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Sister M. Fidelia Whyte

Sister M. Fidelia Whyte, the former Anna Ekers-Whyte of Chicago, Illinois, died in the Infirmary of the Motherhouse on Sunday morning, July 15, at 3:05 o'clock. She was sixty-three years of age and had worn the habit for thirty-eight years.

Sister had undergone mastectomy at Effingham last year in March. Chest x-rays indicated metastasis of the left lung, and treatments were given her. June x-rays showed no increase in metastasis, but "we have not cured her of her condition," the doctor reported. This was obvious in the spring when she left her class to come to Joliet for a check-up. Metastasis now involved neck, arm, and abdominal organs. The prescribed x-ray series at St. Joseph Hospital lasted from March 19 to April 20, and on May 6 she returned to her Leonore class "to finish the year." This she did valiantly, but after school closed she came in to the Motherhouse Infirmary, as she herself cheerfully declared, "to die."

And the end was not far off. She had said she wanted to be useful as long as she could. This she was. She had said she was ready to accept God's will. This she did, lovingly, without regret or complaint. Her condition worsened rapidly, but her spirit remained constant. Her pain that last month, though severe, never mastered her.

Funeral services were conducted in the Convent chapel on Tuesday morning, July 17, The Most Rev. Bishop Martin D. McNamara presiding at the Solemn Requiem Mass celebrated by Father Gervase Brinkman, OFM - Burial was made at Mount Olivet Cemetery, Joliet.

Sister Fidelia began her teaching career in 1918, when she was appointed to St. Joseph's, Joliet. The next year she spent at St. Clement's, Chicago and the following eleven years at St. Peter's, Mansfield teaching successively from the fourth to the eighth grade. Immaculate Conception, Toledo, next claimed her as eighth grade teacher for eight years, six of which she was also Superior and Principal. She held this same position a year at Freeport and six years at Elgin, after which she taught three years in Columbus - one at Immaculate Conception, two at St. Mary's. The next six years found her at Sacred Heart School, Lillyville, which was conducted under the public school system. Here she was Superior and Principal and taught the four upper grades. Her last year was devoted to the sixth grade at Ss. Peter and Paul, Leonore.

At all these posts, Sister Fidelia was an efficient, precise, but kindly teacher - one who made definite demands of the children but knew how to enlist their entire co-operation; wherever she was in charge, she exhibited a true sense of responsibility and exercised good leadership. Hers was a wholesome personality, with an easy and matter-of-fact approach to life and situations. She carried this attitude on to the end, her calm and "natural" acceptance of death proving the supernatural basis of her life. Always she trusted that life would bring only what God's providence decreed, and in that trust she assuredly found at the last not only eternal rest but grace and glory.