

SISTER MARGARET MARY O'ROURKE

Born November 11, 1902
Entered September 4, 1921
Received Habit April 17, 1922
First Profession April 24, 1924
Final Profession April 20, 1927
Died June 18, 1979

1924-1928 St. Michael Elem. School,
Gr. 4, 5, 6
1928-1931 St. Michael Commercial H.S.
1931-1935 St. Michael Elem. School,
Gr. 5, 6, 7
1935-1941 St. Frances of Rome,
Gr. 6, 2, 3, 7
1941-1942 Holy Rosary, Gr. 7
1942-1943 Holy Rosary & O.L.S., Art
1943-1953 St. Mary's, Kingston,
Gr. 3 & Art
1953-1961 St. Lucy's, Houma, Primary
& Kinder., Gr. 4 & 7
1961-1967 St. Mary's, Fishkill,
Superior & Principal
1967-1968 St. Rose of Lima, Gr. 3
1968-1969 Mt. St. Joseph, Infirmary
1969-1971 St. Paul, Kindergarten
" " Hospitalized 11/70
1971-1979 Mt. St. Joseph Infirmary



FAMILY DAY - JUNE 9, 1979

Margaret Mary O'Rourke was a parishioner of Our Lady of Solace Parish long before a school was established there. She was quite young when her mother died and she was raised by her aunt, Mrs. Boyd, our Sister Mary Joan's mother, who treated her as one of her very own children.

She entered Mount St. Joseph with the blessing of the Rev. Daniel J. Curley, then pastor of Our Lady of Solace, who shortly after became the Bishop of Syracuse. Sister was among the first postulants to make her novitiate at the Mount. Upon her Reception she received the name Sister Mary Josepha Honora and at her Profession she had the honor of having Bishop Curley officiate and receive her vows in the name of the Church.

During the early twenties, Sister's father, Richard O'Rourke, was among the Sisters' relatives who made many a trip to the Mount to volunteer their services in helping to build the "octagon" and dormitory buildings.

The first eleven years of her teaching career as a professed Sis-

ter were spent at St. Michael's where, as was seemingly prophetic of the pattern of her life, there was great diversification. Actually, during that time, she taught not only grades four, five, six and seven on the elementary level, but she also taught business subjects from 1928 to 1931 in the newly established Business School for Girls at St. Michael's.

Her next assignment was for six years, at St. Frances of Rome where again she taught a variety of grades, going from sixth, to second, to third, and to seventh. Actually the only grade she did not teach was the eighth! Those who knew her would describe her as a very energetic and creative person. She definitely was gifted in the line of arts and crafts. And so, through the years, in addition to her regular grade work, she also taught art at Holy Rosary, Our Lady of Solace and St. Mary's, Kingston.

Our mission in St. Lucy's, Houma was established only four years when Sister Mary Josepha volunteered her services there. Her chief concentration during the eight years she labored there was on the primary and kindergarten level, although she also taught grades four and seven. Here she proved herself to be a true missionary to the Black People of the South.

Upon her return to the North, she served for six years in the capacity of superior and principal of St. Mary's, Fishkill. (It was during this time that she resumed her baptismal name, as did many others.)

All during the years Sister was plagued with ill health, being hospitalized countless times and having undergone major surgery several times. She had an indomitable spirit--and we used to say she had more than "nine lives"--for each time, upon recovery, she would be back teaching or engaging in some project or another. She was never idle. Even when confined to bed, she would be producing some novelty or another, or giving someone a lesson in crocheting, pillow-making or some kind of arts and crafts.

In March of 1971 it was necessary for Sr. Margaret Mary to come to the Mount Infirmary where, although she was not confined to bed, her condition was such that it had to be carefully monitored. During her last eight years spent at the Mount she was hospitalized many times as a result of sudden and severe attacks due to varicose veins of the esophagus.

On June 9, 1979, Family Day at the Mount, Sister enjoyed the out-

door picknicking and entertaining. Many pictures were taken that day, and soon after, Sister was proudly displaying her collection of family snapshots. It seemed almost as though her family had a premonition of her death, for within that very week she had entertained relatives, some of whom she had not seen in some time and who had come from great distances. Nine days later, she was dead!

Although she had been in a precarious condition for some time, her death came as a shock. The evening before, she played her usual game of cards with the Sisters in the community room and gave no indication of imminent danger. However, when Sr. Marcella Anne went into her room to call her for Mass, there was no response. She lay there in peaceful repose, having just died in her sleep around 6:30 A.M.

An evening Mass of Resurrection was concelebrated by Frs. James Hayes and Ray Bomberger, our Josephite chaplains, Msgr. Bernard Fleming and Fr. Charles Quinn of St. Mary's, Fishkill. Interment took place the following morning after the Community Mass.

