

SISTER JOSEPHINE MARIE KOSTELEK, O.S.F. (Venantia) 675

Born: March 16, 1907 in Joliet, IL
Parents: Anthony and Mary C. (Stefanic) Kostelec
Postulancy: September 8, 1923
Novitiate: August 12, 1924
First Profession: August 12, 1926
Final Profession: August 12, 1929
Died: Saturday, November 10, 1990 at 5:10 p.m.
at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet



Ministry:

April 1926 St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Grades 2 & 3
1926 - 1929 St. Francis Assisi, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1929 - 1932 St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grades 3 & 4
1932 - 1933 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Grade 4
1933 - 1950 Corpus Christi, Columbus, OH, Grades 3, 4, 5, 6 & 8
1950 - 1955 St. Peter, Mansfield, OH, Grades 7 & 8
1955 - 1958 Immaculate Conception, Columbus, OH, Grades 7 & 8
1958 - 1960 Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago, IL, Superior and
Principal and Grade 8
1960 - 1966 Corpus Christi, Columbus, OH, Superior and Principal
1966 - 1972 Our Lady of Guadalupe, Chicago, IL, Superior and Principal
1972 - 1984 SS. Peter & Paul, Chicago, IL, Grades 4 & 6
1984 - 1989 Jesus Our Brother School, Chicago, IL, Librarian and Clerk
1989 - 1990 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Tuesday, November 13, 1990 from 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Rosary at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Tuesday, November 13, 1990 at 7 p.m.

Burial: Wednesday, November 14, 1990 at St. Joseph Cemetery
10:30 a.m.

Survived by sisters: Sister Frances Marie Kostelec, OSF
Sister Angela Marie Kostelec, OSF
Mrs. Agnes Goebbels

*For those who have been faithful, O Lord,
life is not ended, but merely changed.*

On Saturday, November 10, 1990, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, our Sister Josephine Marie Kostelec was born to life eternal. Although she had been close to death a few years ago, there was no indication that she was going to die that Saturday. Her death was sudden and unexpected, but she was ready. It was the final day of her retreat at Our Lady of Angels. She and her sister, Sister Angela Marie, were watching the five o'clock news. She was elated because her team, Notre Dame, had just won their football game. In the midst of conversation, she gasped, and just that peacefully, she died.

Josephine was born on March 16, 1907, in Joliet, Illinois, to Mary and Anthony Kostelec. There were nine children in the family, and Josephine was only a child when her parents died. She is survived by three sisters, Agnes, and our own Sister Angela Marie and Sister Frances Marie. The love and devotion these sisters have for each other has been an inspiration to all of us. How provident it was that Sister Angela Marie was there with her sister as she died.

St. Joseph Parish in Joliet, Illinois was the home parish for the Kostelec family and always remained dear to Sister Josephine Marie. As a young Sister, she had the privilege of teaching at her home parish for three years. It was Msgr. Butala, long-time pastor at St. Joseph Parish and now a resident at OLA, who was called to lead the prayers at her death. That must have pleased our Sister very much.

Sister Josephine Marie became a postulant when she was sixteen, and lived to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee in 1986. One of our Sisters spoke fondly of her, calling her a real community woman. "She was sincere and dedicated, a woman of faith, joy, and great love for her Franciscan vocation."

For fourteen years she served our sisters as a superior. Those who lived with her speak of her care and concern for them. Once she wrote, "I hope to make my Sisters feel relaxed and at ease. We should all work together as members of one happy family. We should share the joys and sorrows of all." With that attitude toward community life, little wonder she was dearly loved by so many of our Sisters.

Sister Josephine Marie ministered as an elementary school teacher and principal. She spent twenty-three years at Corpus Christi Parish in Columbus, Ohio. At a recent Corpus Christi Parish celebration of our 125th Anniversary, the name of Sister Venantia was spoken of with great fondness by many of the parishioners.

From 1966 to her retirement at OLA in 1989, she served the people of the south side of Chicago at Our Lady of Guadalupe, SS Peter and Paul, and Jesus Our Brother schools. These were schools where African American and Hispanic children were struggling to obtain quality education. She served them with



dedication and great love. One of her former principals said she was always so patient and kind to even the most disruptive child. She knew how to welcome the parents, some of whom she had taught when they were children.

She was a living example of a Joliet Franciscan true to our goal to be with "the poor and powerless." We are inspired by her zeal for God's struggling people. She once wrote, "I love working with the culturally deprived. I enjoy teaching the children of the minority groups. I feel I understand the problems of these children."

In 1985, she was awarded a Service in Education Award by the Archdiocese of Chicago: "for many years of dedicated service you have given to Catholic youth by proclaiming the Gospel to them through the ministry of Catholic Education."

This is a portrait of our Sister Josephine Marie, a woman of loving care for her sisters in community, and dedicated joyful service to God's people.

Sister Josephine Marie, we thank you for your sixty-six years as our Sister. We will miss you. We rejoice with you as you spend all eternity with your God and Our Blessed Mother to whom you were so devoted. Amen! Alleluia!