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ST. FRANCIS CONVENT
SISTERS OF THE THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS OF MARY IMMACULATE
520 PLAINFIELD AVENUE
JOLIET, ILLINOIS

February 22, 1950

Dear Sisters:

As a tribute to our dearly loved Mother Thomasine, and to give each Sister a remembrance of her, a special supplement of The Interlude has been issued. It brings you the details of her death and funeral which all of you are longing to know. It will also give you a print of the latest picture taken of her—on her golden jubilee day. A memorial card is also being prepared. It may be two weeks or more before this reaches you.

Let me express my gratitude for all the messages of sympathy that came to me from the Sisters by letter, by the spoken word, and by thought and prayer. Mother's death is our mutual loss and deep grief. My heartfelt sympathy goes out to each Sister. We all realize the pain of loss each one of us is suffering. Our consolation is that Mother will be with us in spirit always and that she is praying for each of us and for our beloved Community. We can repay her devoted service and self-sacrificing love only by living up fully to the religious ideals she fostered, and by being devotedly loyal to our dear Community and its spirit.

I want to express my thanks, too, for the fine response to the request to have a Mass (a Requiem Mass if possible) said for the repose of Mother's soul. We know that the Sisters met with most generous response from all the good pastors. From all sides we learned of the Masses and prayers said in the parish churches. For all we are most grateful.

On March 7 a High Mass will be said in the chapel of the motherhouse for the repose of Mother's soul. I ask all the Sisters to unite in spirit with that Mass, and to pray fervently for her on that day and every day. We all owe a heavy debt of gratitude to Mother. Only by prayer can we pay this debt. May her soul rest in peace.

At the beginning of this Lent in 1950 let us firmly resolve to spend it most fervently, in a truly penitential spirit in union with our Crucified Jesus as a preparation for our own summons to eternity.

Sincerely in the Sacred Heart,

Mother M. Immaculate, O.S.F.
Superior General

Read, post, copy.
Mother Mary Honoria Maga, formerly Elizabeth Maga of Chicago, Illinois, daughter of Titus Maga and Maryanna Rokudz, died at St. Joseph Hospital, Joliet, Illinois, on Thursday, February 9, 1958, at 9:15 a.m., in the seventy-fourth year of her age and the fifty-fifth of her religious life, having been fortified by the rite of Holy Communion. The chief causes of death were carcinoma of the left breast due to metastasis of carcinoma throughout the body.

The funeral services were held in the chapel of the Motherhouse, St. Francis Convent, Joliet, Illinois, on Monday, February 16, at 8:30 a.m. The officiating priest was Rev. Msgr. Joseph M. O'Keefe, O.M.I., Bishop of Joliet. The funeral service was assisted by the Rev. Alfred Brude, vicar-provincial of Sacred Heart Province, and chaplain of the Joseph Hospital, Joliet; and deacon. The Rev. Philip Kruel, O.F.M., pastor of St. John, Elmhurst, was subdeacon. The Rev. Fr. Edward G. Kline, pastor of the Cathedral of St. Raymond, was assistant priest. The Rev. Msgr. O'Keefe, pastor of the Convent of St. Anthony, Joliet, and the Rev. Francis Blum, O.M.I., pastor of St. Boniface, Joliet, were assistant deacons. The Rev. Fr. Kline, O.M.I., assistant at the Cathedral of St. Raymond, was master of ceremonies.


Burial was made at Mt. St. Joseph Cemetery, Joliet, Illinois.

The Right Rev. Msgr. Edmund Buckley officiated at the graves.

Mother M. Immaculata Barchettz, S.J., R.I.P.
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Learn more
MOTHER M. THOMASINE FAYE
1926 - 1944

Mother Thomasine's zest for life shows through her eyes as she seems to say, "Sisters, you will grow to be a great Congregation!"

With the election of Mother Thomasine, the Congregation entered a new era. Mother Thomasine was the first General Superior who had not been in the community with Mother Alfred, our Foundress. She was also the first Sister elected directly to this highest office without having served as a Council Member.

