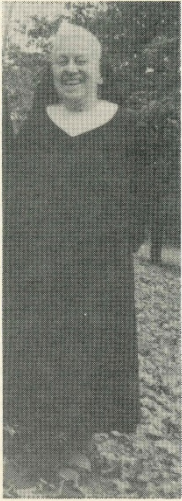


**Sister Mary  
of the Incarnation, O.C.D.**



Birth: November 23, 1897  
Profession: December 8, 1950  
Death: October 5, 1992

**Our Lady's Assumption**

Who is she who cometh forth as morning rising?  
Fair as the moon, and brighter than the sun.  
Like the rainbow, giving light, serene and radiant.  
Angelic hosts repeat, "Who art thou? Lovely one!"

"Arise and come, My love," the King of heaven  
whispers,  
As choirs of angels, and the saints rejoice.  
Saint Michael kneels before his Queen, to offer  
homage,  
"Hail, full of grace!" Again the angel Gabriel lifts  
his voice.

Oh blessed Virgin Mary, with what rapture,  
Thy beauteous soul "doth magnify the Lord".  
Now, veils removed, you behold the Beatific  
Vision,  
The Majesty of God, the Trinity adored.

Standing now, forever, on Divinity's threshold,  
As all His grace comes down to us thru thee.  
Thy prophecy that all will call thee blessed,  
Is now fulfilled. All praise thee, lovingly.

Oh thou, most beautiful of all, where all is beauty,  
Reflecting spotless purity from its source.  
The brightness of thy love is light eternal,  
To guide all men, while ages run their course.

Thy glorious eyes, so full of tenderness and pity,  
Are ever watching with a mother's care.  
Thy hands outstretched, protecting and directing  
Our stumbling footsteps, to our heavenly home,  
so fair.

Sister Mary

## SISTER MARY OF THE INCARNATION (Anne Marie Simon 1897-1992)

Providentially, Anne Simon came into this world on November 20, 1897 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the city of brotherly/sisterly love, which surely was to be the motivation of much of her life. She was the fourth of eight children born to Charles and Annie (Dougherty) Simon. Kate, Flos (Floriasenda), and Jim having preceded her, she would be followed by Bill, Marie, Agnes, and Marge, an altogether loving, and caring family, as was evidenced throughout the years.

Her mother was an exceptionally kind and compassionate woman who practiced the corporal works of mercy to a high degree. Her father, too, must be given due credit. When someone once asked Sr. Mary what her father had been like, she immediately responded that he had been "a good provider". In light of their already large family of ten, plus her mother's ongoing works of mercy, this was no small compliment. Her mother, Sister would relate, often took the entire family to wakes, supplying each child with what they eventually called "funeral cakes" in eight individual bags to assure quiet decorum and contentment .

Although many girls in those days did not pursue formal education beyond grammar school, Anne did attend Girl's High in the evenings where she received a diploma. During the day hours she helped with the many, many household chores and voluntarily assisted her mother in caring for the needy children her mother brought home. There must have been many, for her father would sometimes quip upon sitting down to table that he wondered which were "family" and which were "visitors". Of all the children, she was the one who was most like her mother.

Anne began a nursing career before she actually trained as one, acting as mid-wife to neighbors and caring for the sick in the great flu epidemic of 1918. She also worked as a volunteer at Children's Hospital. In 1921 a new hospital, Mater Misericordia, staffed by the Sisters of Mercy, was opened in Philadelphia and Anne was one of the first group of women to be trained there. She acclaimed them as marvelous teachers but acknowledged that the work was demanding.

They rose at 2A.M. to study so that they could nurse the sick during the day. In 1923 she passed her State boards, receiving also a gold medal in psychology. She chose to stay on at Misericordia helping the doctors with accident cases, giving anesthesia, and performing not only specialized work but also menial tasks. She served as a supervisor for some twenty years. From there she moved on to Fitzgerald Mercy in Darby, Atlantic City Hospital and still later to All Souls in Morristown, N. J. again holding positions as supervisor.

Anne, while very communicative and adept at storytelling, did not let her left hand know what her right hand was doing. Thus, only God knows how many people she helped. But we have a few glimpses. At home one day she was putting two tiny brothers ("visitors") in the bathtub, when suddenly the older boy jumped out, ran through the house and down the street, with the younger one following and Anne in hot pursuit of the two. She enjoyed this as much as her tiny "streakers". Her nieces and nephews tell of her ongoing good humor, of how she could always see the funny side of a situation.

