

Sister Blanche Levasseur was born November 27 1919 in Ste-Angèle de Laval, Nicolet county. Her father, Zéphir Levasseur, and her mother, Amanda Lanneville, had 18 children. Eight children died, leaving six girls and four boys. Blanche was the youngest. Her father owned a corner store. He settled in Three Rivers in N.D. des Sept Allégres parish, administered by the Franciscans. It is in this church that Blanche celebrated her First Communion and was confirmed. Wrapped in the Franciscan spirit, she spent hours silently praying. She helped the priests with vestment and sacristy maintenance.

At 18, she felt the call to religious life. After seeking guidance from the Franciscans, she chose to enter in the Institute of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. She had gotten to know them during their visit in the parish as they went door to door selling their handicrafts for the missions. She asked to enter and they granted her admission. However, her father refused to grant his permission. She was too young and needed time to mature. On December 10 1938, a year later, her father drove her to the novitiate in Quebec City. One of her older sisters was already a Little Franciscan of Mary from Baie Saint-Paul.

Shortly after she entered, her mother passed away. She missed her terribly, especially when the family came to visit her. It was a

very painful time. Mother Bernice de Jésus, novice mistress, knew how to accompany her with comprehension. Blanche continued her religious formation and celebrated her perpetual profession on December 15 1944.

Her mission field was in the big convents of the Canadian Province: Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Saint-Malo, Rigaud, Quebec City, and Montreal. With all her heart, she served in the kitchen, the printing workshop, the infirmary, the reception, and supplies. She was also in charge of the guesthouse and sisters' cafeterias. Lastly, she helped at *Jésus, Marie & Notre Temps* store. She was a choir member and on the liturgical team of a parish in Quebec City. With her lovely singing voice, she loved to thank God through song and animating Sunday liturgies.

Sister Blanche was close to her family. As the youngest, they showered her with love and attention. She found their passing all that more difficult. She was also close to some nephews who visited her and where she spent her vacations. She proudly showed us photos and remembered all the good times.

Sister Blanche was attentive and ready to serve others. She was a woman of prayer before all else. She needed to renew herself daily through the Word of God, spiritual readings, Adoration, and community prayers. She had a spiritual director and

stated, *This greatly helps me to stay focused in God's presence.* This prayer centered on God helped her to be more compassionate towards her fellow sisters. She asked the Lord, *How much must I love you? I need to love without measure! How much must I love others and my sisters? I must love them like Jesus unto death.* She concluded, *The more I am charitable, the more I will be a saint. I shall be holy if I am docile to the Holy Spirit's voice in silence and solitude.*

Over the years, Sister Blanche started having more and more problems with her health. In 2009 at 90, she was admitted to the infirmary for her medical needs and a greater quality of life. In her room with two big windows, she was happy. She listened to hymns that strengthen her faith and brought her much comfort. Thanks to the close circuit television, she never missed the community prayers in the chapel. She spent time with her God in Adoration.

Slowly over time, she withdrew in silence due to her physical limits and her advancing age. Completely dependent on others for all her needs, she rarely spoke and often had her eyes closed. She mostly slept in her bed or in her wheel chair. When we treated her, she always smiled her thanks.

What was going on in her soul throughout all these years of living such intense physical weakness? Sister Blanche was strengthened by God to whom she had given

her life. She was truly living what she had promised to Jesus on the day of her perpetual profession. *I give myself unreservedly to the Father... I ask the grace to be faithful until death. (CS 88)*

In 2019, she celebrated her hundredth birthday surrounded by her sisters' love and aware of this anticipated special day. In June 2021, she moved to the infirmary, now at Carrefour Providence in Cartierville, Montreal. The eve of her death, the nursing staff had transferred her to her wheel chair. That morning, she had recited the rosary with her sisters. The following morning before the dawn, the Lord came to take her home. Sister Blanche, thank you for your presence among us. Rest in peace.



*I take my crucifix,  
I look at my Jesus on the cross,  
Love given unto death for me.  
I embrace him and I ask him to help me.  
We learn so much when gazing on the crucifix.*  
Blanche Levasseur



***Sister Blanche Levasseur  
(Marie de Saint Carinien)***

***Franciscan Missionary of Mary***

***Born in Sainte-Angèle de Laval, QC  
on November 27 1919.***

***Entered the Institute in Quebec City, QC  
on December 10 1938.***

***Died in Montreal, QC  
on August 22 2021***

***in her 102<sup>nd</sup> year,  
the 83<sup>rd</sup> of her religious life.***

***May she rest in the peace of Christ!***