

SISTER M. RUTH YIRKU O.S.F. (Ethyl) 652

Born: February 24, 1901, Austria
Parents: Albert and Margaret (Strba) Yirku
Postulancy: January 12, 1921
Novititate: August 12, 1921
First Profession: August 12, 1923
Final Profession: August 12, 1926
Died: March 5, 1989 at 9:30 a.m.
Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home



Ministry:

1923-1924 St. Stephen, Johnstown, PA, Grades 3 & 4
1924-1927 St. Mary, DesPlaines, IL, Grades 1 & 2
1927-1928 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Infirmary--patient
1928-1934 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Grades 1 & 2
1934-1936 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Infirmary--patient & assistant
1936-1937 St. John, Joliet, IL, Grade 1
1937-1940 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Grades 1 & 2
1940-1941 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Infirmary--patient
1941-1942 St. Joseph, Elgin, IL, Grades 1 & 2
1942-1943 Immaculate Conception, Kankakee, IL, General work
1943-1975 St. Francis de Sales, Chicago, IL, Grade 1
1975-1976 St. Francis Convent, Joliet, IL, Tutor
1976-1989 Our Lady of Angels, Joliet, IL, Retired

Wake: Tuesday, March 7, 1989, 2:00 - 7:00 p.m.
Prayer Service 4:00 p.m.

Mass of Christian Burial: Tuesday, March 7, 1989, 7:00 p.m.

Burial: Wednesday, March 8, 1989
Resurrection Cemetery

Survived by: Sister M. Maxentia Yirku, natural sister
nieces and nephews

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

At 9:30 a.m. on Sunday morning, March 5, 1989, at Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, our Sister Ruth Yirku was born to life eternal.

Although her death was unexpected, she was very frail. For two months she was a patient in the hospital in critical condition. But on January 5, 1989 she returned to OLA, and that homecoming marked the beginning of a recovery. She was able to eat her meals in the dining room, enjoy company, and even go to the activity room. On February 24th she celebrated her eighty-eighth birthday enjoying visits, cards, balloons, and even a fish dinner. And most of all she enjoyed her telephone visit with her sister, Sister Maxentia. On the morning of her death she received Holy Communion, ate her breakfast, and then very suddenly collapsed and died.

Ethyl Yirku was born in 1901 in Austria, to Margaret and Albert Yirku. There were six girls and one boy in the family. Our own Sister Maxentia is Sr. Ruth's younger sister. The family journeyed to the United States and settled on the East Side of Chicago. It was there that Sr. Ruth met our sisters at St. Francis de Sales Parish. She wrote how the sisters influenced her life, and her letter of request to Mother Vincent spoke of her eagerness to be a sister. She became a postulant when she was twenty, and lived to celebrate her Diamond Jubilee of sixty years in 1983. In 1971 she wrote "community is the way of life that challenges me to live my faith, hope and love of God every day in the service of others".

Her days were spent in the service of others, especially the little children. She spent fifty-two years teaching the primary grades, thirty-three of those years as first grade teacher at St. Francis de Sales in Chicago. Her quiet presence and faithful dedication touched many lives. Two of the priests who concelebrate her Mass of Christian Burial were her first grade students.

When she left St. Francis de Sales in 1975 to come to the Motherhouse, the parish honored her. They dedicated Room 102 in the school to her, and there is a plaque outside that room that speaks of her years of ministry there. These words were in the parish bulletin: "Sr. Ruth has given much to the children, faculty, and parents of St. Francis de Sales over these years, and she will always have a special place in our hearts. We thank her for her dedication, her professional competence, but most of all, for the Spirit of Christ which shines through whatever she does." What a wonderful tribute to our Sister Ruth!

Sr. Ruth loved her sister, Sister Maxentia, and one of her greatest joys was to spend vacation time with "Max". She was always ready and eager to travel to California, Montana, Bayfield, always ready for a new adventure with "Max" and her friends. This past summer she traveled to California to make a community retreat with many of our Sisters. These words found on a card seem to capture the relationship of Sister Ruth and Maxentia: "Sister, you are a precious part of me." Truly these sisters lived that quote as they cherished each other, "Max" constantly caring for her frail sister. Their dedication to each other speaks to all of us of sisterly love.

One of Sr. Ruth's students once expressed his feeling for her with the quote "I am glad you are here; it helps me to realize how beautiful my world is". And Sr. Ruth, we your Sisters are grateful for the sixty-eight years you shared community with us. We will miss you, but we rejoice with you as you experience the fullness of life for all eternity. Amen. Alleluia.

