

+
+
+ + + + +
+
+
+

Sister M. Adela Petr

The eves of two great feasts marked the span of Sister M. Adela's life of dedication in our Congregation. Making her entry on Christmas Eve, 1911, Sister began her new life in a special way "with Christ"; almost fifty years later she ended it on the Eve of the Queenship of Mary, peacefully anticipating our Lady's feast of triumph.

Sister Adela had come to the convent as Mary Petr of Cleveland, had received the habit and her name the following August, and in September of 1913 had started out, a second-year novice, on her teaching career. From then until November of 1960 she did continuous duty in the schools of the Community, being stationed for forty-seven years in only two cities and at only three missions. Her first three years she taught at St. Procopius, Chicago, and the next seventeen at St. Ludmilla's. The last twenty-seven years she spent at Holy Family, Cleveland, Ohio.

Hers was a record of stability not only in placements, but also in character. She taught classes from first to sixth grade, and taught them lovingly and well, doing each day's work and meeting all its demands quietly and systematically, "without any fanfare," as one Sister who had observed her through the years reported. "She never aspired to recognition, but did her work for souls and for God. She was very exact, very quiet, and very kind; and her pupils loved her."

She was a thorough teacher, using every opportunity to prepare herself for her work. She had done intermittent summer studying, but when the Cleveland diocese advocated that teachers obtain degrees, she willingly set about doing it. She was no longer young, but she continued her courses steadily for ten summers, graduating in 1950 with a major in history and a minor in philosophy.

Sister Adela was a true lover of peace. In difficult circumstances she never lost her poise; when she knew others were disturbed, she refrained from comment. It might be said her love of peace was her predominant virtue - and her mild manner, her modulated voice, her unpretended sweetness, her cheerful acceptance of all that befell her these proclaimed it.

As a religious, Sister had made her offering and continued faithful to the spirit of her vocation. She seemed to live only for God, but she neglected no one. Sisters, children, family, friends--she was at the disposal of all. She was content with the common life and never asked a privilege; she even preferred not to accept one when it was offered. Given the opportunity on a certain occasion to visit home, she chose to wait until her regular time. And this she did in candid simplicity, with no air of either pride or humility, and with no thought of any special sacrifice. She had accepted a Rule; its fulfillment should be complete.

As she had been admirable in active life, Sister Adela was edifying in the whole course of her sickness. She had great powers of endurance and continued at her post in spite of her serious ailment - carcinoma of the stomach - and her inability to eat properly. She weakened gradually and was brought to the Motherhouse infirmary in the summer of 1960. Though nearing her seventieth year, she was anxious "to grow strong and teach again." She returned to duty in the fall, but had to give up in late Nov-

2.

ember and come to Joliet. Dr. Nyi, hoping to help her, performed exploratory surgery in January, but found he could do nothing. Generalized carcinomatosis had set in. She declined until she was a mere 85 pounds, but she suffered no diminution in patience. All was accepted without question. Even in the last two weeks of extreme suffering, the only indication she gave of pain was to request softly, with clear grey eyes unclouded a "double hypo."

Her death was quiet - so quiet one scarcely knew just what moment it had happened. She was conscious to the last twenty minutes, and Mother Immaculate continued to pray aloud, with no fear of 'overdoing' it, for Sister never tired of prayer in unison. - How happy she must have been to join heaven's "Holy, Holy" in praise and thanksgiving to God, and the "Hail, holy Queen" to her loved Mother, and thus enter upon her joyous eternal rest!

Sister's funeral services were held in the Motherhouse chapel on Friday, June 2nd, at 9:30 a.m. His Excellency, the Most Rev. Martin D. McNamara presided at the Solemn Requiem Mass celebrated by Father Angelo Zwiesler, O.F.M. Interment was made at Resurrection Cemetery.