



Sister M. Rose Leifels, MM

Born: February 19, 1895

Entered: July 19, 1916

Died: January 22, 1966

Sister Mary Rose died at Phelps Memorial Hospital at 1:45 this morning.

Sister Mary Rose (Anna Rose Leifels), the youngest of ten children, was born on February 19, 1895, at Schenectady, New York.

Sister's early training as a secretary assured her of a warm welcome to the family of Teresians, dedicated to serving and assisting the Maryknoll Fathers in the great new adventure of foreign missions. Anna Rose responded, heart and soul, to a challenge given her by the leader of the group, our Mother Mary Joseph. "If she has a real mission vocation, and does not mind hard work, necessarily harder than usual since this is a beginning, I feel that she may be happy with us". Certainly Sister's life met this challenge, and culminated happily for one who not only loved hard work, but was a missionary from the day she entered Maryknoll until this very day. The pioneering days saw a growth of Sister's love, dedication and deep loyalty to Maryknoll and to the missions.

Sister Mary Rose entered Maryknoll on July 19, 1916, and was among the first group to be professed on February 15, 1921. Sister's joy was complete when, after first profession, she was chosen to be a member of the first departure group with an assignment to China. Her love for the Chinese people was deeply rooted in her heart from the day that she begged admission to Maryknoll and grew stronger with each succeeding contact with the people she loved.

Excepting a small interval spent at St. Paul's Hospital in the Philippines, Sister labored in China from 1921 until 1944, when war conditions interrupted her apostolate, and she returned to the United States. Only in heaven will we know the fruit of these twenty-three years, and, behold the multitude of Chinese who will see her and call her blessed. Sister's regret after her return home, was that she could not spend herself for the Chinese, as she did in her days in China. However, she found compensation; she kept up her study of Chinese characters; wrote countless letters of encouragement and counsel to people away from their homeland who needed her help and guidance. Many contacts made during her years at Chinatown, New York, were followed

up with letters, written after the hours of office work at the Motherhouse. Since last September, Sister has been realizing a hope of resuming direct apostolic visiting one day a week, in the homes of the Chinese people of New York's Chinatown. Perhaps Sister looked upon this as her "Nunc Dimitis", preparing her to be ready when the Master called.

Sister was faithful in her dedication to work until the last day of her life. She was the first of the pioneer mission group to go home to heaven, and it must have delighted her that Chinese New Year was the appointed day.