

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

July 24, 1981

Dear Sisters,

Sister Rogeria was no stranger to death. She had been seriously ill and on the brink of death many times during these past several years, meeting each encounter with a beautiful attitude of acceptance of His will. "He will take me when the right time comes." That was 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 22. Surrounded by her sisters, including those who were her long-time friends, she quietly departed this life from her sick bed at Our Lady of Angels.

Baptized Elizabeth by her parents, John and Mary (Balocko) Sestko, on March 25, 1894, she grew up in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. As a young girl, she attended St. Stephen's parochial school. When she was sixteen, she joined the Joliet Franciscans, making her first commitment in 1913. Her fidelity to this commitment spanned many decades. She had, at age 87, given witness to her religious commitment for sixty-nine years.

Within these sixty-nine years, Sister Rogeria served her sisters in many places and in many ways, sustaining and supporting them in their ministry. She served as a household minister within the convent at St. Procopius, St. Clement and St. Boniface in Chicago; at St. Mary's in Columbus and St. Procop's in Cleveland, Ohio. From 1919 to 1930 she gave of herself within the Congregation's mission at Bayfield, Wisconsin. In 1930 she returned to Joliet, first to St. Bernard's and then to the Motherhouse.

When at the Motherhouse, she entered the ministry for which she is best known, community seamstress. Until 1970 Sister Rogeria carefully measured and sewed the sleeves and scapulars for the habits needed by her sisters. In love she built bonds of friendship with her companions in the community sewing room. She retired in 1972, after serving two years as a general assistant at OLA.

During her lifetime, Sister Rogeria knew illness and pain. She understood the ministry of suffering which she patiently folded into her life. In this way she gave witness to the mystery of Jesus dying and rising.

Sister Rogeria is survived by her sister-in-law, Mary Sestko, nieces and nephews. A prayer service at Our Lady of Angels is scheduled for 7 p.m. on July 24. The Mass of the Resurrection is at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, July 25, followed by a burial service at Resurrection Cemetery, Lockport.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

THE GOVERNING BOARD

ALLELUIA
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