

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

June 5, 1979

Dear Sisters,

Today is the 87th birthday of our beloved Sister M. Edith Byrne, whom the Lord called to celebrate with Him in eternity. At 2:45 yesterday morning, June 4, Sister died at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home. She was in the 66th year of her religious life.

The child that was born of Peter and Mary McQuaid Byrne on June 5, 1892, was given the name Mary Elizabeth at her Baptism in Sacred Heart Church, Whiting, Indiana. The family later moved to the southeast side of Chicago in St. Patrick's Parish. Having attended the parochial grammar school, Mary Elizabeth received her secondary education at St. Francis de Sales. Her high school years evoked not only an interest in commercial subjects, in which she excelled throughout her active life, but also an attraction to the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, whom she joined at the age of 20 on August 11, 1912. She was received into the novitiate on March 6, 1913. Her first profession of vows was made on March 6, 1915; her final profession, on August 12, 1919. The culmination of 60 years of fidelity to her religious vows was celebrated by the Congregation at her Diamond Jubilee in 1975.

Sister Edith's first year of teaching--and only year on the elementary level--was spent at St. Patrick's, Galion, Ohio, in 1914-15. The following decade she served as a high school teacher at St. Francis Academy, Joliet, and St. Mary, Columbus, Ohio. She served as principal of St. Peter's, Mansfield, Ohio, and Immaculate Conception, Toledo, Ohio.

Although Sister Edith accomplished a superior record in the liberal arts at DePaul University, it was her expertise in secretarial subjects that prompted the General Chapter in 1932 to elect her Secretary General of the Congregation, a post she held for 18 years. An additional 9 years as General Councilor brought her total service in Congregation administration to 27 years. She further served three years as superior at St. Peter's, Mansfield, and six years at the Motherhouse. As she approached retirement, duties as bookkeeper and receptionist were then given her at Guardian Angel Home, Joliet, and St. Francis de Sales, Chicago.

In 1971, Sister Edith retired to Our Lady of Angels where she experienced a steady decline of health. Her life's vocation was to be of service to others--and for this she is most gratefully remembered. Yet, in her last years the words of Jesus to Peter were realized in Sister Edith: "When you grow old you will stretch out your hands, and somebody else will put a belt round you..." She was asked by her Lord for total surrender.

Sister Edith will be waked at Our Lady of Angels today, June 5, from 2:00 to 7:00 p.m. A Scripture Service will be held at 3:30 this afternoon. Then, this evening at 7:00, the Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated in Our Lady of Angels Chapel. Burial will be at 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 6, from Our Lady of Angels to Resurrection Cemetery, Lockport.

Sister Edith is survived by her sister, Theresa Byrne, of Pompano Beach, Florida, to whom we offer sincere sympathy. May we rejoice with Sister Edith for the gift of eternal life which she now celebrated in Heaven!

Devotedly yours in Christ,

The Governing Board