Many of the difficulties that had begun with World War I continued long after the Armistice of 1918. The Great Depression and another World War were inescapable realities. The Sisters' lives were necessarily affected by these circumstances. Red Cross training, Day Care Center, and Civil Defense Shelters were all part of the Congregation's involvement in the war effort of our nation.

Mother Thomasine is well remembered as the first President of the College of St. Francis. Before there was an official Sister Formation Program, she sought to educate our own Sisters and members of many other religious communities here at our College.

Besides supporting traditional elementary and secondary schools, Mother Thomasine accepted Granville, a special school, and Marybrook, a boarding school for girls referred by the court system. She also accepted two Public Schools in central Illinois.
The 75th Jubilee of our Congregation far surpassed any celebration the Sisters had ever had. The famous photo of almost all the Sisters in front of our Motherhouse during this celebration has never been equalled. This Jubilee year and especially August 2, 3, 4 will long be remembered through all the photos and movies taken in the course of the festivities. Best of all--each Sister was given the special privilege of visiting her family for three days!

Rome had given the permission for Mother Thomasine's election to a third term in 1938, but when the Chapter members suggested the exception for her to have a four-term, she refused. The last six years of her life, Mother Thomasine spent as Director of Teacher Training for the Sisters. During this time, in spite of her physical suffering, she completed the fourth revision of the MANUAL OF PRAYERS, and a new CEREMONIAL.
Sermon of Rev. Alphonse Coan, O.F.M. at the Funeral Services for Mother M. Thomasine, O.S.F.

February 13, 1950

"In all things show thyself an example of good works— in teaching, in piety, and in dignity." My dear friends:

These words were uttered by the great St. Paul, who was laying down a rule of life for his beloved disciple, Titus, who was made Bishop and this was the advice he gave him to guide him in his episcopal work. These words of the great St. Paul find a beautiful application and example in the life of the one whom we are burying this morning. Mother Thomasine could have said in all truth, "In all things I have given an example in good works, in teaching, in piety, and in dignity."

Looking back on the life of Mother Thomasine, it would seem that these words were always in her mind, for she lived them.

Last Thursday, when Mother Thomasine passed away peacefully at the hospital in the presence of the Reverend Mother and some of the Sisters, something went out of St. Francis. Some felt that the heart of St. Francis had gone, had left with Mother Thomasine. So closely was she associated with this institution, so long had she labored here, so prominent a place did she hold in this Community and in the life at St. Francis that we know with her going, St. Francis—this Community of Franciscan Sisters—has lost a prominent member. Mother Thomasine certainly played a prominent role in this Community. You know Shakespeare said that this world is a stage and we are the players. That can be said just as truly
of every religious community. A religious community is a
stage, the members are the players, and every member has a
part to play. Every part is different, but every part is
important. Some are more important; some are less important;
some are very important.

Now Mother Thomasine for the last 25 years has played a
very important part in the life of this Community. She has
seen this Community grow and develop and she herself had a
great part in the growth and development of this Community.

For 18 years Mother Thomasine was the Reverend Mother.
She led and guided this Community. She took the lead and
set the pace for the others. And we know that she did a
grand and a noble work. She was gifted with the marks of a
true religious—she had vision, she had courage, she had
understanding, she had a boundless energy for work, and she
did not spare herself. She had the greatest devotion to a
cause. And these gifts God had given her, she used in this
Community in order to spread the glory of God and to spread
His Kingdom in this world. And that she was successful, we
know.

Mother Thomasine seems to have had a twofold objective
in her life. First, she wanted to implant in the hearts of
her Sisters a deep and solid piety. In order to do that, she
herself gave them the example. The ideals expressed in her
rule—the ideals of St. Francis—were the ideals that she tried
to live; and she did! She lived that rule to the very end,
faithfully to the last. But Mother Thomasine was not satisfied
with that. She wanted every Sister in the Community to live that rule and she stubbornly insisted on the faithful observance of the rule. She realized that the happiness of the individual member, that the welfare of the Community depends on the faithful observance of the rule. So in season and out of season, Mother Thomasine insisted on the faithful and exact observance of the holy rule.

