



Figures in the Work



A Biography of Mama Laura

(Laura Bégin Giguère – born on November 11, 1901; passed away on March 19, 1995)

The Marian Work owes a very special note of gratitude to Marie-Paule's mother, Mama Laura, who gave her children an exceptional upbringing or formation, and whom the Lord described as "a second Saint Anne". (*Life of Love*, vol. I, p. 144). Let us briefly relate the journey of the one who deserved such praise from Heaven.

Laura, the second of sixteen children in the family of Marie-Anne and Damase Bégin, was born on November 11, 1901 at Sainte-Germaine du Lac-Etchemin. As she was growing up, she stood out because of her fervent Marian devotion and a superior understanding of spiritual realities.

On July 19, 1920, she married Ernest Giguère who lived in the same locality. On September 14 of the following year, a little girl would bless their union: Marie-Paule, who was consecrated to Mary and who would be the eldest of ten children.

For her first child to whom she hoped to give the given name of our heavenly Mother, Laura had prepared a room all in white. And the room in the house where Marie-Paule was born was illuminated by a bright Light at the moment she entered this world – a special grace which Laura would recount much later.

In this home full of promises, trials and tribulations, which always rain down upon souls called to a lofty destiny, took an unexpected form. Papa Ernest, such a good and generous man, while working as an insurance broker, would sometimes come home inebriated. What a greatness of soul and what generosity Mama Laura had as she incessantly forgave her husband and did her best to hide his behavior from the children. Later, he would pick himself up and become an apostle of temperance.

In *Life of Love*, Marie-Paule drew this portrait of her mother: "Always with a smile, she gives herself to the problems of each one, sustains her husband, forgives him the stormy periods. In short, she accepts in complete conformity to the will of God a thousand and one vexations in the same manner that she relishes the joys He is pleased to send her. She neglects no aspect of her task of educating and forming the children." (*Id.*, vol. I, p. 30)

A woman with a deep faith, she brought her loved ones together for prayers, and the children would gather around her after the evening meal to receive a religious teaching. She would underline the spiritual meaning of the feasts of Christmas and Easter as well as the seasons of Advent and Lent which prepared them. She would uplift their hearts to that which was

beautiful and grand, fostering wholesome family joys, such as choral singing while she accompanied them on the harmonium.

Mama Laura would continue her formative role in favor of her eldest daughter's children, as this latter had married on July 1, 1944. In 1958, at a time when Marie-Paule had five children and her home was beset by heavy crosses because of her husband's conduct, the Lord indicated to her:

"Soon, my child, your mother will have to look after your children. Tell her that she will continue to enjoy good health and that she will live to see the flowering of religious and priestly vocations in the generation to come." (*Id.*, vol. II, p. 25)

Mama Laura suffered because of her daughter's sufferings, and she would be at her side in the Marian Group and in the Works Marie-Paule would later found. So it was that she would see materialize the foretelling of a "flowering of religious and priestly vocations" within the Community of the Sons and Daughters of Mary founded in 1981. Moreover, she was favored with special graces, among them the vision of a monstrosity which, after having swayed, "steadies itself, becoming very brilliant, resplendent with a thousand tiny fires." "This magnificent favor," Marie-Paule explained, "is proof that the Blessed Sacrament will triumph over the diabolical plots." (*Id.*, vol. III, p. 105)

When Marie-Paule wrote the Constitutions for the Family of the Sons and Daughters of Mary in 1985, she drew her inspiration from the formation received from her mother: a love of simplicity, attentiveness to the grace of the moment and an understanding of providential events. (Cf. *Vie d'Amour*, Appendice II, p. 61.)

Mama Laura spent the last years of her life at the Army of Mary Center in Quebec City, where she lived with her youngest daughter, Sister Lise, a Daughter of Mary. After having been the victim of a brain haemorrhage, she let her soul wing its way to God on March 19, 1995, at the age of 93. On her mortuary card, here is the farewell note she had written: "May the Virgin Mary assist you as she has always supported me in my family life and my life of union with God. She will welcome you tenderly in her beautiful Heaven where we will see each other again in order to rejoice everlastingly in God."

With regard to Mama Laura, the Lord had indicated to Sister Marie-Stella: "She is the mother and the daughter of Mary on earth." (*Life of Love*, vol. VII, p. 500) A unique role that was filled so well by such a very good Mother.

Sylvie Payeur Raynauld

