



*M. Stanislaus Mulhall*  
A BIOGRAPHY



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# Introduction

A statistic highlights the significance of Stanislaus Mulhall in the founding story of the Province of Australia and South-East Asia. When she came to Australia in December 1883, there were twenty-two professed Sisters from Ireland, including the two who travelled with her, and two Australian members - Josephine Bolger the first Australian-born to enter, and Stanislaus Mornane, the first Australian-born Loreto pupil to enter

A further eleven professed members came from Ireland during her thirty years as Mistress of Novices, 1884-1915. Against this backdrop of thirty-five, Stanislaus's influence on the province can be measured in the 177 Sisters she formed in the novitiate and the four who left during initial formation. Another professed Sister came from Ireland during her years as Provincial 1915-1923.



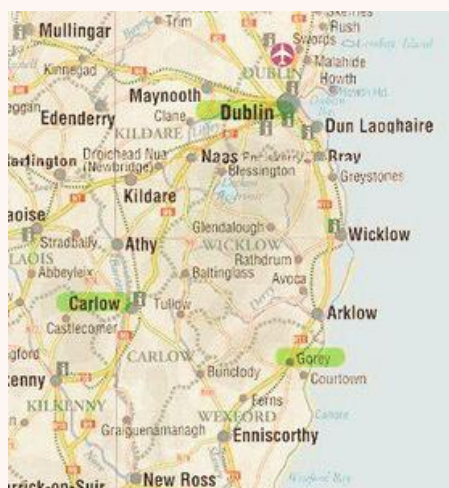
LORETO POSTULANTS, NOVICES AND NEWLY PROFESSED WITH NOVICE MISTRESS, STANISLAUS MULHALL, FRONT ROW CENTRE

# Family and early religious life

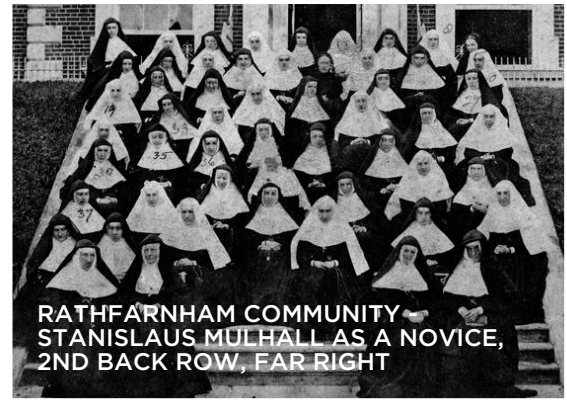
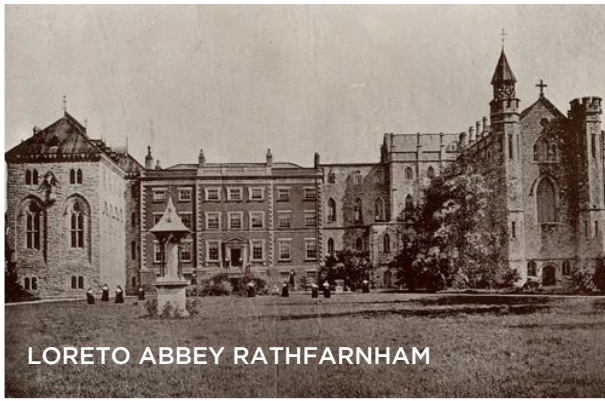
Barbara, as she was called, was Irish, and one of the older children in a family of thirteen. The Mulhall family lived in Carlow, a country town on the River Barrow 88km south-west of Dublin. Gorey, close to the sea, was 60km south-east of Carlow. Rathfarnham was in Dublin at the mouth of the River Liffey, 90km north of Gorey.

The three towns of Stanislaus's childhood and early religious life formed a triangle no more than 90km distant from each other. How different the distances that she would cover in Australia travelling from Ballarat to Portland, Melbourne, Sydney, Perth and Adelaide.

Of the family, we know that Barbara had a sister, Judith, older by two years, who attended the Ursuline Convent and later entered the Dominican Order. Mary, her next younger sister, attended school with her in Gorey. Younger again were Anne and Lavinia who both entered the Sisters of Mercy. There was a younger brother, Aloysius, known in the family as Wishy; and a brother J.L., possibly John after his father and so likely to be the eldest brother. The thirteenth and youngest child, a brother, died in infancy. We do not know her mother's name or the name of other siblings. Is the lack of knowledge a failure in record-keeping, an aspect of personal privacy, or a reflection of the spirituality of the period? "Agere contra" (to act against) was a constant theme of Stanislaus but always in the context of love, her motto "Amorem tui solum" (your love alone).



