

March 3, 2001

Though his suffering, my servant shall justify many.
(Liturgy of the Hours-Friday after Ash Wednesday)

Dear Sisters,

Yesterday just before noon, our Sister Erika, who for many years followed the path of Jesus, the Suffering Servant of Yahweh, was called by Him to her eternal reward.



Sister M. Erika - Franziska Erwig
Born: October 31, 1905 in Polsum, Germany
Professed: September 2, 1931
Died: March 2, 2001 in Reading, PA

A year before her final profession, Sister Erika bade farewell to her family in Germany. Over thirty years would pass before she saw them again. Among the group was her sister, Sister Theodoretta, MSC, who had preceded her into religious life and who died in Hilstrup in 1990.

Throughout her many years of vowed life, Sister Erika served the congregation and God's people with joy and simplicity. She labored long and hard performing various domestic duties with the elderly, retreatants, students, hospital and nursing home patients. She was missioned to Wellsburg, Malvern, Norristown, Dayton, and Limeport. For 14 years Sister cared for the laundry in Limeport and is remembered by fellow sisters as a kind and generous person who was always ready to help with more direct patient care when needed.

In 1982 Sister Erika came to St. Michael's. She cared for the dining room until her retirement in 1988. She was always a cheerful and gracious presence to all who came and went.

In 1993 Sister became a patient in Holy Family Center where she grew progressively weaker and more withdrawn. A few years ago she enjoyed a visit from her family and responded well to their expressions of love and concern. Until her very last days, each evening one of our elder sisters faithfully prayed with her.

During the last week of her life, many sisters sat beside her bed in silent prayer until her bridegroom called her home.

We are grateful to Sister Erika for the example of a long and fruitful life, lived with love, generosity, and great fidelity to prayer. She who shared deeply in the sufferings of Jesus shares now in His eternal life. The Mass of Christian Burial originally scheduled for Tuesday, March 6 has been postponed due to severe winter weather and will be celebrated for Sister Erika on Thursday, March 8 at 11:00 a.m. Afterwards, she will be laid to rest in our convent cemetery.

United in Jesus' love,

Sister Marie Clark, H.S.C.