

Marie-Anne Gendron, FCSCJ (1914 – 2015)

Born on July 26, 1914 in the Eastern Townships, Marie-Anne is the second child of a Catholic family of four children. She is only thirteen when her father dies of Spanish flu. She continues attending the town school, but develops a very strong sense of responsibility, which will define her whole life. On August 15, 1930, when she is sixteen, she enters the community of the *Filles de la Charité du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus*, in Sherbrooke. She finishes her formation and takes her vows on August 10, 1933.



After working first years as a teacher, Marie-Anne is then asked to enroll at the Hôtel-Dieu of Montreal to obtain a nursing licence. She is happy to accept and dedicates herself to the different needs of the community: first, by teaching at the Nursing School of Sherbrooke's Hôtel-Dieu, from 1943 to 1946, and then as head of the *La Providence* Hospital in Magog, from 1947 to 1952, where she also studies Administration. In 1952, she founds and runs the *École des garde-malades auxiliaires*, in Magog. In 1956, when the Magog hospital is no longer able to meet the needs of the population, she takes part in the project to build a second hospital, the so-called *hôpital du peuple* (People's Hospital). The *Filles de la Charité du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus* had already invested an important amount of money in this project, in 1953. They eventually are granted subsidies to build the hospital. Marie-Anne Gendron takes over the hospital management till 1965, when she is appointed General Assistant of her community and has to leave for La-Salle-de-Vihiers, in France.

She returns to Quebec in 1969, as Provincial Superior for two terms. Then, in 1977, she is elected Superior General, thus becoming the first Canadian sister to take on this role. She serves as leader of her community for 24 years. When she returns to Quebec in 1989, she is 75 years old. She is not yet ready to retire and wishes to continue serving the medical community. She therefore offers her help at the medical archives of the infirmary in Sherbrooke, until 1998. A woman of courage and tenacity, filled with hope, Marie-Anne dies on December 5, 2015, at the age of 101.

LINK : <http://www.fcscj.net/accueil.php>