The second objective Mother Thomasine sought was to send the Sisters out to their schools, out to their work, fully and thoroughly equipped for that work. In order to do that, she established St. Francis College. At least, she had a prominent part in the establishment of St. Francis College. She manned that College with the best teachers she could procure. She worked for the best rating she could get for it so that it could stand out among the Catholic colleges for women in the country as one of the best. She did all that she could to make that College something in the eyes of the State, so that there she could train her Sisters that they might be thoroughly equipped to go out and work in our Catholic schools. Mother Thomasine's principle was that no Sister should leave to go out and teach until she was well-prepared and fitted to do her work. No matter what the demand for Sisters was, no matter what the need, her first aim was to equip the teacher. And her ideas, we know, were correct from subsequent events.

Mother Thomasine will go down in the history of this Community because she has done a world of good for education. She has trained teachers, has supplied teachers for Catholic schools, has made St. Francis what it is, not only one of the
finest in the State but in the country. And so Mother Thomasine deserves to be recognized.

When she was in the hospital, the Bishop stopped in to see her and she, in her humility, was expressing her unworthiness of such an honor. The Bishop said to her, "The Church owes it to you." That pleased Mother Thomasine, and she said, "You know, we feel that we are working for the honor and glory of God, and for the Community, and we forget that we are working for the Church." The Bishop said to her, "Mother, you have done a grand and wonderful work for the Church." And she did.

In Holy Scripture we read that those who educate many unto justice will shine as the stars for all eternity. Mother Thomasine taught many unto justice. She, we know, will shine as a star for all eternity.

One of the great and striking characteristics of Mother Thomasine was her love for work, her indefatigable spirit, her boundless energy for work. She could do so much and do it with ease. And this went on year after year, until last year she began to slip. She realized that age and illness were taking their toll. She was slowing up, but even at that she struggled on to the very end, interested in everything that would help the Community and the College. Finally, when she could go no longer, she was taken to the hospital to receive special medical care. After she was there about a week, I stopped in one day and she said, "Mother, sit down. I want to talk to you. You know, I have been getting intravenous injections, different kinds of medicine, and I have been anointed—but, I wonder, what is my condition? Is it serious?
No one around here will tell you, and I would like to know."
I answered, "Yes, Mother, it is serious." "Is it very serious?"
she wanted to know. "Yes, it is very serious."
"Well, I guess that means--"
"Yes, it may be a few weeks, it may be a few months, or
it may be a year, but unless God works a miracle, you have not
a chance in the world to get better."
"Thanks. That is all I want to know. And now, this is
the strange thing; now that I know that the end will be here
soon, I am not worried about death. The thing that worries
me is that I do not worry."

"Mother, thank God you are not worried. That is a special
grace of God. You will have enough to suffer without mental
anguish. You have done a lot of good in your life, but now
in these coming weeks you are going to do your greatest work.
You are going to suffer a lot. Offer up that suffering in the
spirit of resignation. Unite those sufferings with those of
the Blessed Mother and her Son, and you will do the greatest
work of your life."

She nodded, and said, "I'll try." From that moment on
she never showed a desire to get better. She never complained,
knowing that each day she was drawing nearer and nearer to death.
That was the spirit of Mother Thomasine.

So God gave her a good and a holy and happy death and today
as we say the last prayers for her, we have reason to be happy,
eto, because we know that God was good to her. And while Mother
Thomasine's death is a distinct loss to your Community, while
we will miss her, remember that she is still with us. Her memory
and love will always linger with you. Her influence will always continue to influence you. Her devotion to the holy Rule, her love for work, and her love for Catholic education — they will always linger here in St. Francis and in this Community. And so, today, as we say our last Requiem for her this morning, as we often whisper a prayer for her during the coming weeks, and when we say "Let perpetual light shine upon her—may she rest in peace"—let us also add the words: may the spirit of Mother Thomasine remain always with us.

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