

MARIAN RESIDENCE

1104 Toluca Avenue
ALLIANCE, NEBRASKA 69301
December 23, 1987

Dear Sisters, Relatives, and Friends of Sister Serafica:

Each of us will some day be captured by death; when we will experience that final breath, none of us knows. I'm certain that when Sister Serafica Behm celebrated the 60th anniversary of religious profession at Holy Rosary Church here in Alliance on June 6, she had no thought that in less than seven months we would celebrate her Funeral Mass there.

Sister Serafica so enjoyed the jubilee with her Sister Jubilarians, many of her family members, her friends and the Sisters. In mid-July, Sister became very ill and spent the remainder of her life in hospitals and nursing homes. The last two and a half months she was in the Nursing Care Unit here at Marian Residence. She had cancer of the kidney which caused her much pain and suffering. In his homily, Father Tom Reimers said that Sister's pain and suffering drew her into a closer union with God and through them she came to better understand her role of being an instrument of the Lord in spreading the Good News. During these last weeks, when she knew she would soon die, she longed for death and feared death's coming. Death came silently and peacefully for Sister Serafica on December 18, 1987 at 4:55 a.m. as Sisters and nurses prayed at her bedside.

Mary Agnes Behm was born to Marion and Jane Behm on November 20, 1899 in Maryville, Missouri, the second in a family of nine children. The family moved to a farm north of Minot, North Dakota, when Mary was a small child. She attended the Academy at Willow City, North Dakota and after working for some time as a telephone operator, entered the novitiate at Stella Niagara, New York, in 1924. She professed her first vows as a Sister of St. Francis in 1927 and made final vows in 1930. After spending several years in Ohio and New York, Sister was transferred to the midwest and spent time in O'Neill, Nebraska, the Missions in South Dakota and Denver, Colorado before coming to Alliance, Nebraska. Through these years Sister served as portress and sacristan; she taught needle work and CCD.

December 21 our pastor, Father Ed Cortney; associate pastor, Father Tom Reimers; Father Joseph Hargarten, and Father Steven Deaver concelebrated the Mass of the Resurrection at Holy Rosary Church at 11:00 a.m. Her sister, Patricia Schmidt and her niece, Patsy Schmidt, came from Minot. Sisters came from O'Neill, Nebraska; St. Francis, Manderson, Hot Springs, and Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and from Denver, Colorado. Sister Mary Carroll, provincial minister from Denver, was also present. Sister was laid to rest in Calvary Cemetery with 87 other Franciscan Sisters.

Among those who welcomed Sister into paradise along with her parents were her older sister, Elizabeth, her brother Neiman, and her brother John who died last June. Her cousin, Father Gerald Reilly, who was here from Canada to concelebrate her jubilee Mass June 6, was killed in an accident about four weeks ago. Sister visited patients at the hospital in Alliance and many whom she assisted during their last days must have been there to welcome her also.

Now Sister is at peace and experiences eternal life

The Sisters of St. Francis
at Marian Residence