

SISTER M. LOIS, O.S.F.

August 16, 1967

Sister Quillen had completed her summer of service at Our Lady of Angels, but because the Infirmary was rather short-handed after the 12th, she volunteered to stay on as Night Nurse until things were back to normal. That was how she happened to be with Sister Lois in the gray morning hours of August 16th, the last day for both of them at Our Lady of Angels.

It had been obvious for days that Sister Lois "was very bad." Death had, in fact, been dogging her since April, when tests confirmed what had been suspected: an inoperable tumor. She had been told that she could not get better, and though she had apparently accepted the diagnosis, she refused to talk about it. Talking could not change it, and talking could make the situation harder for others -- for Sister Alodia, for instance. So Sister Lois simply refused to discuss the matter.

She must have had a lot of pain. The 14th was especially rugged, and Father Dominic gave her the last anointing. But after it was over, Sister remarked matter-of-factly to Sister Alodia, "I'm not going to die yet!" But if her words were optimistic, her eyes betrayed the truth. Sister knew! Maybe she was not going to go on the 14th, but Death was waiting -- and Sister Lois knew she would not keep him waiting much longer.

Up until Friday the 11th she had been able to sit in her chair for an hour each afternoon, but when Sister Peter gently suggested that it would be better for her not to try it any more -- "You're very sick, Sister" -- she gave in.

She was in bed when Mother Borromeo came to see her on the 15th. "How are you?" Sister asked, remembering that Mother had herself been ill. "Come back again!" she said when Mother left. It was one of her last responses. That evening she lapsed into unconsciousness. Early next morning her respiration changed, and at 4:45 Sister Lois slipped away.

It was a quiet dying, and those who remembered the old Infirmary at the Motherhouse recalled the many times Sister Lois had kept vigil there with the old Sisters poised on the brink of Eternity. It was her turn now, and others kept watch through the night at her side as she had done so often in other days. As the darkness closed in around her, she must have been pleased to know that she was not alone.

She will never be alone now -- forever!

GOD GRANT HER REST ETERNAL!

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