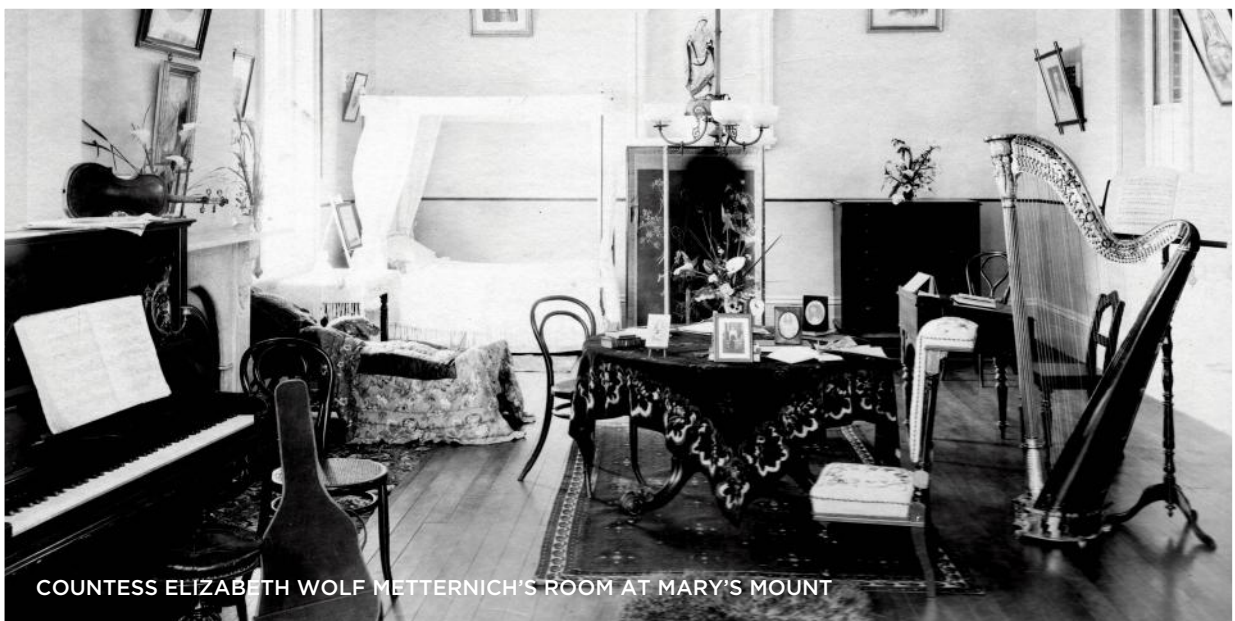
She boarded at Gorey, 1863-1868, and was remembered as a lovable, intelligent student. She was gifted musically, playing piano, violin and harp, as well as fiddle, guitar and concertina. She read widely and was well-educated in literature, history and Latin. From school she entered the novitiate in Rathfarnham in 1868, and took the name Stanislaus. She was remembered as an attractive, though reserved novice who tactfully and unobtrusively set out to serve others.



Barbara felt a call to religious life at age fifteen. She spoke of this with her parents during her last two years at school and eventually obtained their permission. This did not make it easier for her, or for her father, when she did not return home with him after he came to collect her at the end of her schooling. Sensitive and affectionate and brought up in a close and loving family, was it “agere contra” or that she could not face the leave-taking if she went home?

M. Oliver records in her biographical sketch that Stanislaus could recall to the end of her life the grief of her parting with her much-loved and loving father. There are striking parallels in Stanislaus avoiding farewells by leaving Gorey the same day that she was called to Rathfarnham and from there to Australia. So painful was her leaving Gorey after visiting in 1913, that she chose not to go to Gorey when she returned to Ireland for the 1919 General Chapter.

Stanislaus’s sensitive and affectionate nature is strikingly illustrated in her reaction to the death of Elizabeth Wolf Metternich for whom she was harp teacher, friend and confidant. Gonzaga wrote: “Poor Mother Stanislaus is greatly grieved as you may imagine .... [She] got very sick after hearing the news - retching but no pain. We made her go to bed.”





Stanislaus taught music in Gorey and for one year in Ballarat, and is remembered as a gentle nun, with a bright and attractive personality, always cheerful and willing to help. She started Mary's Mount's first orchestra before she began her main life's work as Mistress of Novices. In many aspects, her years as Provincial flowed from that role.



There is a level of spiritual excess and immaturity in her praying that the very sick youngest child would die so that the family would have a saint in heaven, and insensitivity in telling her mother of her prayer. "Agere contra" is operative when she prays as a novice that no one should love her for herself but only that she might lead others to God, and when she gave up reading fiction and playing music except as needed for teaching.

Replacing fiction with spiritual reading bore fruit in her role as Mistress of Novices and Provincial. Maturity and common sense prevailed on the voyage to Australia when she and her companions accepted borrowed dressing gowns to go on deck to watch the porpoises, their habits being wet when a wave washed into their cabin.



M. Stanislaus' Violin

# Mistress of Novices

Discussing the relative merits of the roles of Mistress of Schools and Mistress of Novices, while on holiday in Portland in 1884, Stanislaus commented that the Mistress of Novices had the most opportunity to do good. She received the letter of appointment that afternoon and returned to Ballarat feeling overwhelmed and anxious. She confided in Fr John Ryan sj who was giving a ladies retreat at Mary's Mount and who became her constant resource and guide in training the novices.



