



Dear Sisters,

Yesterday, December 10, 2016, at 12:28 PM (local time) in the community of Fresno (USA), the Lord definitively called to himself our sister,

**SR. M. ANTONIETTA VICENTA CELIA VAZQUEZ,
born January 5, 1937, in El Tulcingo Edo. Puebla (Mexico).**

She entered the Congregation in Mexico City on June 5, 1958, in a reality that had the freshness and perfume of the beginning of the foundation in this nation. From the start, Sr. M. Antonietta distinguished herself for her enterprising spirit and for her great faith and love of Jesus Master. Following the novitiate, she made her first profession on May 31, 1961, with a very favorable evaluation of those responsible: *“heartfelt piety, solid virtue, very docile, quick in the apostolate, and displays good practical intelligence”*. For the perpetual profession, made on May 31, 1966, this was confirmed: *“Optimal goodwill in her duties of piety and apostolate. She has always offered herself generously, and with serenity. She has demonstrated that she truly understands how to live the spirit of her vocation. She accepts observations well, with docility and goodness”*. In her requests for admission to the various stages of formation, she always expressed her joy for the vocation in which she desired to persevere until death.

As a young professed, besides the work in the sewing workroom, she was also the assistant to the aspirants (pre-postulants). In 1972 she was sent to the United States at the Society of Saint Paul in Canfield (Ohio). In 1974 she was sent back to Mexico, to the priestly ministry in Guadalajara. In 1977, obedience called her to the Circumscription of the United States. She was sent to the small community of San Jose, where she carried out her mission in the workroom, fostering the acceptance of lay persons, and welcoming them into the Eucharistic and liturgical life. In 1990 she was sent to the community of Los Angeles (CA), where the sisters offered precious service in the Cathedral. Thus she was able to write to Mother M. Lucia Ricci: *“I continue [to be] at the Cathedral of Saint Bibiana in Los Angeles. There is a great deal of work, but I am very, very happy because here we fulfill the three dimensions of the apostolate: Eucharistic, priestly, liturgical.”* Sr. M. Antonietta worked primarily in the sacristy. The cathedral and its connected buildings, where our community also lived, became uninhabitable following the earthquake of 1994. Therefore, the community transferred temporality to Monrovia, in the outskirts of Los Angeles, awaiting the possibility of having our own house. Numerous years later, in 2007, in the new location in Los Angeles, she would continue to serve in the workroom and resume service in the new Cathedral, dedicated to Mary, Our Lady of the Angels.

The sisters who lived with her in the United States testified that Sr. M. Antonietta *“was gifted with a character that was decisive, convinced, perceptive, loving and generous. She put the astuteness of her intelligence to work to learn and execute the arts required by the charism of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master at the service of the Eucharist, of the Priesthood, and of the*

Liturgy. Rich in common sense, combined with a sense of beauty, she succeeded in all her endeavors. In 1989, with trepidation and courage, she accepted in obedience to be at the service of the Cathedral of Saint Bibiana in Los Angeles. She was the main sacristan for all the celebrations in the Cathedral and the personal sacristan for Cardinal Roger Mahoney. She appreciated this strategic position as a means of being near the priests and bishops like a new Mary of Nazareth. Her style was one of simplicity and attention to the person. She enjoyed the trust and esteem of all those who frequented the sacristy. She listened to them and brought their intentions in prayer and in offering. She also befriended the homeless who wandered around that area of the city. Once a week she guided groups of adorers consisting of street people and others who practiced their faith. She took advantage of these occasions to inculcate her passion for the Eucharist and for the Priesthood. Two young men from this group responded to the invitation of Sr. M. Antonietta and are priests today. Her love for the Priesthood was also manifest in the offering of herself”.

In June of 2011 she wrote to the Mother General, Sr. M. Regina Cesarato: *«In this year of my jubilee, as I complete 50 years of consecrated life, I give infinite thanks to God and to the Congregation that accepted me. In eternity I will sing of God’s mercy because by his grace he has assisted me to be faithful to my vocation which I love so dearly. With great love I place myself entirely in service. With gratitude, in prayer and with “great joy” I greet you lovingly in Jesus Master»!*

About a year ago Sr. M. Antonietta was transferred to our community in Fresno to receive the necessary treatment for her illness, which she always bore with a strong apostolic spirit. Pulmonary fibrosis, together with its complications, brought her to the conclusion of her earthly pilgrimage. The sisters of the Fresno community testified: *“Saturday, as Sr. M. Antonietta closed her eyes to the light of this world, the sisters of the community were at her side, together with three of her siblings: Maria, Guadalupe, Cristina. In peace she surrendered her soul to God. We prayed: Come faithful disciple, enter into the joy of your Lord!”*

For Sr. M. Antonietta the entrance antiphon of this Third Sunday of Advent has become a reality: *Rejoice, the Lord is near!* From heaven, continue to intercede for the United States, for priests, for vocations, and for the 9th General Chapter. Rest in peace!

S. H. Paolo Mancini