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Sister Olga Berlic

Sister Olga Berlic who had been teaching at St. Joseph's School in Joliet for sixteen years, had been suffering from stomach trouble and was under Dr. T. Wagner's care and treatment. After having taken several stomach tests, the Doctor took an X-Ray. The picture showed a very badly ulcerated stomach. The doctor declared that no medical aid would help Sister, and advised an immediate operation to which Sister Olga consented. Sister also requested that Dr. Wagner perform the operation.

In order to convince themselves that the operation should be performed at once, the superiors called Dr. Walter Fahrner for consultation. After the latter had examined Sister Olga, he said surgical aid is necessary and also advised that the gall bladder be removed.

Reverend Mother Thomasine having been in Mansfield, Ohio, at the time, Sister M. Faustina asked her by telegram whether the operation should be performed. Mother answered, "Have Sister Olga taken care of as ordered by the doctor." Sister was, therefore, taken to the hospital, and on October 31 Dr. Wagner performed the operation. He removed a large ulcer on the stomach and also took out the gall bladder, the latter having been drained at a previous operation. The operation was very serious. In spite of the best care given her by the doctor and the private nurses, Sister's condition grew worse from day to day.

As a last resource Dr. Wagner suggested a blood transfusion which might help Sister's condition. He therefore asked if some Sisters would act as donor of some blood for this patient.

Sister Faustina called a special meeting of the older members of the community to ask their advice on this important question. After some deliberation the members unanimously agreed that the request could easily be granted and it was decided to ask for donors among the Sisters.

Four Sisters: Sister M. Flavia Lochner, Sister Fabian Schmal, Sister Eileen Gleason, and Sister Irmna Gruen volunteered. The four Sisters had a blood test taken in the afternoon of November 6, but the blood of none of these could be taken since it did not match Sister Olga's blood. Five other Sisters offered to submit to the blood transfusion: namely, Sister Stanislas Droesler, Sister M. Faustina Wisler, Sister Seraphica, Reineck, Sister Jovita Thompson and Sister Aniceta Guyette. These blood tests showed that Sister Seraphica's blood, Sister Faustina's and Sister Aniceta's would mix with Sister Olga's. Sister Aniceta having been of the same age as Sister Olga was accepted as the donor. She submitted to the blood transfusion the next morning, November 7. However, this remedy did not improve Sister Olga's condition as had been expected and she grew weaker and weaker, until the next day, November 8 at 5:27 p.m. when it pleased God to call her to Himself. Sister died fully conscious and resigned to the Holy Will of God.

Her remains were brought to the Motherhouse for embalment. Rev. John Plevnik of St. Joseph's Church, Joliet, requested that the body be laid in state in the sacristy of St. Joseph's Church. The request was granted and the body was taken there the following day. The funeral also took place from St. Joseph's Church on November 11, 1927. Her remains are interred in St. John's Cemetery.