“Agere contra” was a leitmotif in her letters and writings but always in the spirit of love and to grow “in the likeness of Christ”. Stanislaus taught the spirit of detachment by rewarding, praising and encouraging self-conquest, rather than praising personal talents. When a novice needed her intervention, especially if disheartened, Stanislaus gave her tasks for which she could show appreciation or which provided opportunity for a casual and informal encounter.

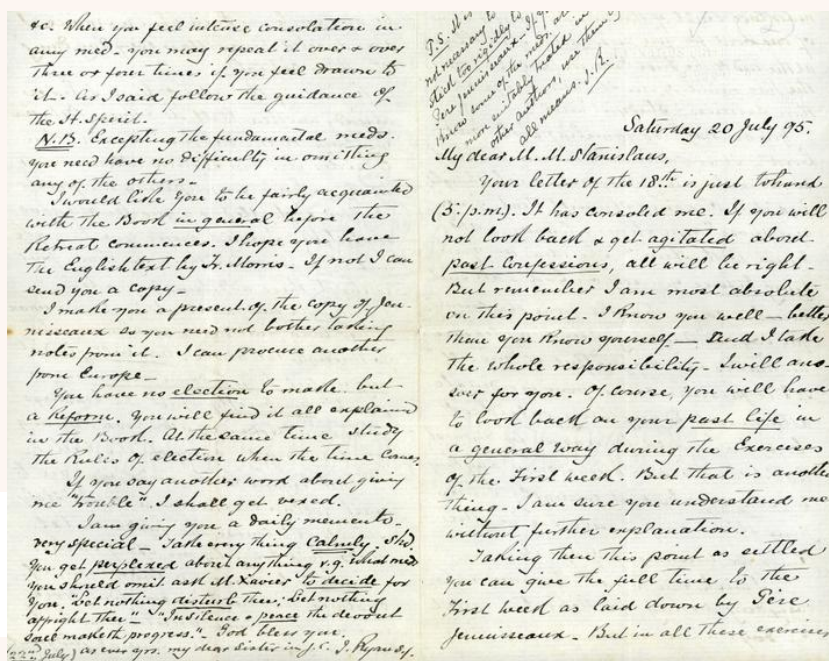
Stanislaus’s personal traits were simplicity, trust and motherliness, with a sympathetic understanding of character, an approachability and a welcoming smile regardless of work she had on hand. She was patient with faults, ready to forget offences, and strict regarding obedience. The novices knew her passion was for their perfection. She shared with them her own experiences and difficulties, her own methods of prayer and colloquies. Through sharing her own happy home life and her dealings with younger siblings, she taught the novices how to relate to God “as little children.” She described failures as childish attempts to please, stressing intention not failure, and spontaneously referring everything to God. A fresh flower, even a wilted flower, provided an allusion to beautifying the shrine of God within.

While Stanislaus had a reputation for a spirit of recollection, she was known for her keen sense of humour, her happy laugh, her willingness to join in light-hearted gaiety, her fiddle, guitar, accordion and song contributing to the novices' recreation. She stressed a happy exterior and urged that recreation be as bright as possible, because merriment and a happy exterior were indicative of being happy in God's service or, as Mary Ward enjoined, a cheerful mind is most necessary for our calling.

Her sense of humour and infectious love of God, evident in her words and actions, were part of her attractiveness. Her invariably happy demeanour, however, often hid an interior state of depression. The letters of John Ryan sj in 1895, when she undertook the Spiritual Exercises under his guidance, commented consistently on her timidity of conscience and her inclination to be rigid and disheartened with herself.



