

# Sister Julia Goes Home

by Sister Helen

ONCE again in the beautiful month of October, the Queen of the Rosary reached down and plucked from the garden of our community a choice flower for the heavenly Gardener. The flower was full blown, ready and eager for the transplanting, for it was the noble soul of our first member, Sister Julia Doyle.

IT had been October, too, that the last death in the community had occurred, when Catechist Marie Bodin—the third member to enter our community—had passed to her eternal reward on the feast of the Holy Rosary, 1939. Then, Sister Julia had traveled from Las Vegas, New Mexico, to Victory Noll to attend Catechist's funeral; now, her remains would be brought from Sante Fe, New Mexico, to rest beside those of Catechist Bodin in the community cemetery.

SISTER Julia assisted our founder, the Reverend J. J. Sigstein, in establishing our community. For several years before the actual launching of the little community, she had worked and planned, side by side with Father Sigstein, for the work which was to help preserve the Faith of little children in our own country.

FINALLY, all was ready for the first difficult venture into the mission field. Sister Julia and her companion, Sister Marie, made their first vows at the Academy of Our Lady in Chicago, on August 3, 1922, and left the same day for Sante Fe, New Mexico, arriving there on the feast of Our Lady of Snows, August 5.

TODAY, thank God, there is nothing strange in the thought of a religious community which instead of conducting schools, hospitals, or other institutions, turns its attention exclusively to the religious instruction of children not attending parochial schools. There are several communities now whose members do such work, while many of the older teaching communities have taken on some missions where they do this type of work. But twenty-five years ago such was not the case, and the new venture was frowned upon not only by the laity, but also by some zealous priests and Sisters.

THEN, too, the New Mexico of today is far different from that of twenty-five years ago. New Mexico has made great strides in material progress since those days; cars have lessened



Sister Julia.  
Requiescat in pace.

distances; many people now speak English. But in 1922 Sister Julia and Sister Marie found themselves among a people of another language and another culture. The Sisters lived in missions thirty-five or forty miles from a railroad center, they had no telephones, no telegraph service, and mail came but three times a week. Spiritual privileges were few; for the Missionary priest had to travel many miles to reach his scattered flock, and he traveled by horse and buggy, or more often on horseback, so that his visits were far apart.

BUT no obstacle proved too great for Sister Julia, and for twenty-five consecutive years she worked in the missions of the Archdiocese of Sante Fe. She watched the little community she had helped establish grow from its original two members to the present membership of 295 Professed Sisters, Novices, and Postulants. She

saw the little mission center she and Sister Marie opened at Watrous, in northern New Mexico, multiply like the proverbial mustard seed, until at the time of her death the community had thirty-nine houses located in five archdioceses and ten dioceses throughout the country.

SISTER Julia was missioned to Santa Fe the past two years, and was engaged in active work until shortly before her death. On October 6 she went to St. Joseph's hospital, Albuquerque, New Mexico, for X-rays. She died there the afternoon of October 21. She was anointed Sunday evening, October 19, at her own request, though at the time it was not thought that death was imminent. She received Holy Viaticum at 9:30 the day of her death, and then remained recollected, absorbed in prayer, until she expired at 2:15 P.M.. She was fully conscious to the last.

WE, who knew and loved her, received the telegram announcing her death with feelings of mingled joy and sorrow—sorrow over the passing of a loved Sister, joy in the knowledge that her beautiful soul had flown heavenward to rest in the arms of Jesus and Mary, whom she had loved and served so well in the person of the poor in the mission field.

SISTER Julia's work was done. She had given the needed maturity to the struggling, young community. Last summer she had come to Victory Noll to assist in the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the community; it had now achieved some degree of maturity—or so she must have thought—and surely she could safely leave it. Within three months she sped to her heavenly home.

SISTER Julia was retiring, self-effacing, yet withal strong, intrepid, valiant. She had a fund of common sense and a wealth of true Irish humor. She had the simplicity of all great souls, and she leaves to her Sisters in religion a shining example of humility and self-sacrificing devotion to duty.

SHE was seventy-two years old and was in the twenty-sixth year of her religious profession.

A Solemn funeral Mass was celebrated in the little mission chapel at Agua Fria, near which our Santa Fe convent is located, on October 23. The celebrant of the Mass was the Reverend James J. Rabbitt, Pastor of St. Anne's, of which Agua Fria is a mission; Rev. Father Leo, O.F.M., Cathedral parish, was deacon; Rev. Father Anthony, Chaplain of our Santa Fe convent, subdeacon, and Rev. Sigmund Charewicz, Secretary to the Archbishop, Master of Cere-

monies. The sermon was preached by Rev. Jos. M. Dardis, S.J., of Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary, Santa Fe. Present in the sanctuary also were Reverend Father Robert, O.F.M., Cathedral parish; Rev. Charles A. Carmen and Rev. Jos. Wood, Raton, and Rev. Henry Green, Santa Fe.

DOMINICAN Sisters, Poor Handmaids of the Precious Blood, and Franciscan Sisters attended the funeral. Our Sisters came from Flagstaff and Las Vegas to join the Sisters at Santa Fe as they paid their last tribute to their deceased Sister.

THAT same evening the body was placed aboard a Santa Fe train bound for Chicago. Sister Louise, Superior of our convent at Santa Fe, accompanied the body. At Chicago she was joined by Mother Catherine, Superior General, and Sister Cecilia, Vicar General, who arrived there that morning from Utah, where they had been making visitation of our convents. Together they accompanied the remains for the last stage of the journey, via the Erie train to Huntington, arriving here at 12:15 Saturday noon.

SISTER Julia was laid out in the reception room until the following afternoon, when the body was taken to the chapel. A guard of honor kept watch, day and night, from Saturday noon until the time of the funeral.

THE solemn Pontifical funeral Mass was celebrated in Victory Noll chapel at 9:00 o'clock on Monday, October 27, by His Excellency, the Most Reverend John F. Noll, D.D., Bishop of Fort Wayne; Rev. Thomas E. Dillon, Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Huntington, was deacon, and Rev. Father Ambrose, O.F.M. Cap., instructor of religion at Victory Noll, was subdeacon. Rev. Simeon M. Schmitt, Pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul's Church, Huntington, and Rev. Father Herbert, O.F.M. Cap., were deacons of honor; Very Rev. Msgr. Charles J. Feltes, Chancellor, was Master of Ceremonies. Also assisting were Rev. James Conroy, Chaplain at Victory Noll; Rev. Edward W. Roswog, Rev. Edward Keever, and Rev. Father Dominic, O.F.M. Cap. Bishop Noll preached the sermon.

SISTER Julia was laid to rest in the community cemetery.

