



## **Hospital Sisters of St. Francis**

4849 La Verna Road • Springfield, IL 62707 217-522-3387 • hospitalsisters.org

From: Brian C. Blasco

Director of Communications and Archivist - Assistant Coordinator of Community Life

Date: April 10, 2025

RE: Sister Crispina Topp, OSF

Birth May 24, 1850, in Warendorf, Germany and named Catharina

Parents Bernard and Johanna (Menge) Topp

Entered HSOSF October 2, 1869 Profession of First Vows March 9, 1872

Missionary to the USA October 1875 at age 25

### <u>Assignments</u>

Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	November 11, 1875
Effingham, IL	St. Anthony's Hospital	1876
Decatur, IL	St. Mary's Hospital	1878
Belleville, IL	St. Elizabeth's Hospital	1882
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1883
Streator, IL	St. Mary's Hospital	1887 Superior/Administrator
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1888
Highland, IL	St. Joseph's Hospital	1895
Sheboygan, WI	St. Nicholas Hospital	1896
Eau Claire, WI	Sacred Heart Hospital	1901

### **Entered Eternal Life**

January 26, 1926, and buried in Crucifixion Hill Cemetery (Springfield, IL)

Praised be Jesus Christ

#### Dear Reverend Mother !

Finally, dear Reverend Mother, I too will let you hear from me, and hope that this first letter from America certainly will be answered. First, dear Reverend Mother, how are you since we left you? Have you also been quite sick after the journey? Have you again recuperated somewhat now? Often have we spoken about you on the ship and mentioned that if you, dear Reverend Mother, had to make a sea voyage, you would not be able to tolerate it, or the dear Lord would have to especially strengthen you.

We would have loved to have had you, dear Mother, with us on the ship, but when we felt so sick and were so terribly pushed and shaken, we were glad that you were not with us. You, dear Mother, would not have made it to New York. We had so much stormy weather on the water, that if a storm was announced, we went to bed until the weather improved and one could stand upright again. We always said, the black Casper blows so much storm together, if he does the same in America, we will have to struggle with a lot. With great difficulties we finally arrived at our destination. But, dear Mother, we have never been received in any Daughterhouse as here in America. From the time we said foot in America, a guardian angel steadily accompanied us. When we arrived in New York the Sisters and Pastor Sauer were there to receive us. That day the Sisters welcomed used friendly, they could not have done more. They gave us five bottles of wine, a large traveling bag, and a few small bags with sandwiches and cake to take along. They had already expected us a few days earlier. For four days, four times each, they went to the harbor not to miss us and cause us distress. They were sorry that we could not stay a night, but we could not since the train does not run on Sunday and thus we arrived Saturday night in Alton.

Yes, dear Mother, they had already prepared twenty beds for us. Should more Sisters follow us from Germany. They asked us, dear Mother, to again see them, because they were delighted to see the Sisters from Germany. But then, dear Mother, they would have to know earlier. They did not know about us except for my letter, and I wrote quite illegibly.

Dear Mother, my aunt picked us up from the harbor and in the evening brought us to the train. The whole day I was able to talk to her. Truly I was very happy there.

Dear Mother, when we arrived in Alton the Most Reverend Bishop had us picked up from the train station and he and many other Pastors received us in front of the Cathedral. After that we were led into the church, which was illuminated brightly, since it was evening, close to 8:00 P.M. Then the Bishop made a little speech and almost all of us cried. We were so moved when he said he would make every effort and pray for Sister Josepha, that the dear Lord might make her listen to reason. I reminded then ? Schwester Josepha, who had her own laundry, and then I want to say that I don't want to be blamed, when a Sister should go the wrong way.

Dear Reverend Mother, don't be cross with me that I write about this from America. I felt not at peace unless I had written to you about it. Many things have happened and I will pray dilligently. Dear Reverend Mother, these past days we talked about that some Sisters in the Daughterhouses use the laundry for themselves. I think a Sister who always selected the laundry which she used before and again chooses it for herself, thus has her own laundry. This is very wrong and through that many Sisters went astray and risked their salvation.

The Most Reverend Bishop wants to assist us when we now enter our second home, that our task will not be to heavy. The sacrifices which we brought should with the sacrifices which we would

bring in America, unite and renew our vows and if we had to face temptation, we would be strong.

Oh, dear Mother, it was as if the Most Reverend Bishop felt what it meant to leave the dear Mother Superior and Sisters and everything else, to make a far, hard, troublesome journey and not to know how one would be received. After that a solemn Tedeum was sung and the episcopal blessing was given. For several days we stayed together in Alton and then were sent to the different houses. But, dear Mother, you cannot imagine how kind the people are here, quite the contrary to Germany. They are only thinking about our happiness. This noon, dear Mother, were several women here who asked us what we would like. They wanted to do everything if we could only say that more Sisters were coming. These few, they thought, were not enough. We would have enough work after we were established and food and beverage and everything else we should have enough for the sick. When we left Alton, they pleaded with us to leave all 20 Sisters in Alton. They wanted to make sure that we would like it there. You cannot believe it, dear Mother, the well-meaning friendliness the people here show us. With a whole cart full they arrived here in Alton.