John Ryan sj & Letter from John Ryan to Stanislaus

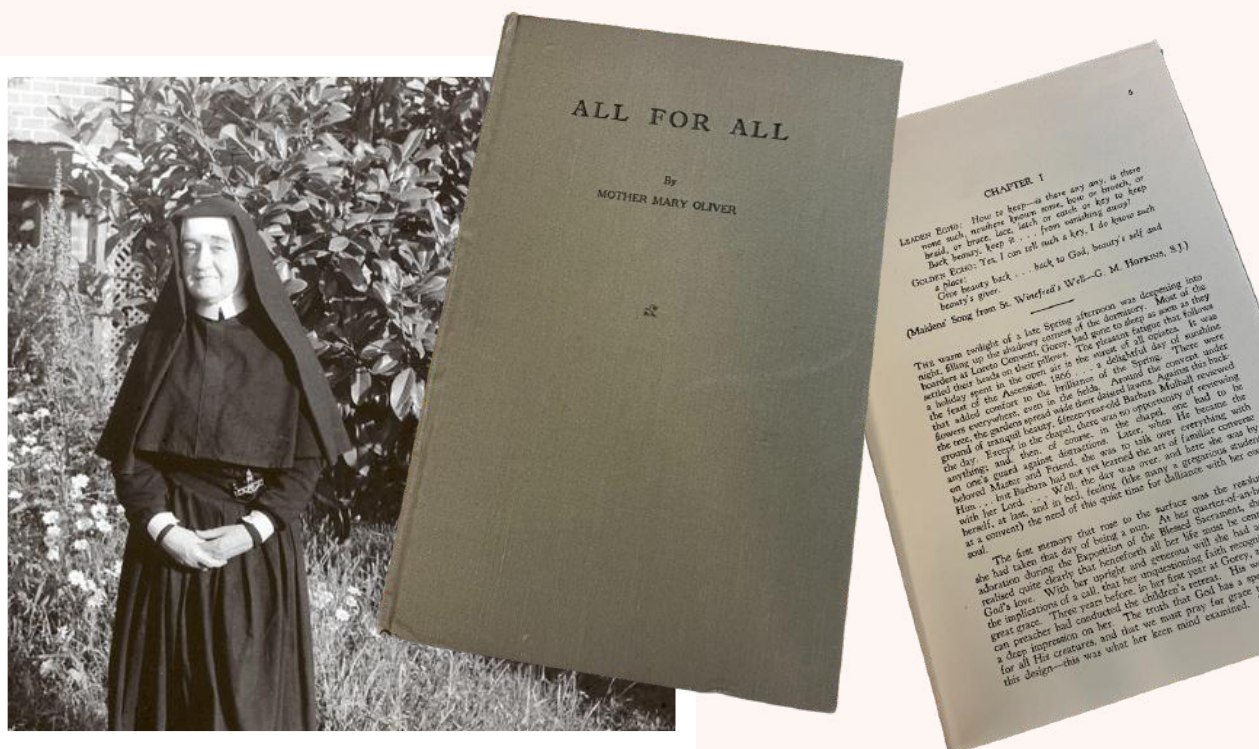


Stanislaus's letters to former novices, usually an annual letter for the feast day of their patron saint, showed her continuing interest in and concern for their progress. Her letters gave encouragement or showed disappointment as appropriate. She was interested in their apostolate, whether study, classroom or domestic duties. She expressed joy in exam success, sent prayer cards of Aloysius to the young boys in Portland, and commented to those in domestic duties on their good fortune in having no tasks to interfere with their talking to God. Given her own strong sense of family, it is not surprising that she often enquired after a Sister's family members.

As Provincial she wrote general letters to communities, urging the cheerful acceptance of the ups and downs of religious life, and receiving, as from God, whatever arrangements were made for themselves or others. She stressed that the exact observance of the Rules meant putting on Christ, and encouraged self-improvement, punctuality and observance of the Additions and Rules of Modesty. Her Christmas letters pointed to the humility and infinite love of God incarnate in Bethlehem, and to the hidden and humble life in Nazareth.

Constant themes in her letters and published writings – the Spiritual Exercises, the Directory and the Manual for Superiors – are love of the Institute, the privilege of being its members, and love of the Rules. These 81 Rules of 1703 were amended according to the 1914 Constitutions which she helped to write.

In 1945, when M. Oliver O’Doherty published her biographical sketch of Stanislaus, *All for All*, she had access to the memories of 133 members of the Province whom Stanislaus had formed as novices, as well as those of one of her two companions on the boat to Australia in 1883. The other had died only four years previously. Oliver entered when Stanislaus was Provincial and much of the content of *All for All*, as well as the memoirs that Oliver recorded, can be regarded as primary sources.



## Provincial

To know a person, it helps to know the historical and social context. Barbara’s father was affectionate, boisterous and fun-loving with the children, amused by their escapades, such as Barbara’s preferring to miss boarding school breakfast rather than apologise for something that she maintained was not what had happened.

Was it from his sense of play that she responded to a dare-devil challenge from a younger brother; that she slipped away with a friend from a boarders’ outing to go into the forbidden lolly shop; that her laughter was always the loudest at novices’ recreation?

As Mistress of Novices, Stanislaus's efforts to eliminate any worldliness, and the required closed environment of the novitiate, meant that the historical context barely intruded. It was different when she succeeded Gonzaga as Provincial. The two were vastly different in personality and background. Gonzaga is frequently referred to as "little Mother", and her photos show a rounded figure with a smiling, benign and welcoming countenance. Stanislaus appears angular and withdrawn, her smile more inward, her blue-tinted glasses veiling the twinkle in her eyes.

Gonzaga's father was a banker and Gonzaga excelled in managing and attracting property and funds. She was a visionary educator, sound administrator, charismatic and inspiring, with the wide canvas of forty years as founder and leader in Australia. Stanislaus's father was a lawyer. Her gifts were reflective, perceptive, creative and spiritual, further developed and focused through thirty years as Mistress of Novices. Both Gonzaga and Stanislaus were held in respect and affection, and Stanislaus accompanied Gonzaga as delegate to the General Chapter in 1913 and succeeded her as Provincial.

