

SISTER M. EUCHERIA, O.S.F.

January 7, 1966

February 6th would have been her 89th birthday. On February 2nd she would have completed 67 years of religious life. But Sister Eucheria was too tired to wait for either anniversary. She had her own rendezvous to keep, and on January 7th, quite suddenly, she went to keep the tryst.

It was sudden, but in a way, not unexpected to those whose trained eyes could see the downhill movement, the slowing-up process, the lethargy. Sister Eucheria had been on the critical list since Thanksgiving. She had not even been able to get to Mass until Christmas Day, nor had she been able to make with Sister Caroline, her classmate, the weekly 12:00 to 1:00 Holy Hour which they had kept together since coming to OLA four years ago. Christmas Day had tired Sister Eucheria, and it was not until the 30th of December that she was able to go to chapel again -- this time for the funeral of Sister Gervaise. But Sister Eucheria closed the year with Mass -- and opened her last seven days of 1966 in chapel.

That was the extent of her activity. When Sister Rita Clare asked her Friday evening, "Didn't you know that it snowed, Sister Eucheria?" she answered a little wearily, "No, I don't seem to have an interest in anything anymore!" That was not quite true. Sick though she was, Sister Eucheria was not uninterested, only very tired. "I hear it's going down to zero tonight," she said to Sister Charitas. "Be sure to take the flowers off the window sill." That was less than two hours before she died. Her African violets would survive the night; Sister Eucheria would not. She was asleep before she could take her medication, and when later she rang, there was at first no indication that anything unusual was pending. Then Sister Jacinta who was attending her noticed "that something was wrong," and called Sister Peter. Sister Eucheria lay as though in sleep -- except for her breathing. There was no struggle, no discernible change of expression, nothing to indicate that she was dying. But within ten minutes, Sister Eucheria had wound up the skein of her life.

There was shocked incredulity when the word reached her Infirmary friends. "But I just said goodnight to her!" anguished Sister Caroline, who until Thanksgiving had faithfully chauffeured her to the nightly newscast. "I said, 'Goodnight, God bless you -- I hope you have a good night!' like I always do, and she wished me the same!"

But Sister Eucheria had gone as she would probably have wished to go -- quickly, quietly. She had simply closed her tired eyes, relaxed her numbed fingers -- and gone Home. It was as simple as that. Her friends would mourn her sudden departure, and Sister Rosalinda would miss especially their praying of the Office in the waning afternoons. They had "Patered" it together for the last time the day of Sister's death. . .

Then Sister Eucheria had settled herself for the "good night" Sister Caroline had wished for her.

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!!

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