



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE



SISTER SOLANGE GAUTHIER

Noël-Henri

Entered eternal life on November 27, 2022
at the age of 93
and 71 years of religious life

+ 2662

(2130)

*‘I was glad when they said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the Lord.”
And now here we are.’ Ps 121:1-2*

Sister Solange left us on the first Sunday of Advent when, in our gatherings in Church, we sang this magnificent psalm.

Yes, her walk has ended after having accomplished the mission of a rich journey. She can now sing with full voice her joy of entering the House of the Lord.

Born in a small village of Témiscamingue, in Nédélec, on November 30, 1928, Sister Solange is the eighth of a family of sixteen children, a rather exceptional family that left its mark in Abitibi-Témiscamingue under several aspects whether ecclesial or social.

Sister Solange did her primary and secondary studies with the Sisters of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin but her Normal School with the Grey Nuns of the Cross. After two years of teaching to help her parents, time came for her to follow her personal dream, that of consecrating herself to God in religious life. A dilemma arose for her in choosing a congregation. Influenced by her older brother, Noël, a secular priest, she entered the Grey Nuns of the Cross, on August 6, 1949.

A woman of faith and courage, she generously responded to several assignments entrusted to her. Altogether, she gave thirty-two beautiful years to youth ministry as a teacher, a boarding school mistress or as an educational pastoral worker in schools of Central Quebec, of Témiscamingue, but especially in Rouyn-Noranda.

From 1962 to 1972, the authorities of the Congregation entrusted her with the formation of postulants, novices, and then scholastics in their doctrinal year. During this period of great upheaval in society and especially in the Church, this mission proved to be quite challenging. Attentive to the youth's needs and concerned for their growth, she gave importance to the

essentials of religious life: prayer and the total gift of self to God and to others.

She was in charge of the liturgy at Cap-de-la-Madeleine for a year but was once more sent to work among young people as coordinator of the school pastoral program in Rouyn-Noranda.

The diversity of commitment required of her revealed her ability to adapt to different ministries. However, an article published in the Canadian Church highlights her valuable presence in pastoral animation. The Diocese of Rouyn-Noranda recognized her precious contribution in the faith journey of many young people. One of them confided to us that her ideal was to be for others what Sister Solange had been for her. So many other testimonies confirmed her personal charism!

In 1994, a no less demanding mission awaited her, that of serving as Provincial animator of the Province of Notre-Dame in Hull. For seven years, she assumed this responsibility with great love and compassion for the sisters, promoting fraternal life. In spite of the closure of houses, she had at heart to keep the sisters in their milieu allowing them to continue their mission until the end.

At the end of this mandate, she accepted a mandate of authority for three years at St. Joseph's Convent in Gatineau.

Wherever she went, her love of singing and of music followed her. She used it as a personal resource in her multiple commitments, both in parishes and in local communities where she lived.

In 2004, the need for a choir director and liturgist at the Mother House met her aspirations. Through well-prepared liturgy and well-chosen songs, she responded to the spiritual and human aspirations of the sisters. For Sister Solange, preparing meaningful liturgical celebrations became a passion, a fulfilling mission.

Fourteen years later, a setback in her health indicated that it was time for her retirement. For a woman, determined and valiant like Sister Solange, this letting go was particularly difficult. Moreover, not being able to visit or accompany family members in times of illness and bereavement saddened her. With the support of her sisters and strengthened by an intimate relationship with the Lord and the Virgin Mary, she continued her journey, surrendering to God.

Thank you Sister Solange for whom you have been for so many people: a committed woman, aware of others, always ready to comfort and confirm. You leave the example of a person for whom the love of God and of others are one. You deserve to enter the peace and joy of the House of God where all things are hymns of praise to his glory.

