

SISTER M. FRANCISCA, O.S.F.
May 11, 1968

The summer lists were all but completed, but it was not until Friday that the assignment was finalized for Sister Francisca. She would stay at Our Lady of Angels for the care and attention she so obviously needed. But on Saturday Sister Francisca quietly overruled the appointment and slipped home to God.

It had been a year of "traveling" for Sister Francisca. In January she had terminated her stay at Joliet's St. Joseph's and gone to Our Lady of Angels. In March she came to the Motherhouse. In mid-April she was taken to St. Joseph's Hospital. Then on May 5th, utterly weary, she returned to the Infirmary, "your problem child," as she told Sister Andre. There was nothing that could be done to check the leukemia, but there was everything that could be done to make her comfortable, to ease her pain, to cheer the remaining days. Sister Francisca was "so tired" when shortly before midnight on May 10th, she lapsed into the consciousness from which she was not to recover.

Those last days at OLA, though pain-filled, had not been without their happy moments. Everyone was "so good" to her -- Sister Emiliana was near enough to visit her -- and as for the pain, well, that too had a special place. "I'm offering it all for the Sisters," she had said, and in that offering all seven hundred of us, novices and postulants as well, were included. With Eternity so near -- and Sister Francisca realized that it WAS near -- there was no time for unconsecrated suffering, no time to let anything go to waste -- "I'm offering it all for the Sisters!"

Probably part of the suffering was knowing that Sister Emiliana was suffering too. They had shared over forty years of religious life. Now Sister Emiliana would have to go on alone. If Sister Francisca was worried during that last week, her concern was surely about her sister. How would things be with Sister Emiliana? But before she broke the bonds of consciousness, Sister Francisca must have known how things would be. She must have known that for Sister Emiliana too there would be care and concern and help. And, very likely, it was in that assurance that Sister Francisca went quietly to sleep -- that midnight of May 10th.

When she heard of Sister Francisca's death, Sister Leonore said to Mother Borromeo, "You have a Mother's Day gift to give to God -- a Sister who persevered!"

Sister Francisca went to God, her vows unsevered -- "a Sister who persevered!"

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!

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