

May 16, 1948

Sister Marie Benes breathed forth her soul to God on Saturday, May 8, 1948 after almost a lifetime of patient suffering. Afflicted with a serious cardiac ailment for more than a quarter of a century, Sister Marie's life had been a veritable martyrdom. Sister's condition became critical on the evening of the feast of the Ascension. The following morning—the First Friday of the month—she received Holy Viaticum and was anointed.

Often enough before Sister Marie had received the Last Sacraments and prepared to meet her God, only to find that He wanted not her life but her sufferings. This time, however, her Divine Spouse was coming to claim her for His own. She remained conscious, though she suffered intensely, throughout the day and until her soul took its flight at three o'clock the following morning.

We laid Sister Marie to rest in the community cemetery at Victory Noll on May 10. His Excellency, the Most Rev. John F. Noll, D. D., Bishop of Fort Wayne, was the celebrant of the Solemn Requiem Mass. He was assisted by the Rev. S. M. Schmitt, Pastor of SS. Peter and Paul Church, Huntington, as deacon; the Rev. James P. Conroy, Victory Noll Chaplain, subdeacon; Rev. Thomas E. Dillon, pastor of St. Mary's Church, Huntington, Archpriest; Rev. Herbert Mathieu, O.F.M. Cap., St. Felix Monastery, and Rev. J. H. Roesler, pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Roanoke, deacons of honor. The Very Rev. Dominic Meyer, O.F.M. Cap., St. Felix Monastery, was master of ceremonies.

Sister Marie was born in Vienna, Austria, June 17, 1897, the daughter of Karl and the late Marie Benes. Surviving are her father, Karl Benes, and two sisters, Mrs. Anna Isaac and Mrs. Caroline Casella, all of Chicago.

Accompanied by the late Sister Julia Doyle, Sister Marie left for Santa Fe, New Mexico, in August 1922, to begin the work of the newly established community in the scattered mission districts of northern New Mexico. An enthusiastic and zealous missionary, Sister Marie spent practically her entire religious life in the apostolate of suffering, and her contribution to the establishment and growth of the young community was that of prayer and suffering—the two indispensable elements in the work for souls.

Sister Marie was in the twenty-sixth year of her religious profession. Her life of patient suffering and total abandonment to the Divine Will remains an edifying example to her Sisters in Religion. May she rest in peace!