Here in Springfield we live for two weeks already with the Ursuline Sisters and probably have to stay another two weeks until the people who live in the house which we will occupy move out. In the meantime we study English, which is quite difficult for us. Who would have done that in Germany? To have four healthy Sisters around and to struggle all day to make it pleasant for us, that the Reverend Mother and the Sisters make every effort, because if this would have happened to them and they were asked to leave the country. Oh, dear Mother, what a kind Mother she is. You cannot fathom how she cares for us. She provides for everything and tells the people

or writes letters to them. We receive beds out of which we can make pillows. A cart-load straw for mattresses. A piece of material she asked for so that we can make sheets and more. For a week we have used her sewing machine. Every hour she sends a Sister to give us English lessons. Should all the Sisters be in school, she sends some children and sometimes we go along to school.

Dear Mother, when we have washed our things, she takes care of us as if we were her children and more. Where they can give joy to us, they do it and yet they know that we posess nothing to reciprocate, so one can see that they are doing it out of pure love and compassion. If the dear Lord continues to help as he did until now.

Dear Mother, the paper has been used up too early, I would have had so much to write about yet. If I only could sit a few hours with you just like the last evening in the much loved Mother-house — but that is past. Soon, by God's grace, we shall have a Motherhouse here, but still we shall miss you, dear Rev. Mother, and our Most Reverend Father. Here we have now a Director but, dear Mother, what shall we do with two Directors? — The paper was used up too early and so I attach a note.

Dear Reverend Mother, we are not writing again before Christmas and so I would like to wish you a very happy Christmas and may you, dear Reverend Mother, celebrate it in the best of health and not under great pressure as before, but may the Christ child be merciful and finally hear our prayers which day by day are sent to it. Oh, if you would celebrate the triumph of the church at Christmas.

Also, dear Mother, a happy New Year and God's rich blessings upon all your undertakings, for this I will pray every day to heaven. And thousand good wishes to the dear Sisters and to all

Springfield, November 21, 1875 page five

of Germany.

I almost forgot, dear Mother, to inform you, that Father Lewer is our Director for America. He was born in Warendorf and I know very well his parents and his family. He is approximately eight years in America and three years ago he went to Germany. Earlier he was Chaplain in Luedinghausen.

Dear Mother, I have to close now but soon will write again. Please, let us hear soon from you or we might become homesick.

Deep in my heart with Jesu and Maria, I remain

respectfully,
your obedient, spiritual daughter
Schwester Crispina

Health Sister of the Holy Franciscans

-		

# Linda Minligs Odlithan!

Forf mulling limber Officerings Oblithan will wring not now America buttom weing fufur lawfore tat. In noft linea Whitten reard yaft it offeren faithfund aim 18 me Ifman y offind and I Tim Tim Tim must now Time sough throat yourstand I for bow This fif judge wing profund in an Iron , where it is afill to Ciff forten I regive wing some Defelfed some of freed of afty arefair of it who my secure it linked White the nine I dan for fort miniful million for square and and right wire of father there and or has a law to on Goth many The wind separation Minister The party was firstand gardened Smales Most low my ag ag sommed The wing want of offer bas week your reference. want when main mains wint to through full fam I is before Tif y of heefe out is my of freithed to agree her feeland, up in and of afraich at 13 the wift bor need moround this ward were limbe Mither wift look . leven yeter yetern more! Other forbread for some O Blimm grafited wing the . defuffer and up in grile & I be nouse garant at in some mand of first thinks to ying and raise winting you what his at half for my in it mentioned I and white and to face themstar ithis falour increase of afory & the popular for in Tomerica wind for want & some forting main away will zin himy famt mais find instancy vopon the fof my swe and and lif given Growled of a threw and

Other leaded . Office How for mine in themerical for find now must in Aminam thing tou fried weefing and morning and sailout for mois man wine about Lordon word Americked befortand fortune using flats firstbarred thefarty angel juit thanks you felt Man upon in Alexa york autorian inguna In The In with rety afoland in this Ty. Louren. This Orfers, follow. und item Chang for formed big mitganounced that fill. from Min mit y agatan is mine youp & Maifa hopf on the it. norf ain your M. mit Littante. is thing in they've forther this much similar they at infant is enough which it in my mount mine Truy a jarland Thing mines much grand Grafen of ery not and a grand of grand of from it in in Markage and fail grand being are of I feel I from tail in again wints man Harft bein I from blicker above on a Sometime wife down dat Bountary of fufet free mill The Longar in humal Barrian , my in mary and Transfiting Office ind Men: you limber Mittow This father popul jugaring when from yoursel's fire int. Mund and not majo Ofen may foly him son directfafland links Whites in m Jaban Fin yabertans, enough how were a very regarded in It. The of most an regal from Din fortand him wind required mings grangiful sell men minima divid is in fully wif for in. . Naribling gafy winder. Links Militar arrained Funts feet ind never Gufon sty efelt in it al Obound of in trafwy . bough wine your on try feet if mis mis offer intropelle Donner if fulw wing my which word verift y of wait. Links Mithe win win in Alter inhum fort in! was frefrancing a display for wow Long a for a befoland long to is. formed wif window He infriend with new Das Butu. Lorder in Gray formy, structif sy and and me is in I'm the. In prefright it is fall belowing but me at in an elice and the Others I for gray on wift Ufu. Olarf sun der forfrantischinger the for new the more up afulture water were fugl 13 lle y arm and foreau at as wound y is Mil men were for the star of more the allest in ing hips thing bruton over fin Afra. Tersepha betan int is leabelfold The may g. 1. D. D. M. M.