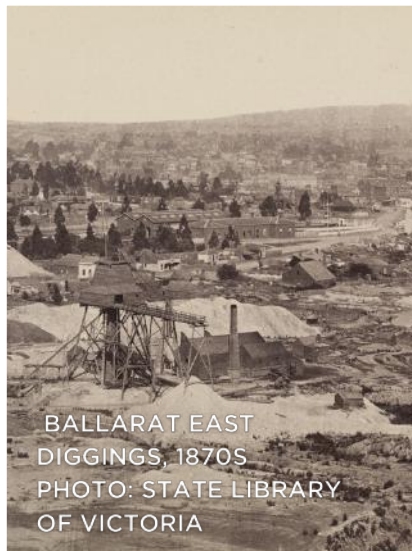
The successor of a charismatic founder will necessarily be viewed in her shadow, and Stanislaus as Provincial might be easily by-passed in comparison with Gonzaga. Stanislaus had no financial or administrative experience, and business negotiations caused her anxiety and stress.



Her foundations are limited to St Mary's Hall in 1918, at the request of Archbishop Mannix, and the associated sale of the Albert Park Convent and Training College, although not concluded until 1932; the purchase and move to the Acacias in Adelaide; and, again at the request Archbishop Mannix, the search for a suitable location in Toorak, with a foundation delayed until the visit by Raphael Deasy, Superior General, after Stanislaus's death.



Gonzaga arrived in Ballarat only twenty-four years after the discovery of gold. The early weeks in the St Alipius Presbytery were within hearing of the non-stop crushing battery. Stanislaus was Provincial during the impact, in Australia, of war and its aftermath, the Spanish flu and diphtheria epidemics, and the depression years. The Irish pioneers, the Sisters as well as priests and civilians, were impacted by the 1916 Irish Rebellion and the Irish War of Independence, until the Treaty of 1921 established the self-governing Irish Free State.



## Australian Context

In Australia, two-thirds of those who went to war died or were wounded, gassed or prisoners of war. Wartime restrictions put thousands out of work and food prices led to food riots in some major cities. Post-war efforts to repatriate soldiers were divisive, with returned soldiers claiming first call on employment, land and pensions.

Because there was not a direct threat to Australia, the Irish, generally working class Catholics, questioned Australia's participation. Dissenters were marginalised as Sinn Feiners and, because of the Russian revolution, as Bolsheviks. Immediately before the war, three-quarters of the population of NSW were Anglican or Protestant, and there were sectarian attacks on Catholicism.

German Australians received especially harsh treatment. They could not drive a car, have a radio or camera, and many were interned. Several of the early members were German or had German names, notably Boniface Volker, although there is no record of open discrimination against them.

The deprivations of war were followed by fundamental social changes and there was an underlying current of individuality and freedom. During the war, women's participation in the workforce grew to almost fifty per cent of those of working age. Returning soldiers knew people and places of other cultures and there was an influx of immigrants from Britain and from Eastern and Southern Europe.

The 1919 Spanish flu affected mainly young adults, and 1921 was the height of the diphtheria outbreak. Drought and economic depression caused huge numbers to leave the country for the city, and in 1920 there were numerous strikes over working conditions. Efforts to lift manufacturing were limited by lack of capital.

Massacres of Aborigines occurred as late as 1926 and 1928. Many of the sisters came from rural areas, but there is no record of how this was acknowledged by them or their families. Like most of Australia, the expectation of an inevitable decline of the indigenous people presumably blinded people to the impact of colonisation.

Post-war was an era of consumption. Progress in the years 1915-23 exacerbated the socio-economic divide. The automobile, electrical home appliances and the wrist watch, picture theatres and radio networks came into the lives of the wealthy. The first London-Darwin flight under thirty days took place in 1919, and QANTAS was founded in 1920 to carry outback mail and passengers.

In politics, Archbishop Mannix opposed Prime Minister Hughes on the issue of conscription which split the Labor Party and the nation. In 1921 Edith Cowan was Australia's first woman parliamentarian, elected to the WA Legislative Assembly and later to the Federal House of Representatives.



Edith Cowan, Australia's 1st female parliamentarian

# Irish Context

The Irish context of the 1916 Easter Rising and its aftermath were significant for Stanislaus and the Irish Sisters whose fathers, brothers, cousins and nephews might have been in the constabulary, 90% of whom were Catholic; or among the 200,000 who volunteered to fight with the British Army; or among the 1,500 Irish Volunteers and Citizen Army who took part in the Easter Rising and were caught in the British military reprisal.

In the following years, the Irish Volunteers led a guerrilla campaign that was countered by British “Black and Tan” reprisals, while social divisions and strikes grew into sectarian terrorisation of Catholic neighbourhoods. The Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921 that gave Home Rule status to Ulster caused anguish to supporters of an Irish Free State.



O'CONNELL STREET, DUBLIN, AFTER THE RISING.  
THE GPO IS AT LEFT, AND NELSON'S PILLAR AT RIGHT

# Institute Context

Gonzaga and Stanislaus were Mary Ward women, enriched by the publication in 1882 and 1888 of the two volumes of Catherine Chambers' Life of Mary Ward. Stanislaus supported Gonzaga in her efforts to unite the several branches of Mary Ward's Institute. At the request of Michael Corcoran, Superior General, they collaborated with others in writing the 1914 Constitutions.

Teresa Ball, who brought the Institute to Ireland from where it spread world-wide, died in 1861. Gonzaga attended Rathfarnham for her final year of schooling in 1852 and entered at Rathfarnham in 1853 so she would have known Teresa Ball.

