



Sister Stella Koester

Sister Mary Stella Koester, our diamond jubilarian, responded to the call of the Bridegroom. Sixty years had she served Him lovingly and faithfully.

Having lived a quiet, serene life, she slept away in a peaceful death on December ninth, in the eighty-first year of her age. For twenty-three years of her religious life the class room was the scene of her labors, her later years she spent close to the tabernacle, occupied with the duties of sacristan.

As a true daughter of our Holy Father Saint Francis, she was known to be patient, kind and a strict observer of holy poverty.

Sister Stella had been very active despite her advanced age. Just two weeks before she died, she became afflicted with rheumatism. Sister Stella was on duty until December third. From that time on, a rapid change took place. A great weakness overtook her; she fell asleep wherever she happened to be. The doctor was summoned and he ordered her to be taken to the hospital for a thorough examination. She was taken to the hospital on December seventh at one o'clock in the afternoon.

The following day the Reverend Louis Biskupski, pastor of St. Stephen Parish paid her a friendly visit as also did several of the Sisters from the mission. Sister Stella remarked to them that she felt much improved. The doctor's report to Sister Lucinda was favorable. He reported that Sister Stella has only a cold, but it would be advisable to have her remain at the hospital for a few days to rest her, adding that there is no cause for alarm.

The following morning, at seven o'clock, one of the hospital Sisters informed Sister Lucinda that Sister Stella had passed away. The chaplain immediately anointed Sister Stella.

Mr. John Hudachko, undertaker and brother to Sister Lucinda, was notified and asked to prepare Sister Stella's remains for burial. On Wednesday morning, December 10, Sister Stella was laid in state in St. Stephen's Church until the funeral took place on December 11th.

A Solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated by the pastor, Rev. Louis Biskupski, assisted by Rev. W. Wozniak as deacon and Rev. G. Dzurya, the assistant, as subdeacon. Present in the sanctuary were the Rev. Martin Gensler of Leonore, Illinois, Rev. Father Christian, O.F.M., pastor of Saint Anthony Church, Streator, Illinois, and Rev. Father Paul, O.F.M., Chaplain of St. Mary's Hospital, Streator, Illinois.

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The following Sisters from Joliet attended the funeral services: Rev. Mother Thomasine, Sister M. Stanislas, Sister M. Seraphica, Sister Clotilde, Sister M. Delphine, and Sister M. Martha.

The Sisters from Leonore, from St. Anthony's School, St. Mary's School, St. Casimir's School, St. Mary's Hospital and the twelve companions of the Streator mission, assisted at the Requiem High Mass.

Twenty-five cars of parishioners accompanied the corpse to Joliet for burial. Having arrived at the convent, a number of autos joined the funeral cortege to the cemetery. The postulants, the novices and a number of professed Sisters walked to the cemetery in order to pay their last tribute to their highly revered and departed Sister.

The entire funeral expenses was paid by Mr. John Hudachko.