



Simone Carrière: A Treasure to Cherish

Simone Carrière celebrated her 107th birthday on April 21, surrounded by her four children and a host of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Nothing could be more fitting, then, for the entire Carrière family than the Manitoba theme for 2023's National Week for Life and the Family: "Grandparents and the Elderly: A Legacy to be Cherished".

By Daniel Bahuaud, Communications Coordinator for the Archdiocese of Saint-Boniface



Born Simone Perricard in 1916 in the small town of Ralph, Saskatchewan, Simone Carrière is the daughter of French immigrants.

"Grandma Simone is extraordinary," says her granddaughter, Stéphanie Einfeld. She has influenced me a lot. When I was a child, I went to her house for a lot of overnight stays. We often played cards. In fact, it was she who taught me to play Cribbage, Kings in the Corner and Golf, games that I later taught my husband and children. At her house, we were spoiled. With her coconut and chocolate cookies, and by the quality of her listening. She would fill us up with sweets, which Mom and Dad would never do. And we could confide our joys and sorrows to her in a different way than we would have done to our parents.

"She still surrounds us with love. Every day she prays for each of us. Her four children, 11 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren (two more to come) and two great-great-grandchildren. It's reassuring to know that someone is thinking of you. Not only during a visit, but when you're not even there, through prayer."

Josie Carrière, her daughter, agrees. "Mom likes to give of herself. Especially when it comes to children. I was the youngest in the family. And I was very young when she started taking care of my older sister's first baby. She not only babysat her own grandchildren, but the little ones in the neighborhood. She was always calm and patient, which are admirable qualities for taking care of little ones. And to this day, she loves the kids.

I admire Mom," she says. She perseveres. As a child in Ralph, Saskatchewan, she caught the Spanish flu. She survived that terrible disease. And life wasn't always easy on the farm, and then in St. Boniface, where she and my father Henri ran a little grocery store located at the corner of Langevin Street and the Avenue de la Cathédrale. There was always something to do to keep the store running smoothly."

Ghislain Carrière, her son, agrees. "Mom and Dad took turns working at the grocery store. They were very, very busy. Yet, they both managed to surround us with love. We love Mom's smile, which she shares with everyone. Mom is very positive. And we have fond memories of the way she brought the generations together at her New Year's dinner, or at our big family celebration at Easter, which we later celebrated regularly at the Club Éclipse.

I also admire her perseverance," adds Ghislain Carrière. She is, of course, the oldest in the family. But at 98, she was still swimming at the Boni-Vital pool. She walked daily. She's had several falls. She broke her hip at 97, and then at 99 and at 103. She even broke her neck at 106. That's why she now wears a neck brace, to strengthen her neck. But there is something inside her that keeps her going. At her 100th birthday celebration, she told us, *'Well, I think I can quit now'*. She doesn't say that anymore. She is smiling and greeting everyone at Actionmarguerite St. Boniface. And she never stops praying for us. Her joy and

her faith always animate everything she does, everything she is.

"I also admire Mom's generosity. As an older child, she and Dad served on the board of the Eclipse Club. When we were younger, they were both very active in the Cathedral parish and raised us in the faith. Mom was proud to see my brother Guy and I serve at Mass. Her faith was also expressed in her desire to serve with love. Even at the age of 90, she would visit *'the old folks'* at St. Boniface Hospital, *'because they have no one to visit them'*.

"I believe deeply in celebrating our seniors," he concludes. Please, cherish them, thank them and recognize their joy of living and their perseverance."



Photo: Simone Carrière, with her great grandchildren Cassidy et Gavin, her grand-daughter Stéphanie and her grandson through marriage, Joshua Einfeld. In the background: Mary Carrière, Simone Carrière's daughter in law.