Stanislaus entered at Rathfarnham in 1868 and would not have known Teresa Ball personally, but would have quickly become familiar with the story of Loreto's founding in Dublin in 1821 and the opening of the school in 1822. When Stanislaus attended the 1919 General Chapter in Rathfarnham, she noted the atmosphere of strife and discontent emanating from the growing tension between those who regarded Mary Ward as foundress and those who saw Teresa Ball in this role, a tension that was increasing in Australia also.



The tension regarding Union and whether Mary Ward or Teresa Ball was founder flowed into Institute affairs from the Irish-English political tension. Michael Corcoran, five times elected Superior General 1889-1918, was a Mary Ward woman in favour of Union. Dr W. Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin, feared that German houses might dominate and the Mother House move overseas if Ireland united with branches in other countries. He exerted influence against Union and forbade Corcoran to go to the 1900 Conference convened with a view to Union. Walsh's interference extended to his refusing to allow a General Chapter in 1906 at the end of Corcoran's term, deposing her and installing a Vicar. Pressure from Rome ensured that the 1907 General Chapter took place, with Corcoran re-elected and again in 1913, but a small group refused to acknowledge her.

Raphael Deasy succeeded Michael Corcoran at the 1919 Chapter. Her strong nationalist stance, viewed against the Irish War of Independence 1916-1921, increasingly distanced the Irish branch from other branches of the Institute and from identification with Mary Ward, who was regarded through the lens of Irish nationalism as a disgraced Englishwoman, officially unacceptable to Church authorities until 1909.



# Health

Stanislaus had delicate health and was at times in severe pain which she was able to conceal. From her first year in Australia, she wore blue tinted glasses to reduce eye strain. She might have suffered from associated blurred vision or dry eye. Headaches are another associated condition. We know that she had a severe headache the night before she died of a cerebral haemorrhage. If she suffered from headaches during her life, it would fit with her need for tinted glasses.

In February 1896 she went to Portland suffering from loss of power in her right side. Neuritis is mentioned. In severe cases brachial neuritis, one of its forms, causes pain and paralysis in the nerves that connect the brain and spinal cord to the hand, arm and shoulder. One common cause is chronic stress. The remedy is sleep and rest, and recovery usually takes 6-12 weeks. This fits with the fact that she was several months in Portland. In the spirit of the Rule, Stanislaus placed herself, when sick, entirely in the hands of the infirmarian, even when Provincial asking when she might rise or go to bed.

Stanislaus was assiduous in her care of the novices' health, urging fresh air, providing milk and a daily dose of olive oil, arranging that the school hall was available for exercise, and encouraging the daily cold shower. While stressing that the novices should eat well, sleep well, pray well, she was less caring of her own health, and her spiritual director needed to remind her to avoid the temptation of excessive mortification in nourishment and sleep. An Assistant for four years never saw her eat cake or other dainties, eating instead dry bread, and assumed that Stanislaus could not digest them; this was until the doctor ordered that she eat whatever was provided. Mortification surely, but common life?!

She was sixty-four when appointed Provincial. Responsibility, coupled with train journeys of thousands of miles to visit communities, with only short periods of rest between, wore her down. Added to the train journeys, especially the two days and nights to Perth, were the sea trips of several months to Ireland for the General Chapters in 1913 and 1919. By 1920, at the opening of Acacias in Adelaide, she had become quite frail and increasingly unable to sustain effort. Exhaustion and an illness of several weeks in 1921 were followed by a slow convalescence. Her letters in 1922 asked prayers for a complete recovery.

She was at Benediction on the afternoon of the Feast of St Michael in May 1923 and went to bed early with a severe headache, having arranged clean head linen for the following day. Priest and doctor were called at 9.00pm when there was evidence that she had suffered a cerebral haemorrhage. Barely able to speak, she signalled her concurrence when the priest said a favourite prayer, “Here cut, O Lord, here burn, here mortify all that is not pleasing to Thy pure eyes”. She died several hours later, on the Vigil of the Ascension.

## Modus operandi

Stanislaus’s Manual for Superiors is not dated but the imprimatur for the parallel Meditations for Superiors is dated 1921. The latter was edited for other than Institute members. Reference to specific Rules and Constitutions are omitted, and “Institute” and “IBVM” are replaced by “Religion”.

In the front piece, Stanislaus describes both books as a compilation. There are references to the writings of thirteen saints and six other spiritual writers who are named, as well as to the Rules, Constitutions and Spiritual Exercises, and extensive Scripture references. Not only was Stanislaus widely read, but her absorption of what she read led to a seamless inclusion of references, as well as sayings of Mary Ward at the end of sections.

Although the modern reader might regard the overall tone as exhortatory, the Manual is practical. Stanislaus enumerates six duties of a Superior and gives Points for Consideration on each. These might be seen as self-disclosure of her modus operandi as Mistress of Novices and Provincial.

