

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

December 10, 1984

Dear Sisters,

Several times during the last few years it seemed that Sister Antonella was close to death. A few days before she died she admitted that she was not praying for the Lord to come for her. "Rather," she said, "I am praying that the Lord's will is done." She said this with such conviction that anyone who heard her say this would know that the Lord's will would be done. The Lord called her to himself at 11:50 p.m. on the eve of the feast of the Immaculate Conception. It was the Lord's will, obviously.

Hedwig Votruba was born in Bohemia on August 3, 1900. She told the story of her father, Matthias Votruba, who returned to Europe after his first wife died and married Elisabeth Skodova. Sister Antonella was the daughter of Matthias and Elisabeth. Hedwig came to the United States at the age of fifteen and lived in St. Procopius Parish in Chicago. She went to school to learn English and she learned it very well and very quickly. She also had to work to help the family. Five years after her arrival in the United States she felt the call to become a Franciscan sister because of the sisters she had seen and admired.

She was not only the oldest of her convent class, but her classmates say Sister Antonella was also the "clown" of their class. She had delightful stories to tell and liked to entertain by dancing around and playing her violin! Her classroom, most often one of the primary grades, was known for the many plants and animals and for her violin playing. Besides her love for music and for teaching the little ones, she also liked to paint and write poetry. As a special ministry, Sister wrote letters and poems to the elderly.

Sister Antonella had a few idiosyncrasies that Sisters in the Community will recall. Her umbrella was a symbol in the summer. She carried it wherever she went. She said she never knew when it would rain. Sisters also know her for the little white collars she liked to wear after the habits were modified.

Even during her last year Sister Antonella loved to share stories. She enjoyed reading. Queen Victoria was one of her favorite characters. "Our troubles seem so little when we see what they had." When she considered her pain during her last days and saw it as a share in the sufferings of Christ, her expression became welcoming and peaceful. Her attitude was the same: "my suffering seems so little."

We express sympathy to Sister Antonella's brother-in-law, Constant Moffaert, and to her nieces and nephews. A few days before sister died, ten-month old Kimberly Renee Mathis, her great grand niece, was brought to her bedside at Our Lady of Angels.

We rejoice with Sister Antonella as we celebrate her entrance to the kingdom where we can imagine her telling stories, dancing and playing the violin! Alleluia!

Sincerely,

The Governing Board



Sister M. Antonella Votruba (Hedwig) 590

Born: August 3, 1900 in Bohemia  
Parents: Matthias and Elisabeth (Skoda) Votruba  
Postulancy: September 6, 1920  
Novitiate: August 12, 1921  
1st Profession: August 12, 1923  
Final Profession: August 12, 1926  
Died: Friday, December 7, 1984 at 11:50 p.m. at  
Our Lady of Angels



Ministry:

1923 - 1927	St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA, Grades 2 & 3
1927 - 1928	Holy Cross, Joliet, IL, Grade 2
1928 - 1930	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1930 - 1931	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grade 2
1931 - 1932	St. Francis Assisi, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1932 - 1933	St. Stephen, Streator, IL Grade 3
1933 - 1934	St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Grades 3 & 4
1934 - 1936	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grades 2 & 3
1936 - 1938	St. Procop, Cleveland, OH, Grade 3
1938 - 1940	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grades 3 & 4
1940 - 1946	St. Procop, Cleveland, OH, Grade 3
1946 - 1954	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grades 2,3 & 5
1954 - 1957	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Grades 3 & 4
1957 - 1958	St. Francis Assisi, Chicago, IL Grade 4
1958 - 1959	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Grade 3
1959 - 1960	St. Mary, Fairfield, AL, Grade 2
1960 - 1961	Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago, IL, Grade 2
1961 - 1963	St. Boniface, Chicago, IL, Grade 2
1963 - 1966	St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Grade 2 & 3
1966 - 1969	St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, General Help
1969 -	Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL

Wake: Monday, December 10, 1984 from 2 - 7 p.m.  
with prayer service at 4:15 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Monday, December 10, 1984 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Tuesday, December 11, 1984 from OLA at 9 a.m.  
to Resurrection Cemetery.

Survived by nieces and nephews.