She helped out at her parish too. She was an expert at removing burned incense from brass, and with great humor told us of the time she starched the albs, "You could hear Father Henry all the way down to the corner ! "

She was always ready and open to lending assistance. Especially when no one else volunteered she would step forward. One time while traveling via Greyhound, a woman became very ill. Passengers, already hemmed in, showed displeasure. Anne Simon at once came forward to help the woman. Not without good reason had she been nicknamed "sympathetic Anne".

Early in World War II the Simons moved to Atlantic City, N. J. Here Anne met many servicemen as a majority of the hotels were being occupied by the Air Force. When President Roosevelt sent out an urgent appeal for nurses, Anne enlisted in the Nursing Corps of the Army Air Force. Though short 1 1/2 inches of the required height, she was readily accepted because of the tremendous need. She trained in Greensboro, North Carolina, and was commissioned a second Lieutenant, later receiving higher promotions.

At some period she had charge of an Officers' Mess Hall for 200 men. Soldiers who had been A.W.O.L. were sent to her for KP Duty. Upon completion of their chores Anne would issue them tickets which entitled them to coffee and sandwiches! Any man who ever came around to the back door hoping for some food went away satisfied. One day she met a superior officer who, looking very serious, said to her, "You know you' re spoiling the discipline around here. " However, she thought she detected a twinkle in his eye.

She desired very much to go overseas but in order to do so she would have to join the regular Army. In 1945 she went to Santa Fe for Army training, then to the Chief Nurse's Office in Salt Lake City to await assignment overseas. From Seattle she was transported to Korea. There, in the hospital assigned her, the injured from the battlefield were brought in for treatment. She also treated cases of leprosy. While in Korea she seriously considered bringing a fifteen year old girl named Patsy to the U.S. in order to adopt her. But the Lord had other plans .

Anne loved her work in the Army and was looking forward to promotion to Colonel. However, the war ended and the number of military personnel was being reduced so she was retired in 1947 with the title of Captain. The timing was perfect for her mother soon became ill and Anne was able to attend her until her death during their Novena to St. Ann in July, 1948 . (Both she and her mother had a lasting devotion to St. Ann.) Unfortunately, she was not able to do the same for her father because he died two months after Anne entered Carmel .

Two months after her mother's death, Anne made a retreat at the Dominican Retreat House in Elkins Park, PA. The Retreat Master was Father Constantine, C . P. When Anne told him of her ardent desire to live a deeper prayer life, her love of nursing the sick and her love for travel, she had in mind possibly the Medical Missionaries in whom she had become very interested. Father Constantine told her he would consult with a friend of his regarding her vocation. When next she saw him, rather said very enthusiastically, "I have just the place for you, Carmel ! " A surprise, indeed, but she really desired that God direct her. So Carmel it was. Father Constantine wrote to the Carmel of St . Therese in Loretto, PA, where he had recently given the nuns a retreat, and introduced Anne Simon. Anne was accepted and entered Loretta Carmel December 7, 1948 , as a Lay Sister because of her age, and as she put it. , she had "supervised" so long she wanted to put herself in a different situation.

Within a month of her entrance, Sr . M. Cecilia Schwab (sister of the well known steel magnate, Charles M. Schwab, who had built the monastery in Loretto) , became very ill and Sr. Maryanne, as she was now called, attended her and continued to do so until her death in December of 1954. She was an excellent nurse, generous, devoted, and self-sacrificing.

At this time there were ten sisters in the novitiate, all in their twenties except for Sr. Maryanne who had just turned 51. She fitted in well. One day during outdoor recreation the sisters decided to have a race. To everyone' s surprise Sr . Maryanne finished first. Another day they did it again and once more our shortest, she was only 4 ' 10" tall , eldest member outran the others; so she was declared the undisputed champion .

After twelve months postulancy she received the Carmelite habit and the name Mary of the Incarnation. First Profession followed on December 8 , 1950

and Solemn Vows exactly three years later, 1953 . When Vatican II gave Lay Sisters the option of becoming Choir Nuns Sr. Mary did take that request and received the black veil, certain that this was now God's will for her. She loved and was faithful to the Divine Office until vision left her.

