

SISTER M. MONICA, O. S. F.

November 3, 1967

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" -- that was the extent of her reaction in those days when the pain mounted and the world began to close in about the Infirmary room to which she had moved not quite a month before.

Until early October Sister Monica had been on her feet, going down for physical therapy -- she had been one of Sister Jeanine's first patients, --under her treatments Sister Monica's poor arm had lost its swollen dimensions, and she moved with something like the ease that had been hers in those long years when she patiently wrote for her children on the blackboards at Holy Cross - Streator - Cleveland - Englewood - Chicago - Johnstown. Romeoville was her last mission, and when she closed the classroom door at St. Andrew's in the spring of '65, she stamped "Finis" on almost 50 years of teaching -- and came home to Our Lady of Angels.

Did she remember those years in the quiet hours that filled her days? She had been a Fourth Grade Master Teacher -- her children had always won awards and contests and commendations. And she had been so proud of them. Did they crowd about her now in memory? Did she think of the boys and girls of the Yesterdays and wonder about the men and women they had become? It is hard to say, for Sister Monica did not speak much about those years, once the curtain had fallen. But she must have remembered -- often, proudly, fondly.

She had had one great wish: To celebrate her Golden Jubilee, and no one was happier last June 22nd than Sister Monica. She had made it! And her family, her dear brother Abbot, her friends -- all were with her to share that golden moment. Did she think fleetingly as she publicly renewed her vows, that time was running out, and that "all the days of my life" were hanging now by a very slender thread? Possibly, but that could hardly have mattered to Sister Monica. Many days - few days -- they were all caught up in the chalice of dedication she had offered fifty years ago and now re-consecrated in the twilight time.

The radiance of Jubilee clung to her through the summer. There was pain, of course, but it was bearable. Once she had even walked over to Guardian Angel Home with her cousin, Sister Annunciata, to see the Chapel. And earlier she had attended Sister Teresa's Jubilee Celebration at St. Jude's. On October 27th she celebrated her Diamond Birthday, and there were cards and flowers and greetings to mark her 75 years.

It was to be her last birthday. November had ushered in days of stabbing pain, but she did not lose hold of reality. It was still only "Oh dear! Oh dear!" but no other complaint. Then on the 3d the change came. It was about 9:30 Friday morning when Sister Monica slipped quietly into the coma that Father Dominic's blessing and the prayers of her Sisters crowding the room could not penetrate. At 9:45 Sister Monica had crossed the Border.

The road had ended in God.

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!!

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