

SISTER M. VERONICA HAARTH

242. DECEMBER 7, 1941

On Wednesday morning, December 10, at 10:30 a.m. in the convent chapel of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate, Joliet, Illinois, Rev. F. J. Haarth, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Hubbard Woods, Illinois, will celebrate the Solemn Requiem funeral Mass for his sister, Sister Mary Veronica. Sister Veronica died at the Motherhouse, St. Francis Convent, on Sunday afternoon, December 7, after an illness of about six months. At the time of her death Sister Veronica was in the 82nd year of her age and the 54th of her religious life. Last June Sister Veronica celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her religious profession.

Sister Veronica was born in Chicago on October 16, 1860. On July 9, 1888, she entered the congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate at the motherhouse and novitiate, St. Francis Convent, Joliet. For more than thirty years she was a teacher in the various schools of the congregation, most of the years having been spent in Chicago.

Sister Veronica was best known for her untiring work on behalf of the blind, particularly the adult blind. In 1920 at the request of her superiors she took up the study of Braille. At that time she was relieved of teaching and all other duties so that she might devote her entire time to this worthy work. From 1920 until she became ill during the past summer, Sister Veronica gave unstintingly year after year, and day after day, of her time and energy for the good of the blind. All her services during these more than twenty years were entirely gratuitous. Her chief work was the transcribing of Catholic books, usually fiction, into Braille for the adult blind. These Braille volumes Sister had plated so that copies could be distributed widely over the country. These Braille volumes are found in the public libraries of the larger cities throughout the United States. The Chicago Public Library has the complete set of volumes which have been plated through the efforts of Sister Veronica. The complete number of Braille volumes is also in the library of the College of St. Francis, Joliet. The approximate cost to have one Braille volume plated is \$100, and Sister Veronica has more than 100 volumes to her credit. Sister herself collected all the funds for this work from the circle of her devoted friends who were interested and from the various small private clubs of women. The Catholic Charities of Chicago also made a substantial contribution each year to help Sister Veronica carry on her work. In her Braille work Sister Veronica cooperated with and worked under the direction of the late Rev. Joseph M. Stadelman, S.J., founder of the well known Xavier Free

Publication Society for the Blind. Father Stadelman began his work in Chicago but the headquarters were later moved to New York. All the Braille books of Sister Veronica were plated by the Xavier Free Publication Society.

Sister Veronica's interests for the blind were by no means confined to the transcription and plating of books. It would be impossible to recount adequately the innumerable acts of kindness she performed for this afflicted group. Through her influence educational advantages were given to various blind girls. The spiritual life of these blind proteges was of paramount importance to her. The College of St. Francis cooperated year after year with Sister Veronica in giving educational opportunities as well as spiritual advantages in the way of retreats, etc. The services of some of the best physicians and surgeons were gladly donated for the benefit of the blind; through her efforts many of the blind were able to receive cultural entertainment; better living conditions were procured for many of them; in fact, anything and everything she could do to promote their happiness, to bring a little more light into their dark lives, was little enough in her eyes. But through all her sympathetic understanding and solicitude for their welfare, Sister Veronica never lost sight of the fact that the blind must be made self-reliant, that they must do things for themselves.

Besides her brother, Father Haarth of Hubbard Woods, Sister Veronica is survived by two sisters, Mrs. John Beyer of LaGrange, Illinois, and Mrs. E. Holmstead of Highwood, Illinois. Burial will be in St. John Cemetery, Joliet.