



Hospital Sisters of St. Francis

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From: Brian C. Blasco

Director of Communications and Archivist - Assistant Coordinator of Community Life

Date: April 10, 2025

RE: Sister Euphemia Gaertner, OSF

Birth	November 24, 1845 in Herzfeld, Germany, and named Anna
Parents	Phillipp and Marie Anna (Lehmann) Gaertner
Entered HSOSF	February 3, 1868
Profession of First Vows	February 12, 1870
Missionary to the USA	October 1875 at age 29

Assignments

Effingham, IL	St. Anthony's Hospital	November 15, 1875	Superior/Administrator
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1879	
Belleville, IL	St. Agnes Orphanage	1883	

Entered Eternal Life

January 2, 1885, and buried in Calvary Cemetery (Springfield, IL)

Effingham, November 1875

P.B.J.Chr.

Dear Reverend Mother!

How are you? Did you get back safely then? What are you doing in Germany, how I would like to be there. Soon we expect a letter. In two weeks we might get one. Ours from Alton will probably arrive there these days; we follow them in our thoughts. So and so far are they now. When they are going to bed, we drink coffee in the afternoon. Oh, if you could be with us some time, yes, I am convinced, you would have done it, oh, then we would be overjoyed. Now we had to travel alone to our little town; there was no other way, then to Bremerhafen. It was our dear Lord's Will. He certainly took good care of us. What problems the Most Reverend Bishop has you cannot imagine. The Vicar General had to accompany us a distance to where we had to transfer because we did not know English. We are the farthest from Alton and the closest to Mausitz. We are looking forward to new Sisters, they first have to stay with us.

We returned the same way and then off about 1½ hrs. from Teutopolis where the Franciscan Fathers are. Four Fathers are here and keep a Mission.

Last night, by accident, one got us out of church. They were astonished. The first Father is our extraordinary Confessor. (But only the little Mother Superior), I had not thought that. Dear Reverend Mother, thank God we are all well. We are quite content. We have here a half-rented house, although upstairs it is not quite ready. The Priest tried to rent a whole house for us alone. He could not get it that fast, because he knew it only two days ago. Well, it is quite alright. The beds we made as in the Motherhouse. A wealthy lady wants to give us a nice place as a hospital, and if she has no heirs, everything else. That is quite a possibility.

We have a fine piece of material, it could be used for fine linens,

Effingham, November 1875

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and also other things. Two pots with meat which we cured.

Hl. Antonius is here the church protector. He has to get everything, if we need something we tell him and we immediately receive it. and hl. Joseph obtains patients for us. We had already five, they both do a good job.

But dear Reverend Mother the most important I almost forgot, you have kept a secret (?). We have a Director. Oh, how strange it was when we heard this. But this has to come from Meurietz

? Meurietz, I think that is the Director's assistant.

But, dear Reverend Mother we are content with everything. We can truly say we left everything. What you wish is good. The dear Lord blessed us here especially, that I have to admit. We study English. We go to the Sisters who enjoy teaching us. This way we learn it thoroughly. Reading we know with translating, but the speaking is not that easy. Sister Franziska already went to an English woman, she accomplished that. Sister Fortunata to another, she is new. She has done her best. All of us don't want to get discouraged. The dear Lord will help us if we do our part, I am not worried. Humiliation we will have to suffer and that is good for us. We have a very devout and passionate Priest. Last year he gave his house to the school-sisters. That means a lot here, because the clerical can influence many. We take an example from them. You have entrusted us to good hands, how nice. Should we desire dispensation, the Most Reverend Bishop likes to be informed. So we have to become holy, and that we desire.

Shortcomings I don't want to write about at this time. I have been rather obedient. I cannot write about everything that happens here. Everywhere it says to be true to the Rules. The Priest here wants us to take in some poor children who live hours away from the school. Do not pay the cost, otherwise cannot attend the school. The Most Reverend Bishop has for the time

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being permitted it. We already received two letters from Sister Angelika.

Dear Reverend Mother I cannot write everything. You still will hear stories from all Sisters. In the holy heart of Jesus we are quite close. Please pray for us that we may go to Heaven, that alone is our desire. The Father today had in his homily (Lord your Will be done, even if I don't understand, your Will be done even if it hurts so much).

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.

Commending to hl. Jesus and Mary

I remain Sister Euphem^{ie}~~e~~

Hospital Sister of St. Francis

We are good lotenten and happi *

* Written by Sister Euphem^{ie}~~e~~

der weitesten weitheten, die Pfaffen die
Kreuzt, wir finnen uns sehr gerne. Und
die wirsen nicht nicht sein wir sein
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12. Wir sind nicht topolis und die Pfaffen
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gassen Sollen fassen wir fassen wir
die Pfaffen, die Pfaffen die Pfaffen wir
der Pfaffen ist nicht nicht nicht nicht
(Was wir die Pfaffen Sollen) die Pfaffen
gassen, die Pfaffen Pfaffen die Pfaffen
Sollt nicht gut die Pfaffen nicht nicht
gassen nicht, wir fassen fassen fassen
Pfaffen, die Pfaffen nicht nicht nicht
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wir fassen fassen, wir die Pfaffen
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Sollen fassen wir nicht nicht nicht
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Sollen nicht nicht nicht nicht nicht
die Pfaffen, die Pfaffen Pfaffen nicht
wir fassen wir nicht nicht nicht
nicht nicht Pfaffen nicht nicht nicht
Pfaffen die Pfaffen nicht nicht nicht
Pfaffen die Pfaffen nicht nicht nicht

[illegible]

[illegible]

We are good intentions and happy

SR. EUPHEMIA

*"I have fought the fight,
"I have finished my course,
"I have kept the faith,*

"As to the rest, there is laid up for me a crown of justice." (St. Paul)

Anna Gaertner, a native of Herzfeld where she beheld the light of day Nov. 24, 1845, was singled out by Divine Providence to help found the American Branch of the Franciscan Hospital Sisters in 1875. When twenty-three years old February 3, 1868 she begged to be aggregated to the Sisterhood. Her wishes met with no opposition, a year later Anna Gaertner becomes young Sister Euphemia, pledges fidelity as Religious February 12, 1870 and reiterates these vows in 1872 and '74. Her impetuous appeal in '75 to join the band of Emigrants could not be withstood by indulgent Mother Bernardine, hence she became one of them. She proved to be a valuable asset to the nascent American Branch, always found at the post of duty and ready to do more than was expected of her or her strength would reasonably allow. Ten years she had labored incessantly for God and the Order when on January 2, 1885 God's Messenger ushered the dear Sister into His presence. Sister Euphemia's memory will live forever in the annals of the Order and many a fervent prayer is sent in her behalf to the Throne of Mercy. She was active as Superioress at Effingham, sacristan at St. John's and died at the Orphanage of Belleville. She is buried at Springfield. Tuberculosis was the immediate cause of her death. R. I. P.

