

## SISTER M. VIRGILIA, O.S.F.

It was 8:15 Saturday evening, December 1, 1962. Sister Virgilia had reached the end of her heroic struggle. It was all over -- the pain that had begun over two years ago was finished. The "cancer of the bone" about which she came to speak so casually had ended her life in its fifty-seventh year.

In January of 1961 Sister knew she was doomed. She was living on borrowed time. With this realization came the dark hours of struggle. It was hard even for her cheerful nature to face the truth that her life was ending -- not suddenly, but slowly, painfully. Sister faced that hour of struggle and came through it with a peace of mind and a resignation which did not leave her until that final breath in the infirmary of Our Lady of Angels, Saturday evening.

She was conscious almost to the last. "Be sure to come back," she told Sister Myra, who saw her about three o'clock. "Peter, don't go!" was her one request throughout the afternoon. It was almost as though she was afraid she might slip away with no one near her. But that fear was groundless. Her room was crowded with her Sisters, praying continuously from 6:40 p.m. There too was Father Louis Antl to exhort, "Depart, O Christian soul!" And then, suddenly, it was all over -- no convulsions, no struggle -- only serenity. The pain had ended. For Sister Virgilia the Advent season had opened in Eternity.

Mother Borromeo was on her way to Joliet when Sister's death occurred. But Sister Virgilia had already said goodbye on Friday when Mother came to see her just before going to Toledo. On November 23d Mother had first asked, "Sister, I was wondering whether you would want us to say the prayers, --" Mother hesitated, but Sister unflinchingly finished the sentence, ". . . for the dying? Yes."

Sister Joseph Marie leaving her that day, said, "Now, be sure you help us when you get to heaven!" Her breath was labored, but Sister Virgilia murmured with a touch of her old humor, "I'll do what I can!"

It was a promise.

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL

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