

Sister M. Maxentia Yirku, O.S.F.



Born: April 17, 1906  
 Parents: Albert and Margaret (Strebel) Yirku  
 Entered from: St. Francis DeSales, Chicago, IL  
 Postulancy: September 6, 1922  
 Novitiate: August 12, 1923  
 Profession: August 12, 1925

Died: Sunday, March 14, 1999 at her residence: 11514 Yolanda Avenue, Northridge, CA at 4:15 a.m.

Ministry:

1924 - 1925 St. Stephen, Streator, IL, Grades 2, 3, 4  
 1925 - 1932 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Grade 1  
 1932 - 1942 St. Clement, Chicago, IL, Grade 1  
 1942 - 1944 Sacred Heart, Englewood, IL, Grade 1  
 1944 - 1952 Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, IL, Grade 1, Principal (1950-52)  
 1952 - 1971 Holy Family, Bayfield, WI, Grades 1, 2, 3  
 1971 - 1973 Annunciation, Aurora, IL  
 1973 - 1981 Residence, Northridge Apts., Northridge, CA  
 1981 - 1983 Residence, Ashland, MT, Labre Indian School  
 1983 - 1985 Residence, Boulder, CO  
 1985 - 1999 Residence, Northridge, CA

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL Friday, March 19, 1999  
 2-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL  
 Friday, March 19, 1999 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Saturday, March 20, 1999 leaving Our Lady of Angels at  
 9:00 a.m. to Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL,  
 S8-L353-G4

Survived by: Sister-in-law Mary Yirku (Naperville, IL) and many nieces and nephews

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

Sister Maxentia Yirku was born on April 17, 1906 to Albert and Margaret Strebel Yirku. On April 29, of the same year, she was baptized Margaret at St. John the Baptist Church in Whiting, Indiana. As a young child her family moved to Chicago's East Side and Margaret attended St. Francis DeSales School. After graduation from eighth grade, she continued her education in commercial school.

When Margaret was sixteen years old, she came to Joliet to become a postulant with the Franciscan Sisters. Her older sister, Ethyl, had also joined the Sisters and became Sister Ruth. When Margaret entered the novitiate on August 12, 1923, she received the name Sister Maxentia. She made her first profession of vows on August 12, 1925.

Sister Maxentia began her ministry as a primary teacher at St. Stephen School in Streator, Illinois. Her early years as a primary teacher took her to St. Peter's, Mansfield, Ohio; St. Clement's in Chicago; Sacred Heart in the Englewood Area of Chicago; as well as Sacred Heart, Hubbard Woods, Illinois. In 1952 Sister Maxentia began her first of 20 years at Holy Family in Bayfield, Wisconsin. In addition to her excellence as an educator, Sister Maxentia was also widely known for her care and devotion to the poor. The families of Hubbard Woods soon learned of the need of the children in Bayfield and each year sent clothing, toys, food and books to the students at Holy Family in Bayfield. Maxie had a way of making sure that each child had what was needed.

After 48 years of teaching Sister Maxentia moved to Northridge, California with Sister Grace Ann Rabideau and Sister Clare LaPointe. She served her local community by cooking, cleaning and other thoughtful ways. She loved to write letters to keep up with her many friends and family members. She spent time in prayer and reflection, and enjoyed the company of others. Maxie loved and was loved by the parishioners and staff at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Northridge. Maxie's gentleness gave strength and encouragement to all who knew her. Children and adults alike found comfort in her presence. She had the charm of a child and the graciousness of a queen. All were assured that she would pray them through any difficulty they were facing.

Even as her strength began to wane and her body grew weaker, Maxie wanted to be included in as much as she could. Even in her final days, she was known to lift herself up on the bed, look around and ask, "What's the schedule?" As the sisters kept vigil at her bedside through the night and into the dawn on March 14, 1999, Sister Maxentia peacefully returned to her God. Her friends from Northridge gathered for a prayer service and farewell before her body was flown to Joliet for the Funeral Liturgy and Burial at Resurrection Cemetery where her body will rest in peace next to that of Sister Ruth.

Sister Maxentia, we are grateful for the gift of your presence among us over these many years. As you are now reunited with your family members and your Franciscan Sisters in God's presence forever, we ask you to continue to pray for each of us, that we too may live in a spirit of abiding peace. May you enjoy the beauty of God's presence forever. Amen.  
Alleluia.

