

SISTER MARY BERTRAND KANTOR, O.S.F. (Albina) 668



Born: October 18, 1904 in Czechoslovakia
Parents: Louis and Mary (Klesken) Kantor
Postulancy: December 8, 1928
Novitiate: August 12, 1929
First Profession: August 12, 1931
Final Profession: August 12, 1934
Died: Saturday, June 2, 1990 at 1:00 a.m. at
Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home

Ministry:

1931 - 1932 St. Mary Magdalene, Columbus, OH, Grades 3 & 4
1932 - 1935 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grades 4 & 5
1935 - 1937 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 4
1937 - 1941 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Grades 5 & 6
1941 - 1946 Immaculate Conception, Columbus, OH, Grades 5, 6 & 7
1946 - 1948 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Grade 5
1948 - 1949 St. Bernard, Joliet, IL, Grades 5 & 6
1949 - 1950 Annunciation, Aurora, IL, Grades 5 & 6
1950 - 1951 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 7
1951 - 1956 St. Mary, Fairfield, AL, Grades 5, 6 & 7
1956 - 1959 St. Joseph, Pesotum, IL, Grades 5, 6, 7 & 8, Principal
1959 - 1960 St. Coleman, Pompano Beach, FL, Grade 7
1960 - 1963 St. Pius X, Lombard, IL, Grade 6
1963 - St. Francis Xavier, Chicago, IL, Grade 7, Sept. & Oct.
St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Substitute in November
1963 - 1968 St. Mary, Green Creek, IL, Grades 7 & 8, Principal
1968 - 1969 St. Paul, Joliet, IL, Grade 7
1969 - 1971 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grade 5
1971 - 1974 St. Cyril & Methodius, Chicago, IL, Teacher
1974 - 1976 St. Anthony Hospital, Denver, CO, Pastoral Ministry
1976 - 1982 St. John the Evangelist, Loveland, CO, Parish Ministry
1982 - 1983 Will County Jail, Joliet, IL, Teacher
1983 - 1989 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Parish ministry to the elderly
1989 - 1990 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Wednesday, June 6, 1990 from 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Wednesday, June 6, 1990 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Thursday, June 7, 1990, Resurrection Cemetery at 9:00 a.m.

Survived by sisters: Valerie Lebensorger, Margaret Bregin
and brothers: Anthony, Kenneth and Brother Francis de Sales

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

Early Saturday morning, June 2, 1990, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, our Sister Mary Bertrand Kantor was born to the fullness of life eternal. There was no warning that her death was imminent when she left the Motherhouse for Our Lady of Angels on June 1, 1990. After months of experiencing great fatigue, she had just been diagnosed as seriously ill, but desired no chemotherapy. She simply told us, "I know I am dying," and faced her death with her characteristic courage and faith.

Scholastica Albina was born October 18, 1904 in Czechoslovakia to Mary Anna and Louis Kantor. There were nine children in her family, and her living brothers Tony, Ken, and Brother Francis de Sales, and her sisters Marge and Valerie will miss her presence in their lives. Most of them had the opportunity to visit with her the few weeks before her death. She was very devoted to her family, and they to her.

Sister Mary B. entered the postulancy when she was twenty-four years old, and enjoyed celebrating her Golden Jubilee in 1981. As early as 1931 she wrote to Mother Thomasine, "I keep your advice about not worrying about the past or future, I try to live in the present, live for the day."

She began her ministry as a teacher in 1931, and continued for forty three years as teacher and administrator of elementary and junior high grades, in Alabama, Ohio, Illinois and Florida.

We will probably remember Sister Mary B. best for her spirit of ministry during the past sixteen years of her life. At the age of seventy she began her "second stride" as a Pastoral Minister. She wrote, "Since pastoral ministry has always been my love, I began volunteering part time in hospital ministry." She volunteered, and later was hired as a member of the pastoral care departments of Little Company of Mary Hospital in Evergreen Park, IL., Sacred Heart Home for the Aged, and St. Anthony Hospital in Colorado. In 1979 she became certified as a Pastoral Associate for Health Care.

She described what this pastoral care ministry meant to her in these words, "...to care and fulfill the needs of the patients whatever they may be, to listen to them with the ear-of-the-heart, to reverently recognize the riches of the other person, the gifts, talents, their beauty and life, to enter compassionately into the pain and struggle of another person." Little wonder that we find these words from one of her patients, "Your pastoral service gave me renewed spirit and encouragement. You gave me the confidence I needed to want to get well and strong. You were a channel for Christ' strength for me."



From hospital ministry she began a new venture in parish ministry, serving both at St. John's Parish in Loveland, Colorado, and St. Pascal's Parish in Chicago, Illinois. "I try to bring the Gospel at the point of each person's need...and I listen. The people I serve have much more to give me than I do to them. They enrich my life immeasurably. Sharing in peoples' lives are what we are all about."

When Sister Mary B. retired to the Motherhouse in 1989, she remained a source of inspiration and joy to all who shared community with her. When we talk about her it is in terms of amazement about her positive attitude and spirit. She taught us what it means to be "fully alive all the days of our life." We will always remember the Mary Bertrand dressed in "top hat and tails" entertaining us by her soft shoe dance at talent shows. Her feet could never be still when the music started. We remember how she enjoyed her walks, swimming, painting, and listening to fine music.

Sister Mary B. knew how to be a sister to her Sisters, and how to be a good friend. The day before she died, she hugged one of her close friends and said, "This is for you, may it make up for anyone who has ever hurt you in your life." She gave advice to her friends, "People will always know who you are by looking into your eyes. Just what you do for God is important." She will be missed by those who shared community and friendship with her.

In March, 1990 she made plans to attend Retreats International at Notre Dame this summer. She chose two courses which give us insight into her spiritual journey this last year in her life: "Contemplative Psychology" and "Intimacy With God." She wrote, "I belong to a contemplative prayer group (of Sisters and lay people that meets every week.) This experience has made a considerable change in my prayer life. In fact it is one of the best things that has ever happened to me."

And so we thank our Sister Mary B. for her sixty-two years as our Sister. We will miss her, but we rejoice with her and know she has a new pair of dancing shoes for all eternity. She has left us a legacy of living with a zest for life, and we remember her as we pray these words from one of her favorite psalms:

"How glorious it is to be alive O Lord
May every breath of my body
Every beat of my heart
Be dedicated to your praise and glory." (Ps. 89)

Amen! Alleluia!