

Sister Patricia was born in Sherbrooke, QC on March 17 1931. Her father, Aldégar St-Cyr, was a factory supervisor in Sherbrooke. Her mother, Blanche Giguère, was the blessed mother of thirteen children. Three died little and ten survived. They were three girls and seven boys. She grew up in a family filled with love and sharing. Her seven brothers enjoyed teasing her as the two eldest sisters were already married.

It is in this garden of love, respect, and steadfast faith, that the thought of a religious vocation took root. She wrote, “I felt my parents rooted in a deep faith beyond the mere religious practice as they faced the struggles of the Great Depression in the 30s”.

Around 14, Patricia went to a retreat and expressed to the retreat master that she was thinking of religious life. He gave her his niece’s (Mother Liébert) address. She discovered the FMM through a steadfast correspondence. Mother Liébert had given her a prayer card of Maria Assunta. “I recited it every night. The message was simple. Do even the smallest things out of love for God. I remember clearly that at one point I knew I would be a religious like her”.

At 17, she told her parents that she wished to enter the Institute. They thought she was far too young for such a departure, but her father told her that he would not hinder her vocation, as it was sacred to him! She

left her family and entered our Quebec novitiate in September 1948. She was a determined young woman courageously living a deep spiritual life ideal.

After her religious formation, Sister Patricia taught ten years in our primary school of Notre-Dame de la Providence in St-Malo, Quebec. In 1964, after her Bachelor’s in Education at the University of Ottawa, she became principal at our high school in Rigaud. Six years later, she finally fulfilled her dream of an overseas mission with her posting in Kinshasa, Zaïre (DRC).

Inculturation in this new country was quite a shock. She stated, “One must start on the bottom rung while taking the time to learn and appreciate a people’s values. I learnt that it is not always a question of results, but a question of gratuity in the hours spent together”. In DRC, she was a high school prefect of Kiezila for 3500 students. “In leaving Canada, I thought that the best years of my life were given. I realized my mistake. The best is given throughout one’s life as you age, evolve, and grow”.

Then, she received the call from her sisters to serve in the Institute’s animation and administration. She completed elected mandates as provincial of French Guyana-Guadeloupe-Surinam in Latin America, general councilor in Rome, and provincial of Canada. Woman of service, she spared no effort in fully immersing herself in her

ministry. Leader concerned for others, she knew how to nurture trust. Rigorous and efficient, she followed through on tough issues in a responsible manner. Woman of communion, she led while searching with her sisters for new paths to better answer the rising needs.

After her mandates in 2000, she became the coordinator of the SIAF (Service Intercommunautaire d’Animation Franciscaine). These seven intense years of relationships created bonds throughout the three orders of the Francophone Franciscan family of Canada. Her openness to discern the present and welcome the future permitted her to breathe new life into the SIAF and to answer today’s needs.

As the Church encouraged religious institutes to share their charism with the laity, Sister Patricia, as a true daughter of Mary of the Passion, invested time and energy to create the first associate group in the Institute. She wrote their statutes. In 2012, the Canadian province had 137 associates. This model of collaboration with the laity inspired many provinces in the Institute.

The years flowed by. A last mission kept Patricia in one of our Montreal communities. Its mission was the welcome of our FMM students from other countries. This international community permitted her to live once again that *the world was her homeland* as Mary of the Passion

expressed it so well. Gifted with empathy and the art of listening, Sister Patricia was to each one a precious help in their adaptation.

Then in 2017, she arrived in our infirmary. In the silence of a retreat, she reread her long journey. Franciscan in all of her being, Francis and Clare's spirit captivated her. Vibrant and without ceasing in her research, she wrote spiritual leaflets for the associates. Sensible and affectionate, she remembered the happy times of her childhood. She was close to her nieces and nephews. She was so proud of them. Loyal in her friendships, her presence and encouragement abounded. In the setting years of her life, she summed up her state of mind. "I have always been happy in the Institute. God granted me great joys throughout my life! I had a bountiful life where I was able to blossom in my entire mission. I give thanks to God".

In the evening of September 4 2020, she fell and fractured her hip. She was rushed to the emergency department of Notre-Dame hospital. Despite all the efforts of the doctors, her health declined rapidly. There was no more hope, possible treatment or recovery. Surrounded by her sisters and her niece Nicole, she peacefully slipped away to the Lord. Go Patricia in peace. We will treasure in our hearts your final message. "If I do not return from the hospital, tell the sisters that I love them".



*The Holy Spirit Creates  
Heaven In You.*

Elizabeth of the Trinity, letter 239

Holy card found in her Bible.



*Sister Patricia St-Cyr  
(Marie Rachel de l'Eucharistie)*

*Franciscan Missionary of Mary*

*Born in Sherbrooke, QC  
March 19 1931*

*Entered the Institute in Quebec City, QC  
September 15 1948*

*Died in Montréal, QC  
September 8 2020*

*in her 90<sup>th</sup> year,  
the 72<sup>nd</sup> of her religious life*

*May she rest in the peace of Christ!*