



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 Fortunata Honkamp, OSF

Birth	July 19, 1843, in Steinfeld, Germany, and named Carolina
Parents	Clemens and Catharina (Bergmann) Honkamp
Entered HSOSF	February 5, 1870
Profession of First Vows	August 31, 1872
Missionary to the USA	October 1875 at age 32

Assignments

Effingham, IL	St. Anthony's Hospital	November 15, 1875	
Decatur, IL	St. Mary's Hospital	1878	
Litchfield, IL	St. Francis Hospital	1880	Superior/Administrator
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1883	
Effingham, IL	St. Anthony's Hospital	1885	Superior/Administrator
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1891	
Effingham, IL	St. Anthony's Hospital	1892	
Lincoln, IL	St. Clara's Hospital	1896	
Litchfield, IL	St. Francis Hospital	1899	Superior/Administrator
Streator, IL	St. Mary's Hospital	1901	
Highland, IL	St. Joseph's Hospital	1907	
Springfield, IL	St. John's Hospital	1909	

Entered Eternal Life

March 7, 1922, and buried in Crucifixion Hill Cemetery (Springfield, IL)

Effingham 1875

P.B.J.Chr.

Dear Reverend Mother!

With pleasure and joy I feel moved by my heart to pick up the pen and for a little while hold in writing a conversation with the Reverend Mother.

How are you, dear Reverend Mother? Have you recuperated from the big journey? I hope the dear Lord has protected our good Mother, so that her health did not suffer. The dear Lord certainly knows that we cannot do without her. Though we now are so distant from each other, I am happy that in my thoughts I can dwell in the Motherhouse with the dear Mother Superior. The sacrifice we now had to make to our dear Lord when we left our worldly parents, yet we made it willingly and joyfully. It was God's Will, that alone suffices.

About the voyage to America and our friendly reception by the Most Reverend Bishop and the other Priests our dear Sisters have already written.

Yes, dear Mother, we were moved to tears. This outpouring of love and honor for such a poor creature as me who often disloyally forgot the dear Lord. But it shall improve now, regardless of the cost.

Yes, dear Mother, the Priests are here so devout and pious, one can only be edified by this devotion. We also, dear Mother, have such a religious Priest. He is in my opinion quite strict and pays attention to the smallest detail, which, dear Mother, serves me well, don't you think so, dear Mother?

We in Effingham have the pleasure of having the smallest Mother. Sister Euphemia, as perhaps Reverend Mother had already decided in Muenster. But Franziska and I are quite cordial and want to be quite holy and good. The harm we did in Germany we don't want to repeat in America. The words of our Reverend Father: Remain Faithful, echo in my ears.

Yet, dear Reverend Mother, as much as I want to, I have to admit, that I lack concentration and devotion during prayers. Often my

thoughts are elsewhere. While I am thinking I want to walk in God's presence , and before I look around it is gone again. Also the Prayer of the Hour leaves much to be desired. Yet, dear Reverend Mother, patience I myself have to practice. One question, dear Reverend Mother, I have to ask: when we were still in Alton, Sister Angelika told us, that Most Reverend Bishop announced that Father Leve would be our Director. Is that true, dear Reverend Mother? We certainly will not be excluded from you. We, as always, hope to receive strength and help from our Director at Meuritz, is that so? As we always did before, we ask dear God in Heaven . . .

Now, dear Mother, I have to tell you what we are doing. Already on Monday morning, after we arrived on Saturday, I started private nursing.

A German gentleman from Westruh. He can talk about Germany all day. Slowly he is getting worse, and soon I will pray for him to enter Heaven. With English I have a hard time because I understand so little. We study it every day, but before we become fluent, it will take some effort. I don't remember the time when I prayed for the holy ghost as I now do in America.

The paper is used up, dear Mother, but not my plea to Sister Theodora and the Sisters. Soon I certainly may be permitted to write again.

With affectionate Christmas Wishes I remain in Holy Jesus' and Mary's Heart

your loving and spiritual daughter

Sister Fortunata

P.B.J.Chr.

P.S.

Dear Mother, with my whole heart I wish you a very blessed, merry Christmas and a happy New Year, also for the Motherhouse.

Mit Freundschaft und Hingabe, als ich Sie heute in
Köln, in der Säule meines Jugendhauses
zu sehen und mich mit Ihnen persönlich
unterhalten zu können, ist mir ein großes Vergnügen.

[illegible]

Das wird mir jetzt von einem andern Systematiker
gar nicht gleichfalls sein. Ich meine, ich will einen
Abdruck von einem andern Systematiker sein. Ich will einen

