

SISTER JOSEPHA STEJSKAL, O.S.F. 723

Born: August 29, 1897
Parents: John and Anna (Silhanek) Stejskal
Postulancy: September 5, 1921
Novitiate: August 12, 1922
First Profession: August 12, 1924
Final Profession: August 12, 1927
Died: Wednesday July 20, 1994 at 8:55 a.m.
at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL



Ministry:

1923 - 1924	St. Joseph, Joliet, IL, Grade 2
1924 - 1925	St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Grade 2
1925 - 1929	St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA, Grades 4, 5, 6
1929 - 1950	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grades 3, 4
1950 - 1957	St. Ludmilla, Chicago, IL, Grades 5, 6, 7
1957 - 1959	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Grade 7
1959 - 1965	Holy Family, Cleveland, OH, Grade 4
1965 - 1966	St. Procop, Cleveland, OH, Grade 5
1966 - 1968	Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Chicago, IL, Grade 4
1968 - 1971	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Grade 5
1971 - 1979	St. Procopius, Chicago, IL, Tutor
1979 - 1994	Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL Friday, July 22, 1994
2-7 p.m. with prayer service at 4:30 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL
Friday, July 22, 1994 at 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Saturday, July 23, 1994 leaving Our Lady of Angels at 9:30 a.m.
Resurrection Cemetery, Romeoville, IL, S8-L351-G11

Survived by: her cousins Rose Silhanek, John Silhanek, Agnes Melichar, Mary Cernin, Ann Kristen,
Bessie Kaloupek, and Josef Palak.

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

Sister Josepha Stejskal was born to John and Anna Silhanek Stejskal on August 29, 1897 and was baptized Mary at St. Ludmilla's Church in Chicago. She attended St. Ludmilla's School and it was there that she became acquainted with the convent housekeeper, Sister Cyrilla, who by her simplicity and love for the Blessed Mother encouraged Sister Josepha to enter religious life. On September 5, 1921 Mary became a Postulant with the Joliet Franciscans and entered the Novitiate the following August. Sister Josepha's ongoing record of preparation and updating for her educational ministry included a bachelor's degree in history from the College of St. Francis and further studies at De Paul University in Chicago.

Sister Josepha began her ministry of education in 1923. Most of the almost six decades of teaching were spent with students in the intermediate grades. She taught at Holy Family in Cleveland for 26 years, at St. Stephen in Johnstown, St. Cyril, St. Ludmilla and St. Procopius in Chicago. For the last ten years of her teaching career, she tutored children at St. Procopius. Her former students still sing her praises.

In 1980 Sister Josepha moved to our Lady of Angels where she continued her zest for life into her 97th year. She was a great enthusiast for exercise and never missed physical therapy. Art and crafts fascinated her. She enjoyed making various kinds of clowns for the annual Christmas Bazaar. She expressed herself through water color and counted cross stitch.

Being together as family was important to Sister Josepha. She enjoyed visiting her sisters Ann and Rose and was deeply saddened when her Jesuit brother John died at the age of 59. She and her sister Rose both had a love and dedication for the Brazilian Missions. Sister Josepha upon her death wanted her treasured statue of the Baby Jesus, a gift from Rose, to be sent to the Mission in Brazil. This wish became a reality as Sister Mary Jean Morris carried this statue to Brazil for the Silver Jubilarian Celebration. As Sister Josepha wrote "Rose would surely be honored for she was devoted to our South American Missions." Each month when Sister Josepha herself would receive her \$15.00 budget, she asked that \$5.00 be given to Brazil, \$5.00 for retirement and the rest she kept for her few needs.

During the past couple of years Sister Josepha's health gradually grew weaker. On October 7, 1992 Sister Josepha wrote a special letter and asked Sister Lillian Ujka to keep it until her death. It reads: "Dear Sisters, There will be a day when I must leave your company. I want to thank you for all you did for me during these 95 years, 24 of these I spent at home. That means I lived in the religious life 71 years. Thanks be to God to let me live so long. So far I am able to use my 5 senses and do much for myself. Without prayer and trust in Divine Providence, I could do nothing. I hope I will be forgiven by all whom I offended and forgive all who offended me. I am praying for all of you. Please remember me in your prayers. Thank you."

Sister Josepha, we thank you for your congeniality, your long life with us, your simplicity and joy of praying together. May the immense love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus enfold you as you celebrate God's presence forever. Amen. Alleluia.