The Introduction to the Manual, sub-headed “Amas Me?” (Do you love me?), emphasises the imperative of becoming Christ-like because the Superior’s duty is to convey God’s message by the daily fidelity of her life. For Stanislaus, love of God was the one indispensable qualification for the discharge of the office. A second sub-heading, “Mater Dei, Mater Mea! (Mother of God, my Mother) Fly to her in all your necessities”, reflects Stanislaus’s devotion to Mary, Mother of God, and her fidelity to the second rule: “love and reverence her with all their strength and fly to her in all their necessities”.



Writing of the office of Superior, Stanislaus cites Jn.13:15, "I have given you an example that as I have done you also must do", as the Superior's program of government. A good Superior is closely united to God, devoted to the interests of the community, and has no interests but those of God. If a Superior's chief duty is help those in her care to make progress in the interior life, she can succeed only if she is interior and wholly devoted to God.

Stanislaus lists the Superior's first duty as prayer and the second as good example. The emphasis that Stanislaus gives to prayer is evident: almost one-fifth of the book is dedicated to this, and insights on prayer permeate other sections. The second duty of good example can be summarised in her focus throughout: It behoves a Superior to cultivate diligently and with love the Spirit of Christ. The other four duties of a Superior are vigilance - see all things, dissemble all things, correct few things; prudence - strict with oneself, indulgent with others; charity - rule by love, sweetness and kindness; firmness - be courteous and pleasant but know how to be respected and obeyed.

The Superior's Examen suggests Stanislaus's *modus operandi*: begin matters of importance by examining them before God; lead by example and be first in the observance of the Rules and Constitutions; show to all a mother's watchful care and commend all to God; be such that all may approach with confidence; see that all have sufficient time for their spiritual duties; give the example of loyal obedience to higher Superiors and promote union; pray for light and strength to discharge one's office.

The Rules of Prudence are widely applicable: study character, inclinations and abilities and so arrange things that no one is over-taxed and all have time for spiritual duties, rest and recreation; show esteem, find excuses for failings, give praise when due; be on guard against tale bearers; do not act with precipitation or when you are agitated; keep secret what is confided to you; do not trust too much in your own judgement but ask the opinion of others; do not reprove too often or for trifles; never condemn anyone unheard; choose the most favourable moment for correction when the person has had time to regain her composure; after correction show that you have no ill-will towards the person.

As Gonzaga had a copy of the Jesuit Constitutions, it can be assumed that Stanislaus knew them, as she refers to them as the expression of the life and spirit of Christ: having the same sentiments as Christ and judging things as Christ judges them; having the same affections as Jesus and being detached; having the same principles and purpose, namely to do the will of the Father and to save souls; possessing and practising the same virtues.

# Spiritual Exercises

We know Stanislaus through her writing. As well as the Manual for Superiors, are the Directory or reflections on the 81 Rules; the four Weeks of the Spiritual Exercises that she gave to the novices over twenty-three years; her personal letters to individual Sisters; her letters to communities when she was Provincial. The only correspondence that she kept were letters from Father John Ryan sj, her director when she made the Spiritual Exercises, and subsequent letters from him.

In December 1896, Stanislaus gave the first of what became the annual long retreat for the second year novices. The extent to which the retreats were valued is shown in the request of the Perth community, when she visited as Provincial, to give a truncated retreat of nineteen days during the Christmas break.

She was engaged in the task of editing her talks for circulation among the Sisters when she died. They were in circulation until at least 1961, almost forty years later.

The copies of Meditations on the Passion and The First Week, from the novitiate printing press, are dated 1912 and 1921. The Second Week is dated November 1923.

Dr Foley, Bishop of Ballarat, wrote in a foreword, "Many religious outside the Institute of the B.V.Mary will be gratified to know that this volume will be made available for general circulation, and that copies may be procured through the publishers or their agents." Earlier dates on letters of appreciation from religious of other orders show that they were already shared widely. The copy of the Fourth Week held in the Province Archives is a roneo print.



Stanislaus gave a preached retreat, as was common at the time, with lengthy points for meditation. She adheres strictly to the construct of the Spiritual Exercises and to the Additions and Method of Prayer. Her exposition of the two Preludes, History and Composition of Place, show detailed background knowledge of both history and geography. The Third Prelude, Ask What I Want, is a glimpse into Stanislaus's personal prayer, as is her frequent colloquy within the points for meditation, and the formal colloquy at the end. At the start of Contemplations on a Gospel scene, she reiterates "See the persons - listen to the words - consider the actions. Reflect with myself in order to draw fruit for my soul". The last point is especially instructive of how Stanislaus saw God's hand in all things and how she drew practical application for daily life. The connections that she made were sometimes surprising but always instructive and thought-provoking.

## Themes

"In the likeness of Christ" was the overall theme of Stanislaus's training of the novices and in her writings. Coupled with this, from the meditation on the Three Degrees of Humility, was seeking to detest and be delivered from the spirit of the world, "agere contra" in the context of love. The Institute in Australia can be said to be founded on the Spiritual Exercises.

