



*Dear Sisters,*

On October 20, 2022, at 9:30 AM, in the Divine Master community of Mexico City, in the vicinity of the World Day for the Missions, our sister returned to the House of the Father

**SR. M. ANUNCIACIÓN – ANGELINA BALLESTEROS GUTIÉRREZ**  
**born on July 7, 1942, in Irámuco Guanajuato.**

She was baptized on the following July 24 in her native parish of San Girolamo. She was the fourth of seven children. She entered the Congregation on October 21, 1957 in the Divine Master community of Mexico. Seven years later (1964), her sister María Elena Ballesteros (†), would follow her example and join Sr. M. Anunciación in the journey of discipleship. Her vocational journey was wrapped in the protection of Mary Most Holy with her entrance into the Institute and her departure for eternal life in the month of October. She entered the novitiate in Mexico City, made her religious profession on December 8, 1960, and the perpetual profession on December 8, 1965.

From the first stages of consecrated life, Sr. M. Anunciación presented herself as a young woman who is enthusiastic, responsible, creative, open to change, understanding of the sisters. She distinguished herself by her sense of humanity and her humor.

After the religious profession, she began her mission by collaborating in the various aspects of the apostolate: initially she was dedicated to the Liturgical Apostolate Center in Mexico City, in three different periods: (1960-1961; 1964-1965; 2009-2013); she offered her collaboration in the Saint Paul houses (1961-1964; 1979-1980); she also used her ability for sewing in the workroom for ecclesiastical tailoring (1970-1973; 2001). She distinguished herself in the care and responsibility for the communities as local superior (1970-1972; 1975-1978; 1981-1983), and as regional councilor (1973-1975). She was also in Rome for a short period (1984-1985).

The majority of her life as a Sister Disciple, however, was spent as a missionary in the *Democratic Republic of the Congo*, where she remained for 29 years of her religious life, as long as she had the necessary strength (1985-2001; 2002-2009; 2011-2013; 2014-2018). Here she was able to make herself a sister to the Congolese sisters, integrated into the reality and communion with the missionary sisters from other nations. All of this in the simplicity of daily life: she dedicated herself to every type of service that was needed. One can say that it was heartfelt, but that she gave her heart. The love that animated her relationships and her service was evident. She truly sought to configure herself to Jesus the Divine Master in everything, in the spirit of Saint Paul the Apostle.

In 1988, she was responsible for the community of Lubumbashi and councilor for the delegation; in 1997 she was in Kinshasa. Following a period of one year in Mexico, she returned to Lubumbashi, as mistress of the Juniors. She was present in the various communities according to the local needs. She summarized her missionary experience, writing to the sisters in Mexico: *«The Word of God has enlightened my mission: Mary's "yes" was the guide and model in my life, what made me experience great joy and dignity is the totality of the call in the mission; the*

*diffusion of articles for the celebration of the liturgy; I felt that I was a living and active member in the Church. The most beautiful and rich experience of my life were the years spent in the Republic of the Congo. Certainly, the difficulties were not lacking, my own poverty, the collaboration in beginning the mission, but the strength of community life united us and gave us courage. The charismatic phrase: **Do not be afraid**, gave me a great deal of strength, especially in the moments of war and plunder that made us tremble».*

She definitively returned to Mexico in 2018 when it became necessary for her to have an atmosphere of community life and apostolate that was more suitable also for the requirements of her health. Here she gradually integrated herself into the reality of the Province, dedicated in the workroom preparing sacred vestments. In 2021 a fall resulted in various consequences, among which was great insecurity in walking. In addition, the unexpected death of her sister, Sr. M. Elena Ballesteros, in 2021, caused her profound suffering.

At the Provincial Assembly of 2022, during the sharing she said: *“I ask the young women to do everything with great love and to love the Congregation”*. On October 9, 2022, she sustained a second fall from which she did not recover. She received the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick at the hands of her nephew priest P. Plácido Ballesteros. The sisters of the community cared for her with continual assistance, until the celebration of the eternal Passover. She was also closely accompanied by her niece, Sr. M. Sara Beatriz Serrano García, the current Provincial Superior.

Worthy of attention is the witness from the sisters of the Delegation of the Congo: «The sisters of the Delegation of RDC-RC, are weeping because our sister Sr. M. Nuncia has fallen asleep in the peace of Christ. An elder sister who was simple and courageous. She initiated the pastoral work for vocations in faraway places and accepted the risk of traveling for the vocations. A great sister filled with faith and trust in the Congolese sisters. She said: the time has arrived to yield the place. She believed in us, and we believed in her advice because she was coherent in her behavior. ...A true Pauline who made herself all things to all people to gain the world for Christ. An authentic Disciple, sincere, jovial, honest, laborious and courageous. In our midst she was authoritative by her example. ...Sister Nuncia, now sleep in peace, open your heart and your ears to listen to your little sisters who pray and weep».

And the General Councilor, Sr. M. Clementine Kazadi Kasongo testifies: «I thank the Divine Master for having placed on my journey of formation and discipleship Sr. M. Anunciación Ballesteros who accompanied me in postulancy and in the first years of my Juniorate. She was for me what the high priest, Eli, was for the young Samuel: a companion on the journey who did not substitute for those being accompanied. She knew how to listen, accompany in discernment, and allow them to go with confidence.

I received the news of her death with great sorrow, but I thanked the Divine Master for having chosen and sent her as a missionary disciple facing with faith even the risks of violence, of war, and of the insecurity that is present in the Country for a long time.

An African proverb says that *“the one who has planted a tree before dying has not lived in vain”*. Sister M. Anunciación did not live her mission in the Congo in vain, she left a testimony of life that also speaks to the lay Pauline Cooperators who knew her, and it will be transmitted to the new generations that continue to blossom.

Heartfelt thanks, Sister M. Anunciación Ballesteros, rest in peace, “Everything has an end, except the banana, which has two”, dying to give new life to the young plants. You are a grain of wheat that fell into the African soil, especially in Congo, which you loved and served with courage and perseverance. We will never forget you!».

We entrust to our sister the journey of preparation for the General Chapter, the Province of Mexico and the Delegation of the Congo.

*S. H. Paolo Haurum.*