

SISTER M. LEA MELLIKANT, O.S.F. 738

Born: September 11, 1906
Parents: John and Mary (Hric) Mellikant
Entered from: St. Francis De Sales, Chicago, IL
Postulancy: September 6, 1922
Novitiate: August 12, 1923
Profession: August 12, 1925
Died: Saturday, April 27, 1996, at 9:00 p.m.
at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home



Ministry:

1924-29 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grades 2,3,4,6,7
1929-41 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grades 5,6,7,8
1941-44 St. Joseph, Manhattan, IL, Grades 5-8, Principal
1944-50 St. Bernard, Joliet, IL, Grades 5,6,7,8, Principal
1950-51 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, Grade 8
St. Michael, Worthington, OH, Grades 5-6
1951-54 Sacred Heart, Englewood, Chicago, IL, Grades 5,6,7
1954-56 St. Michael, Worthington, OH, Grades 6,7
1956-57 St. Francis De Sales, Toledo, OH, Grade 5
1957-59 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Grade 7
1959-62 St. Pascal, Chicago, IL, Grades 7,8
1962-64 St. John, Joliet, IL, Grade 8
1964-67 St. Matthew, Champaign, IL, Grades 5,6
1967-71 Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, IL, Bookkeeper
1971-78 St. Mary, Des Plaines, IL, School Accountant
1978-79 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Inventory clerk
1979-86 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Substitute teacher, clerical
1986-90 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL, Retired resident
1990-96 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired resident

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Monday, April 29,
2-7p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Monday, 7p.m.

Burial: Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,
S8, L346, Grave 5
Tuesday, April 30, 1996, from Our Lady of Angels
at 9:30 a.m.

Survived by:

Sisters: Sister M. Gerald Mellikant, OSF
and Mrs. Ann Shaser of Grand Junction, MI
Numerous nieces, nephews, cousins

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

Sister Lea Mellikant was born in Chicago, Illinois on September 11, 1906 to Mary (Hric) and John Mellikant. She was baptized Elizabeth and was one of ten children, two of whom died in infancy. Their parents taught them the values they had brought as part of their legacy from Slovakia: a deep and devotional faith, the virtues of honesty and caring for others, with love.

Elizabeth attended St. Francis De Sales Grade and High School, where she came to know and love the Joliet Franciscans. In September, 1922, Elizabeth left her family and her job in the real estate office to enter the postulancy of the Joliet Franciscans. Her sisters, Julia and Mary Teresa, followed her later, to become Sister Leon and Sister Gerald. Her other brothers and sisters continued to live out the values their parents had taught them, in their own way of modeling Christian family living.

On August 12, 1923, Elizabeth was received as a novice and given the name Sister Lea. The following year Sister Lea began her ministry of education at St. Joseph Parish in Joliet, and continued teaching for 63 years. Sister Lea loved her students and wanted them to learn. She drilled them with persistence and exactness. It is no surprise that in writing her thesis in preparation for her Bachelor's degree from the College of St. Francis, she described the character of Theodore Roosevelt, highlighting his sense of duty, a value with which Sister Lea lived her whole life.

As early as her novitiate days, Sister Ottilia recognized that Sister Lea was neat and exact about everything she did. Even more than exactness in learning and being faithful to duty, Sister Lea was zealous in her desire to have her students grow in their faith. Her own teaching and her spirituality were nurtured by earning a Master's Degree in Franciscan Theology from the Seraphic Institute at CSF in 1969. In 1986, the year following her 60-year jubilee, Sister Lea was also honored for her work in promoting devotion to Mary through the Miraculous Medal among the high school girls at St. Francis Academy. Sister Lea knew that the words prayed by St. Catherine Laboure were the words inscribed on the medallion of her Franciscan Crown: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you."

In 1990, Sister Lea moved to Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home with her two sisters, Sister Leon and Sister Gerald. Sister Lea spent much time praying and reading, and in keeping up as well as she could with her former pupils and friends. As her strength waned, Sister Gerald was at her side, helping her as much as she could. On Saturday, April 27, 1996, with Sister Gerald at her side, along with other Sisters of the Congregation, Sister Lea peacefully returned to her God.

Sister Lea, as you are welcomed forever by Jesus and his Mother, we ask you to continue to pray for your sisters, Ann and Sister Gerald, for all your family and your Franciscan Sisters. We ask you to pray that more people may be filled with a spirit of prayer, modeling their lives after that of our Blessed Mother. May you experience forever God's peace, love and joy. Amen. Alleluia.

