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Sister Mauritia Lang

Sister M. Mauritia, the former Bertha Lang of Sacred Heart parish, Englewood, daughter of Peter and Anna Huerlemann Lang, died at 5:25 Friday evening, January 2, at St. Anthony's Hospital, Rock Island, Illinois. Sister had attained the seventieth year of her age and the fifty-second of her religious life.

Sister Mauritia had not been well, but had remained in school up to the Christmas vacation. She was taken to the hospital on Sunday, December 21, suffering with a heart condition and complications of diabetes, hypertension, and beginning gangrene. The next day she was anointed by Rev. Edward Phelan, the chaplain. After Christmas it appeared she would not rally as she had done on several previous heart attacks, and on Monday the 29th her sisters, Sister Anacleta and Sister Corinne with their sister Kate, went to Rock Island and kept alternate watch with the patient. On Tuesday Mother Immaculate joined them.

Though Sister's condition was critical, the doctor said she might possibly go on in the state for some time, and he gave permission for her transfer to Joliet. Mother Immaculate and Sister Miriam Edward were to accompany her in the Dames ambulance. Sister was on the ambulance cot with the oxygen adjusted and the others had already left the room when she suddenly changed for the worse. The group waiting in the lobby was quickly summoned, and they returned just as Sister raised her eyes and died.

Sister's passing was quiet and resigned, as was her entire illness. She was "a good patient," accepting her situation calmly. She accompanied the prayers that were said at her bedside, and her prayer "For those in their Agony" was especially firm and strong. Asked whether she was afraid to die, she answered, "No, why should I be?"

Bishop McNamara presided at the Solemn Requiem Mass celebrated in the Motherhouse chapel Monday, January 5. Besides the clergy listed in the Obituary, the Very Rev. Pius Barth, provincial general of the Franciscan Fathers of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, and Rev. George Schroeder, pastor of St. Mary's, Rock Island, were present. Interment was made at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

Sister Mauritia was one of the Community's outstanding grade school teachers. Of her fifty years in the classroom, she devoted twenty-two years to schools in the Archdiocese, spending eleven years in Chicago - at St. Boniface, Assumption, St. Francis Xavier, and St. Pascal - and eleven years at St. John's, Joliet. At the latter mission she was superior and principal for six years. She was also superior and principal at St. Joseph's, Elgin, and at St. Joseph, Freeport, for eleven and three years respectively. In Ohio she totaled eleven years at St. Mary's, Columbus, and spent one year at Catholic Central High School, Toledo. From 1956 to the present time Sister was stationed at St. Mary's, Rock Island.

Cordial in all her relations, wherever she went Sister Mauritia found her children lovable and derived joy from her work with them. She was especially a lover of music and song and enjoyed most teaching singing in her classes. Her children always had a large repertoire of songs, good songs. Sister Anacleta cited her Rock Island class as typical, saying Sister taught them thirty-two songs during the school year. Where there was "music in the air," she believed, evil could not well intrude, and in cultivating a spirit of song in her pupils she was cultivating virtues like faith, hope and love.

Zealous for the cause of God and His church, Sister was also a dilligent worker for vocations. She taught her children to pray regularly for vocations and was herself alert for good prospects; these she encouraged wherever she found them. She numbered many priests and brothers who had been former pupils of hers, and considered these vocations among her best achievements as "God's instrument." May the priests among them remember her at the altar, and may she, her work done, "rest in peace!"