"God wants you to be a saint" was a frequent exhortation of Stanislaus. While she left no personal notes, she gave to a young Sister a copy of her resolutions at the end of the long retreat: rise above despondent feelings and thoughts; be bright, accessible, gentle and simple; put others at their ease when anything unpleasant occurs; regard common life as my chief mortification; seek silence and the hidden life as far as obedience and charity sanction it; stand without choice regarding food, rest and occupation; have prompt recourse to Our Lady when I fail.

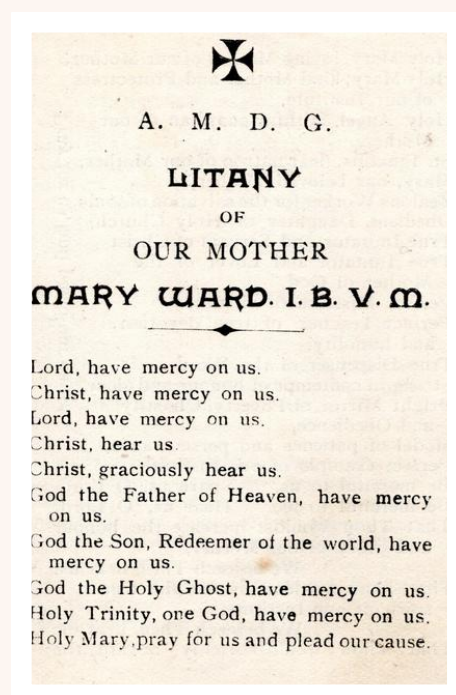
Stanislaus had great devotion to Mary, "our beautiful mother", and frequently invoked Mary's intercession in the colloquies of the Spiritual Exercises. She encouraged practices in Our Lady's honour and spoke of imitating her virtues as a sure way of advancing in sanctity. She showed her own honouring of Mary by saluting her statues and pictures, and in the way she spoke of her. Her love and veneration of the Institute embraced the second Rule, "All are to choose the most glorious Queen of Heaven ... for their special Patroness and Mother".

A constant theme in Stanislaus's writings is love of the Institute and the privilege of being called to be its member. Her love of the Institute shines in her Directory of the Professed of the IBVM. Already compiled, it was printed and circulated early in her term as Provincial.

“As the end which our Institute has in view is the greatest and sublimest possible, being the same as that of Our Lord here on earth, so also the means are excellent, seeing that the Institute embraces all such as are natural and supernatural .... Our call to the Institute is a call to sanctity or holiness ... close imitation and love of Our Lord and union with Him.” This reflects the Sixth Rule: “Let them always remember to how sublime a state they are called by Almighty God; and for that reason, their main design must be .... to please him more and more ...”

Working for the recognition of Mary Ward as founder, which came in 1909, Stanislaus composed a Litany of Mary Ward and had it printed in leaflet form with the prayer: “Awaken in us, O Lord, the spirit in which our Mother served, so that filled with it, we may strive to love what she loved and do the work she taught us”.

A former novice remembered Stanislaus overcome with emotion during a consideration on the Blessed Sacrament, unable to continue the invocations of the prayer, Anima Christi. She remembered also Stanislaus prostrating each evening before the Tabernacle.



Stanislaus constantly placed before the novices the highest ideals, yet the means she suggested were simple. Outward demeanour leads to inner recollection and a spirit of prayer. Asking to please God in the details of daily life leads to knowledge and love of God. Approaching Holy Communion with love and confidence is the remedy for spiritual infirmity. Common life leaves no room for self, and self-denial, self-effacement, self-sacrifice contribute to holiness. Loving to have the blessing of obedience is a practice of poverty. Each hour, each circumstance, each opportunity is precious in regard to eternity and an invitation to leave nothing undone that pleases God.

Stanislaus died in May, 1923. Dr. Foley, Bishop of Ballarat, who celebrated her Requiem, wrote of her in his front piece to the published Spiritual Exercises Week II: “Those who were privileged to know her, discerned in Mother Stanislaus a personality of rare spiritual elevation. She had a deep and thorough understanding of all the intricacies of the spiritual life, an unflagging fidelity to prayer, a passionate love of our Divine Lord, and an extraordinarily vivid sense of living and moving always in his presence.”

# SOURCES

Correspondence and photos held in the Province Archives of Loreto Australia and South-East Asia

Constitutions IBVM 1914

Rules IBVM 1703 amended 1914 according to the Constitutions 1914

Mulhall, Stanislaus

*Directory for the Professed of the Institute of the B.V.Mary, 1916*

*Exhortations on the Rules of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary Vol.I & II, 1910*

*Manual for Superiors, 1921*

*Meditations for Superiors, 1921 Advocate Press*

*Meditation on the Passion, 1912 hand-written date*

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*Immaculate Conception.*  
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**AMOREM** **SOLEM**  
**TUS**

**Mother M. A. STANISLAUS**  
**of**  
**JESUS**

*Baptism. 5<sup>th</sup> March.*  
*Entrance. 15<sup>th</sup> August.*  
*DEATH. 9<sup>th</sup> May 1923.*  
*Reception. 4<sup>th</sup> May.*  
*Profession. 4<sup>th</sup> May.*