

Mother Anselme Marie Parisotto, S.C.S.M. (1909–1992)

Born on May 31, 1909, Mother Anselme takes her vows with the Sœurs de Charité de Sainte-Marie in 1928. She teaches for six years in schools run by the sisters in Torino. During the war in Ethiopia, she accepts to go help in the hospital of Gimma (Ethiopia). In 1941, during the British occupation, she is imprisoned in the concentration camps of Dire-Daua and Harrar, where she looks after the sick children. Three years later she is released and returns to Italy.



In September 1949, upon the request of the Marist Brothers in Montreal, she leaves for Canada together with other nine sisters. They work for the Marist Brothers, in their school's kitchen and doing other humble chores. With time, the sisters buy several small houses - one after the other - on the Montreal North's riverside and in 1954 open a kindergarten. Because the parents ask them to continue, they inaugurate also the primary school and, in 1958, the secondary level of Marie Clarac's School. In 1957 she creates the Camp Mère M. L. Clarac, a summer camp for youth in the Laurentides.

With the development of their educational work, the small houses are no longer sufficient. Aware of the social needs of her time and especially of the lack, in Montreal, of hospitals for the convalescent persons, Mother Anselme makes an ambitious plan, that of a school and a hospital at once. This is how the Marie-Clarac Complex came about, in 1964. In 1968 she creates the "Residence Angelica", an assisted living residence, and four years later the "Residence Les Cascades", designed for independent seniors. In the '80s she opens the "Etoile du Nord", a holiday residence for elderly people, next to the Camp Marie-Clarac, in St-Donat.

In 1984, the Mother House of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Mary in Torino provides for the canonical erection of the Province of Canada, which includes the communities of Canada and Mexico. Sister Anselme is appointed Provincial Superior.

The life of Mother Anselme is steeped in the Gospel and filled with outstanding courage, generosity and heroism, according to the spirit of Saint Vincent-de-Paul and of the foundress of her community, Mother Marie-Louise Clarac. She dies in December 1992, at the age of 83.

LINK: <http://marie-clarac.gc.ca/en/>

QUOTATION: "The characteristic of true love is that it is perpetual"