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Sister M. Boniface Renner

Our beloved Sister M. Boniface has gone to Eternity dying in the Motherhouse infirmary on Wednesday, March 3, 1954, at 4:18 p.m., after an illness of five months. Sister was the former Susan Renner, who had entered the convent from St. Boniface, Chycago, in April of 1888. She was in her eighty-ninth year and had worn the habit of St. Francis for sixty-five years.

During her last years hypertensive myocarditis had developed, and on October 10th Sister suffered a stroke. For more than two months she was critically ill, and though improvement followed, she suffered a relapse from which she did not rally. She was anointed after the first attack by Father Wilfred Cool; after the second, by Father Benedict Pfeifer.

Though Sister was ailing the last years, she never complained, but always went about in her sweet and kindly way. At the Motherhouse she had for the past ten years and now had no assigned duty. This did not mean that she passed her days idly. She prayed much, she meditated long; her presence was as "gently refreshing as the morning dew." Further, she was faithful to the daily "peeling" chore, and was one of the most exact of the older Sisters who helped with that work in the kitchen. At the time she was taken sick, she had just finished her work and was still in the lower hallway, where she was found, somewhat dazed, saying she felt "so strange."

But the last ten years of retired helpfulness were preceded by fifty-six years of quiet, efficient, loving service in the kitchens of the missions, chief of which were St. Francis Assisi and St. Clement's, Chicago, where she spent eight and eleven years respectively; and St. Mary's and St. Mary Magdalene's, Columbus, with seven and eleven years respectively. She also spent four years in charge of the Motherhouse kitchen.

Any mission to which Sister Boniface was appointed as domestic Sister considered itself fortunate. The cooking and laundering she would take over completely. Everywhere she kept the same tidy and shining kitchen, served the same palatable and varied meals, proved herself the same charming and helpful Sister in charge. "No one," the Sisters would say, "can make mayonnaise like Sister Boniface; no one can serve a steak dinner like hers," and "Nothing is ever too much for her, if only she can make someone happy."

This was characteristic of her. Though she served in large houses and did it unassisted, she never seemed to find it a burden, and the work never engulfed her. She kept this relaxed and happy attitude to the end. In her last years at the Motherhouse, besides her work and her prayer, she found time for friendly chats with the Sisters, and her favorite recreational activity--Chinese checkers. Even though there might be no partner available, Sister Boniface could often be found in the Community room, being her own congenial opponent in a game of solitaire. While the Sisters pray that God may grant her "a place of refreshment, rest, and happiness," they are confident that she has "entered in to the joy of the Lord."

Funeral services were held in the chapel of the Motherhouse on Saturday, March 6, at 8:15 a.m., beginning with the recitation of the Office of the Dead by the Community. The solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by Rev. Gervase Brinkman, OFM, who was assisted by Rev. Wilfred Cool, OFM, and Rev. John Przybylski, OFM, as deacon and subdeacon. The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Romeo Blanchette, Chancellor of the Diocese, was in the sanctuary as representative of His Excellency, the Most Rev. Bishop McNamara, who was unable to attend.