuum whenever possible. I try to be cheerful and conceal any hurt feelings." Her life became an authentic homily on community living.

She wrote that she had a special concern for the poor, especially the Spanish speaking. Many of her later years were spent in the city of Chicago in changing neighborhoods where there were Spanish speaking immigrants. There are families who can tell the story of her daily efforts to tutor them so that they would learn English and be able to establish themselves in their new country. She understood how to reach out to the poor and powerless.

What a beautiful testimony of a faith-filled life she has given to us. Sr. Erwin, we will miss your presence among us, but we rejoice with you as you now experience the fullness of community with your God. We thank you for your life with us. Amen! Alleluia!

