



Dear Sisters,

Friday, July 25, 2025, at 2:08 AM, at the Antipolo Hospital and Wellness Center in Antipolo City (Philippines), the Divine Master called our sister to eternity

SR. M. CLAIRE – CARMELITA ESPIRITU
born on July 24, 1949, in Taytay, Rizal (Philippines).

The third child, after two boys, on Sunday, September 4, the little girl received baptism in the Parish of St. John the Baptist and, through the gift of faith, she received the name Carmelita and entered into the great family of God.

At nine years of age, she lost her father and, with the help and example of her mother, she was educated in the family and Christian life. She was educated and taught in the high school and she participated actively in parish life as a member of the *Legio Mariae* [*Legion of Mary*]. Thus the Marian devotion and sensitivity toward the ecclesial life increased within her, which fostered her willingness to respond to the Lord's call to dedicate herself completely to him and to his Gospel.

On May 1, 1971, she entered the Divine Master Community in Antipolo City to undertake the formative journey for the religious life among the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master, under the protection of Mary Most Holy. Upon completion of the novitiate, on December 8, 1974, she made her religious profession in the Divine Master Community in Antipolo City where, on December 8, 1980, she would make her perpetual profession «*enthusiastically proclaiming to the world that we consecrate ourselves to Christ the Master because we love him*» - as she publicly testified on the 50th anniversary of religious profession.

During her life as a Sister Disciple, she carried out various ministries and formed herself continuously to serve the people of God with the specific charism of the Institute: at the service of the Eucharist, the Priesthood and the Liturgy. She attended the Theological Institute for Laity, then she dedicated herself to liturgical formation at the *Paul VI Institute of Liturgy*, Malaybalay, Bukidnon. Finally, in 2007, she obtained a *Master of Arts in Liturgical Studies* at Saint Bede College, Manila. With the intention of integrating the specific charismatic dimension, she was offered the possibility of attending the Charism Course of the Pauline Family (2000-2001) and the hermeneutics course on the Founder promoted by our Institute in Rome. All of this enabled her to be a sister who was esteemed and appreciated in the Pauline and diocesan seminaries, where a feminine presence was requested by the superiors and those



in positions of responsibility, for religious and lay persons, to foster integrality in the growth and preparation of candidates for priestly ministry.

Many communities were able to experience her presence as a sister and apostle, as local superior or as coordinator or collaborator in various activities: DM Antipolo; LAC Manila; DM Cebu; DM Davao; Alberione Oasis, Antipolo; PDDM Dagupan; SSP Silang; Alberione House Antipolo; PAC Manila.

The profile of this sister is well described in the witness of Sr. M. Magdalene Magallanes, Provincial Superior of the Province of the Philippines-Taiwan-Hong Kong: *«My memories of Sr. M. Claire go back to the time of the novitiate, when I came to know the Liturgical Center in Manila. I still remember how Sr. M. Claire took time to teach me, not in theory, but with a real and practical formation. She taught me how to pack boxes correctly and efficiently for our centers in Davao and Cebu. She was precise, practical and always aware that every shipment represented a service to the community and, ultimately, to the persons who would be the recipients.*


Then, I learned from her how to navigate the complicated process of shipments from Rome. She had an eye for detail, a calm approach even in the midst of bureaucratic confusion, and an unshakeable sense of mission. That which could have been stressful or tedious became, by her example, a significant extension of our life of service.

But beyond the logistics and apostolic abilities, the thing that struck me the most was her love for the Liturgy. Undoubtedly, she was a teacher and a liturgist, deeply rooted in the worship of the Church. In this way, she formed many persons – religious, seminarians, priests – with the same depth and care that she gave to every task. In fact, during her last days in the hospital, some of her former students – now priests – went to visit and pray with her. That image remains impressed within me: she is surrounded by those she had taught at one time, who now assisted her with gratitude and love. It was as if the Liturgy she taught and lived made a complete circle, sweetly bringing her back home».

The sudden illness that led to her hospitalization and rapidly to her death surprised the community, her family, the brothers and sisters of the Pauline Family, and those who knew her, but we believe she was ready for the encounter with the Lord, whom she sought, served and loved, day after day.

Dear Sister, now that you participate in the heavenly liturgy to the praise and glory of the Most Blessed Trinity, intercede for us as we continue as pilgrims that we may learn to walk in the hope that does not disappoint. Watch over the candidates to the priesthood, over our communities that they may be places of hospitality for vocations.

Rome July 26, 2025


Sr. M. Micaela Monetti