

## SISTER STANISLAUS GARRY

SABINA GARRY, daughter of James and Sabina Quinn Garry was born at Helena Township, Scott County, Minnesota on 31 August 1858. She attended the local schools; she entered the Convent of the Visitation in St. Paul and made her profession on 31 August 1885 as Sister Stanislaus. For the next 68 years, Visitation was a family focal point for the Garry-Ryan relatives and her name, Sister Stanislaus, became a household name held in love.

Perhaps the story of her life is best told by her sisters at Visitation. So, I quote from the community letter written by them on September 30, 1953, three days after her death. "After sixty-eight years of religious life in the rank of Associate Sister, our loved Sister Mary Stanislaus Garry returned quietly and peacefully to her Creator on September twenty seventh at nine thirty-five p.m. Since it was Sunday, Sister was surrounded all day by loving and fervent prayers. It was only during the last few days that her feeble hands were unable to make the sign of the cross and her frail fingers could no longer hold her rosary, though the prayers were on her lips.

Till the day of her death at ninety-five years of age, Sister Mary Stanislaus retained her native sparkle and wit. Just recently Sister inquired about the health of a Sister who was visiting her. "Oh, I am able to be about and take little nourishment," she was told. Sister Mary Stanislaus looked at her a moment and replied, "Well, you'd be dead if you didn't." Although sister has been on the infirmary floor for many years, she has always remained a very vital part of the community life. From her high-backed chair at recreation it was her delight to give arriving Sisters a playful poke with her cane. We shall sorely miss her tapping in and out of the tribune where she spent many hours of each day in prayer – sometimes very audible.

This last year Sister has been brought down to Communion in a wheel chair, but only within the last few weeks has she missed her morning meditation and Holy Mass.

For many years Sister served the community as portress and infirmarian. What the early poverty of the community could not grant her for her patients, she made up for by loving and cheerful service.

Sister was anointed several weeks ago and was grievously disappointed that the Lord did not come for her at once. Recently she asked the doctor if she were dying. When he answered, "Yes, Sister, you are dying" she replied, "Well, I won't be seeing you again then." The long years of loving care lavished on Sister Mary Stanislaus by our devoted infirmarian were frequently brightened by her blunt and witty sallies.

Sabina Garry came from a comfortable country home in Minnesota, and the poverty of the religious life was hard for her to understand. But she could always forget her material wants and miseries by drawing on a remarkable memory which filled with the loveliest in prayer and poetry. Even in her last days she would pore over her treasured books with a large magnifying glass,

reading and rereading familiar passages. With the death of Sister Mary Stanislaus many links with the past are broken, for Sister was the oldest in our community. But we do not regret her going, for she herself longed intensely to be with her friends in Calvary Cemetery. Just a few days before her death she called for Our Honored Mother and gave orders that the last grave in Calvary was to be hers and no one else's. The rest of us might go to Resurrection, but she would be in that section which holds the mortal remains of those who have died since the foundation in St. Paul.

Sister is survived by one brother and many nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, all of whom were devoted to her. Never a birthday passed that she did not receive an enormous and elaborately decorated cake and flowers. It was her joy to summon her little grand-nieces from their play in the parlor, line them up outside the grate, and flourishing her cane, peer at them through her dark glasses while they stared mute and wide eyed.

Sister's funeral mass was at the Convent of the Visitation in St. Paul and burial was in Calvary Cemetery.