



Dear Sisters,

Today, March 9, 2016, at the *San Agustín Mextepec Hospital* in Mexico City, at 11:30 am (local time), the Lord surprised us by calling to himself our sister

**SR. M. KARLA - M. ELENA CASTRO VALENZUELA,
born on February 24, 1955, in Saltillo, Coahuila (Mexico).**

Originally from the North of Mexico, already a mature young woman, she entered the Congregation in Mexico D.F. (Federal District) on August 23, 1979, bringing with her a rich experience of life and of work. In narrating her vocational story, she recalled that everything began with participation in a vocational retreat that her sister wanted to attend. With great interior struggle, she joined her in living this experience of discernment. During this retreat she was struck by the person of Jesus Master and decided to enter the Congregation together with her sister, who returned to the family during the period of aspirancy.

Following the novitiate, she made her first profession on August 15, 1984, in Mexico. She made her perpetual profession in her home parish of Saint Catherine in Nuevo León on August 26, 1990, sharing the joy of the consecration with her entire family and the Christian community.

In her request for admission to perpetual vows she affirmed: *“Events, struggle and effort have helped me to make my decision, together with the grace of God and the greatness of our vocation...Now I can affirm that I love the vocation of the Sister Disciple and desire to consecrate myself entirely to God, if this is his will”* (Mexico, June 17, 1990).

In her report, the junior mistress stated: *“Sr. M. Karla is a person who is open and spontaneous, with her limits and her qualities. She has worked on herself, is aware that having arrived at the perpetual profession does not mean that she has reached her goal, and that there are things that still need work. She loves her vocation and loves the Congregation to which she gives herself generously. She is a sister who shows much promise for the future in the Congregation and in the Church”*.

These areas formed a program of life that Sr. M. Karla worked hard to attain. She was decisive and always moving forward, like a person who is in a hurry with the interior knowledge that the time is short. She took seriously the work of sanctification as the primary commitment in her life as a Sister Disciple.

During her period of temporary vows, as a student she survived a terrible experience during the earthquake in Mexico (1985): together with a few other students, she managed to escape downstairs as the entire school building collapsed. She always considered her survival a miracle.

After studies in 1993, she was given responsibility for the pre-postulants in the Divine Master Community in Monterrey. In 1996, she was appointed as Junior Mistress in Mexico City. She then spent two years in Rome (1998-2000) where she participated in the Pauline Family Charism Course and offered her apostolic contribution at the Souvenir shop in the Vatican. Following her re-entry to Mexico, she was sent as a missionary to the United States (Los Angeles)

for some months. She was then assigned to Monterrey, Mexico, where she dedicated herself to various ministries, including the Liturgical Apostolate Center. She also spent some time in the Divine Master community in Guadalajara. In 2008 she went to the “Damascus” house for priests in Mexico City. Sr. M. Karla inspired much creativity and enthusiasm in the various areas of our apostolate: in the priestly service, in the Eucharistic service and in the liturgical service, always collaborating with great generosity and love.

Since 2011 she is a member of the provincial government, actually the vicar. The sisters greatly appreciated her capacity for accompanying the persons. She was especially helpful in her generous dedication to the service of the sisters. During this time, in fact, she was at the “Damascus” House for Priests substituting another sister. This was an apostolate that she fulfilled with great love and attention for the priests. It was here that she felt ill and it became necessary to bring her to the hospital. She was diagnosed with a form of pneumonia that proved to be resistant to treatment. Transferred to intensive care, she took the path to the Kingdom of heaven!

Sr. M. Karla was a person who promoted animation and will surely assist the Province from heaven to realize the hope instilled by the visit of Pope Francis: *“... in these days I have been able to observe that in this people there are many lights who proclaim hope; I have been able to see in many of their testimonies, in their faces, the presence of God who carries on walking in this land, guiding you, sustaining hope...May Mary, Mother of Guadalupe, continue to visit you, continue to walk on your lands — Mexico which cannot be understood without her — may she continue helping you to be missionaries and witnesses of mercy and reconciliation.*

The sisters of Mexico expressed these thoughts: *“We give thanks to God our merciful Father for the life and fidelity of our sister, Sr. M. Karla, and we entrust ourselves to her prayer that from heaven she may intercede for the entire Pauline Family, and especially for her father, Mr. Carlo Castro, and her whole family in this time of suffering they are experiencing in great faith”.*

S. H. Paolo Haucaur.