

SISTER M. FLAVIA, O.S.F.

June 29, 1966

It had been twenty years since her summer appointment had read "CSF Instructor," but as 1966 edged its way into history, Sister Flavia began tentatively to plan the biology classes she was "going to teach in summer school." She never actually got around to formal planning, of course, but it was obvious that time had reversed itself for her, and once again she was "Sister Flavia, Ph.D., Catholic University of America," and that somewhere a class was waiting.

That, however, was before the listlessness set in, before general hardening of the arteries brought on the lassitude, the drowsiness, the fatigue. Not that she was bed-ridden. She was able to drowse quietly in her chair, rousing with more or less difficulty when someone spoke to her. And though she had little interest in the world around her, she would respond to others' questions, and she prayed each day with Sister Caroline the Franciscan Crown.

She was aware almost to the end that she was "St. Pascal's Prayer Sister," and she was able to reach back in memory for the title of her doctoral dissertation and to recall the year when she finished her work in steaming Washington D.C. and returned to only slightly cooler Joliet -- and summer school.

1966 summer classes were less than a week old when Sister Flavia fell into the sleep from which no one could waken her. Sister Juliana, watching her in the early hours of Wednesday morning, noticed, as she told Sister Peter, that "Sister Flavia's breathing is different than usual." At 4:00 o'clock the breathing had ceased. On his feast day morning Saint Peter had flung wide the gates for Sister Flavia.

She had never had a chance to wear the new veil. It was easier to doze in her chair in the old. And it was in the old that Sister Peter gently dressed her for the last time.

Sister Flavia's room is vacant now, and to all her "nurses" who had so devotedly cared for their "doctor" there is a sudden emptiness, a realization that they will never again walk into Room 217 to find Sister Flavia dozing quietly in her chair.

**GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!!**

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