



Sister Delphine McMahon

In 1882 Sister Delphine had been sent to assist in teaching the English branches in St. Wenceslas' School at De Koven and Des Plaines Streets, Chicago. Showing an aptitude for learning the Bohemian language and taking pleasure in being able to speak and teach it, Rev. Joseph Molitor, the pastor of St. Wenceslas, gave her lessons, for there was no sister to teach the language in school. She made rapid progress to the satisfaction of her teacher. After some months of earnest application the would-be Bohemian scholar took sick and soon it became evident that she would not recover. Her parents being informed of her condition petitioned the Mother General to permit their daughter to pay them a visit. This was granted. When she was about to leave for Mansfield Father Molitor said to her, "After I have taken so much interest in teaching you Bohemian, now you want to die?" She replied: "Father, when I get to heaven, my first request to our Lord shall be that He may inspire a Bohemian girl to take my place in the convent". The following June, hardly two months after Sister Delphine's departure from this world, a young girl in the bloom of life and health knocked at the convent door for admission. She was joyfully accepted. This young girl, who in the year had come from Bohemia, then aged seventeen, had come to America simply because home life had become too monotonous and there was too much parental restraint, always to be in the same surroundings, always in the same village, always to remain with father and mother, never to have more freedom - that was more than could be expected of one who was most anxious to see the world and enjoy its pleasures.

Most reluctantly did her good parents consent to her departure. She, however, was determined to go, and finally received the consent and also the blessing of her parents. She then went directly to Detroit where several of her relatives had already established homes for themselves. However, our wanderer soon after seemed to lose all relish for the joys and pleasures she had longed for, without being able to account for the change. In her case it can truly be said that "The Spirit of God breathes where He will". Just at this time Rev. Joseph Molitor, pastor of St. Wenceslas Church, Chicago, had written an article for the Catholic press in his native country, Bohemia, in which he set forth the necessity of Catholic teachers for Bohemian schools in this country. While this good priest was seeking vocations from abroad, God so directed that the aforesaid article fell into the hands of the good parents of our young pleasure-seeker, who in their turn sent the article to their daughter, then in Detroit, Michigan. She now understood the call from on high, doubtless an answer to the prayers of her solicitous parents and to those of our dear Sister Delphine, and soon after came to Chicago where she applied to our Sisters for admission. As already stated she was most gladly welcomed, and Miss Mary Sklyzek, now Sister M. Ludmilla, is up to the present time devoting her life and her talent to God's service in the religious state, and to the welfare of the children of her nation, the Bohemians, in parochial school work.