

MOTHER M. ANGELA ROSENBERGER
136. MARCH 8, 1923

FUNERAL SERMON BY RT. REV. MONSIGNOR REMPE FOR
OUR BELOVED MOTHER M. ANGELA ROSENBERGER:

My dear Sisters and dearly beloved in Christ:
When the mortal remains of Mother Angela will have been laid in her last resting place and you return home without her it will no doubt seem to many of you that the convent is no longer what it has been, for if there is anyone with whom your whole community was inseparably interwoven, it was surely Mother Angela. She stood at the cradle of this community. She was received as postulant in March, 1865 and took the religious habit on August 2 of the same year. With the community she grew up; she dedicated to it the best years of her life and all the energy of her being. She lived and labored to see not only her own but the community's Golden Jubilee, and ever since she has lived here as a true friend, a councilor, and example and inspiration to her fellow Sisters down to her saintly death.

Around the person of Mother Angela there seems to gather all the reverence and affection which is usually accorded to a pioneer. Certainly everyone of you was by her very presence reminded of the days long past, the days of difficulty, of strife and struggle, the days when physical comforts were few, and when the heat of the day and the weight of the burden was such as only the heroic could endure. Mother Angela's very presence reminded us of the early days when the foundation of this community was laid, a great foundation, intended by Providence to live a long life, and render beneficent service under trying circumstances, and amid anguish, and anxiety, which is usually the lot of all institutions of a religious character intended to propagate the service of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Like their Master, they have their hour of agony, when the uncertainty of the present and the responsibility of the future years seems to overwhelm them. It was the pioneers who were called upon to carry this burden who by their ability, zeal and vital interest in the welfare of the community deserves to be in the front rank. Such a pioneer was Mother Angela. You cannot think of her any other way than a hard worker of this community, and in those years when: "The harvest was great and the laborers few", she threw herself into the task that was set before her. Her long and laborious life, her many activities become evident at once when we retrace the mile stones of her grand career.

When we think of her as a teacher in St. John's School of this city, Elgin, and Columbus, Ohio, as the secretary and treasurer of this community, as a member of the council, the board of directors, of the school board, when we think of her in that responsible position as mistress of novices from 1879 to 1893, and finally when she held the highest office in the community, that of Mother General and served from 1893-1899 in which capacity she was able to carry out that long cherished desire of opening a home for

the homeless and orphan, that institution, the Guardian Angel Home, upon which the blessing of heaven and the good wishes of this whole community rests so abundantly, and the members of which has been a great consolation to her in her old age. During the evening of her life when her failing eye sight would not allow her to take part in other activities, she devoted herself with all her heart and the ripe experience of a long life to the wards of this institution.

I realize that the mere enumeration of the offices which she held will never give us a real picture of her wonderful accomplishments. I should add, and you will gratefully and lovingly bear me out, that in every capacity she made use to the fullest, the wonderful talents which Divine Providence endowed her. She was a most able and conscientious teacher. The phonic system which is being taught in your elementary schools was her creation, and it will always remain a noble monument to her zeal and scholarship.

No doubt there are many of you here this morning who received your training in the Novitiate from Mother Angela and you will rise up and call her blessed. She had all the great qualities that are necessary for this office, but it seems to me we ought to be more grateful especially for that sane moderation of Mother Angela which was such an important factor in educating youth, the emotional and impressionable youth, to a clear and sensible view of life free from sentimentality, inculcating at the same time inspirations for the noblest and highest.

There are many of us among the clergy and laity who knew her in the years of administration of this community, and I am sure there is not one of us who will not give testimony to her tact and sense of justice and benevolent charity, and so I am sure today we all feel that a wonderful career has come to an end, that a great soul has left its house of clay and gone forward to its everlasting reward. Of this we feel sure, for it is almost fifty-eight years ago that she consecrated herself to God, and you know with what fidelity she has kept her vows. There is probably none among you who is more faithful to the obligations of the religious life than she, none of you who realize the value of time than Mother Angela. Those of you who knew her best will say that she was never idle. She lived the life of a religious by giving herself to Almighty God, and I feel certain that when the end came there was nothing more to give Him except her last breath. When she made her vows the priest said: "If you observe these things, I, on the part of God, promise you life everlasting." She has kept her promise, and my friends, God will keep His. For half a century she has given herself to the education of the young and to the special training of the young Sisters in the religious life, but God has said, "Those who lead others to justice will shine as stars in the firmament." Through her zeal and charity there has sprung up in this city a school for orphans and homeless and the poor. We are aware of what this home has done in the past and who knows how much more good it will do in the future, for it

will go down the corridor of time to come, for the years of the past, present and future seem to rise up this morning and hover over this lifeless form as we call to mind the words of the Divine Savior, "What you have done to the least of my brethren you have done to Me." We have all reason when we lay her to rest, to hope with a strong hope that she has gone forth to enter the joy of the Lord and she goes accompanied by our prayers and heartfelt wishes. We know she deserved her reward and we would not call her back, but we believe that though her body be consigned to the earth, and her place in the convent be vacant, her spirit will remain in this community to inspire her Sisters with the noblest and highest sentiments, while her soul has gone from this world of strife and struggle to a better world. Amen.

MOTHER M. ANGELA ROSENBERGER (MARY ANN)

DIED: MARCH 8, 1923 in her 74th year
58th year of religious life

Born: March 17, 1849 in Metamora, Illinois

Parents: Joseph Rosenberger (Deceased)
Veronica Bambeck Rosenberger
remarried: Martin Hiermeier

Postulancy: March 24, 1865

Novitiate: Received as the first novice and named,
Sister M. Angela Merici
on August 2, 1865 in Allegany, New York,
by Father Pamfilo da Magliano, on Foundation
Day of the Congregation, when Mother M.
Alfred Moes was named the Foundress.

First Vows: September 3, 1866 in St. John the Baptist
Church, Joliet, Illinois

Final Vows: July 17, 1869

Mission Record: Mother Angela's own summary:
11 years total at St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL,
in 4 different times
11 years total on other missions
11 years total as Mistress of Novices
2 years assisting in St. Francis Academy
in 1874 and in 1886
6 years officiating as Mother General
2 years (1899-1901) Secretary General of the community
Secretary of the community at intervals during the
superiorship of: Venerable Mother Alfred, Mother Francis,
Mother Celestine, Mother Lucia, Mother Alexander until 1901

Mission Records:

- 1865-68 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL
1868-69 St. Joseph, Mendota, IL
1869-70 St. Anthony, Effingham, IL
Sts. Peter and Paul, Naperville, IL
1870-72 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL
and Postulant Directress
1872-73 St. Peter and Paul, Toledo, OH
1874-79 St. John the Baptist, Joliet, IL
and
1877-84 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL
Mistress of Novices
1879-84 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL
Secretary General
1884-87 St. Francis Academy, Joliet, IL
1887-89 St. John, Joliet, IL
Mistress of Novices
1889-93 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL
Secretary General
1893-99 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL
General Superior
1899-01 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL
Councilor
1901-05 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL
1906-08 St. Mary, Columbus, OH
1908-23 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL
Normal School, Phonics publications, Printing Press