Sr. Mary was tiny in stature but had a huge sense of humor and was vital ly interested in current events. She was a great cook and this, coupled with her nursing abilities, gave her a very fu[l life . She was uniquely herself and years after entering was still calling her sisters, "Hon" " instead of "Your Charity" .Yet over and above all was Sr. Mary's love of Mother Church and her priests. It truly can be said that her life was given for the priesthood.

Over the years Sr. Mary was visited by her family, her nieces and nephews and old Army and nursing buddies. Her family meant so much to her and her prayerful concern was always with them. All of her brothers and sisters preceded her in death. Kate was to die first, then Flos and Jim died suddenly in an automobile accident. Bill, Agnes, Marie and Marge followed as the years went by. Although Sr. Mary always had a great longing to "see God" she was to be the last of her family to go home to Him.

In the fall of 1971, Sr. Mary suffered hemorrhaging during cataract surgery and this complication would lead to progressive blindness. She was very courageous in accepting this cross.

In June, 1975, Sr. Mary transferred to Latrobe Carmel and was lovingly welcomed.

About four years later her eyesight began to really deteriorate. She continued to do all she could, such as reading at Liturgy with the aid of a special light (and her trusty stool to enable her to reach the microphone and be seen above the lectern). She was determined to help all she could, And to that end she enlisted the help of the Society for the Blind and strove valiantly to learn Braille. While she painstakingly grasped the theory, the practice was discouraging for her fingertips, calloused by her work over the years, robbed her of the needed delicate sense of touch. Not to be outdone she turned to the Society's recorded books and magazines for as long as she could. But her hearing diminished too, and she had to surrender this as well.

During Holy Week in 1981 Sr. Mary began to fail visibly and for the first time she was unable to be present for the Good Friday Service and the Easter Vigil. She did appear for Easter Sunday Mass. The Divine Bridegroom was on His way but with unhurried steps.

About this time we were in the process of planning for the building of our new monastery. The Sisters of Charity at Seton Hill in nearby Greensburg, generously offered to care for Sr. Mary at Assumption Hall, their retirement home

for their sisters. She had wonderful care and we will be forever grateful to the Sisters of Charity. Once the Monastery was finished, Sr. Mary returned to our new infirmary but was never really able to "see" the monastery because she was totally blind by then.

Her health continued to deteriorate and many times we believed her to be at death's door. Upon receiving the Anointing of the Sick she would spring back to life. We witnessed the power of this Sacrament in her. However, the Bridegroom did come and Sr. Mary slipped off quietly about 1 :00 a.m. on October 5 ,1992. She was beautiful in death beautiful and peaceful as victor !

We honor guarded throughout the days and one night, holding two Vigil Services, one with her family. When we dutifully informed the US Army of her death and were asked if we wished to have a Military Funeral for Captain Anne M. Simon, we declined. But, we received an American flag which was placed near the casket. Mass of Resurrection was scheduled for 10 :00 a.m. on the 8th. The casket having been closed, four of her nieces and nephews covered it with the pall then it was wheeled to the center of the choir, Ten priests participated, including Archabbot Douglas Nowickit O. S. B . , from St Vincent Archabbey. Her nephew, Fr. Leo McGee, chief celebrant, gave a memorable homily in wh:i-ch he humbly boasted, "Aunt Anne was there when I was born. " Her family actively participated in the Mass . Sr. Catherine Marie, who had been i.n the novitiate with Sr. Mary in Loretto, read one of Sr . Mary' s poems as a communion reflection. This poem, "A Dream, " revealed her prime aim: love for God and neighbor, and something of her already deep prayer life in pre-Vatican II days. Then, to our happy surprise, Archabbot Douglas gave an inspiring talk. Six sisters were pallbearers, together with her nephew Francis Carlin. Everyone from wel l-fil led chapel went to the cemetery for the final prayers and blessing . Sr. Robin of the Baltimore Carmel, who had lived with and dearly loved gr . Mary, carried a dozen white roses which she distributed to each sister, who in turn placed hers on the coffin. Two sisters symbolically shoveled a little dirt on the coffin. Upon completion of the prayers we sang the Solemn Salve.

We believe Sr. Mary went. straight to heaven and we rejoice that after fourteen years of uncomplaining blindness she is able to SEE Him Whom she so longed for.