



Dear Sisters,

On March 30, 2023, at 8:30 PM in the DM community of Albano (RM), our sister was invited to the Banquet of Easter joy:

SR. M. ARCANGELA – CARMELA BRUGIOLO
born on July 16, 1924 in Brugine (PD).

Braving the difficulties imposed by the Second World War, at the age of seventeen, Carmela entered the Congregation in Sacile (Pordenone) on September 11, 1941. She completed her formation in Alba (CN) where she made her religious profession on March 25, 1944. She made her perpetual profession in Waterville (Canada) on May 24, 1949. Her formators underscored her characteristic traits as that of a young woman *with much hope, common sense, obedience and a spirit of sacrifice*. After profession, for some years she was in Alba, dedicated to the formation and various services until she was called to be a missionary. At the age of 24, in fact, she was chosen to form part of a foundational nucleus for our presence in Canada, which Fr. Alberione had been preparing for some time.

Designated by the Founder, Fr. Dionigi Pettinati, ssp (1912-1991), took the necessary steps with the ecclesiastical authority to secure the acceptance of the Sister Disciples in the Diocese of Sherbrooke. On October 4, 1947, the Bishop, Msgr. Philippe Desranleau, responded that he would receive the Sister Disciples under the condition that they would accept to offer domestic assistance at the *Orphelinat Saint-Joseph* [orphanage] in Waterville, run by the religious of the Holy Cross and at the seminary of the *Missionari di Marianhill* at Mont Sainte-Anne, Sherbrooke. The contribution being requested was heavy and delayed the presence of the Sister Disciples at the Society of St. Paul, but Fr. James Alberione advised them to accept, at least temporarily.

Sr. M. Arcangela and the other Sister Disciples destined for Canada left Naples on March 3, 1948 aboard the ship *Vulcania*. On March 19, they arrived in Canada and began a small community at the *Orphelinat St. Joseph*. In 1950, Sr. M. Arcangela went to the other community of Sherbrooke, in service to the *Missionari di Marianhill*. In 1953, they concluded this service and in 1954 it was possible to establish a Liturgical Apostolate Center in Sherbrooke, where Sr. M. Arcangela offered her service. In 1956 she was able to do it in Montréal where, in the meantime, the construction of our house was begun.

In 1958 her collaboration was requested as Local Superior and for the liturgical apostolate in the community of Toulouse (France). She returned to Italy and served as coordinator for the community of Sanfrè. Thanks to her knowledge of French and her missionary heart, she was called to cross the Ocean to unite herself with the missionaries departing for Zaire (now Dem. Republic of the Congo) as the person responsible for our service with the Society of St. Paul in Kinshasa (1961 – 1967).

Sr. M. Arcangela narrates: *«It was in the month of July 1961, I was in Sanfrè when I received a note from Mother Lucia Ricci accompanied by a letter in which she told me: “Before opening this letter, go in church before the Tabernacle, pray to the Holy Spirit and to the Madonna, then open the letter and give me a response”. I confide that I was trembling with emotion, since I did not know what God would be asking of me. After praying, I opened the letter which read: “Are you ready to leave Italy once again for a new frontier in the Congo?”. I did not know anything about the Congo; I knew only that there was the independence and that the war was still taking place in some regions. After praying, I gave an affirmative response. Then I met with Fr. Alberione. He was in Ariccia. I remember that he told me: “The fathers need the presence of the Sister Disciples, your prayer, since there are numerous difficulties in establishing the apostolate. Only your prayer can obtain the grace of the apostolate for them. Do not be afraid! ”.*

Together with Sr. M. Giuditta Beltramo, aboard the “Sabena” and accompanied by Maestra Tecla Merlo, we arrived at Léopoldville toward 11 in the morning, November first. Awaiting us were all of the Pauline brothers and sisters. It was an emotional encounter, especially because of the presence of Maestra Tecla».

From 1967 to 1969 she was responsible for the community of the Sister Disciples in Lubumbashi, where our presence had been established in the meantime.

Upon her return to Italy, she was asked to assume the service of Local Superior in the community of Sanfrè (1969 – 1972). Then she spent one year at the Society of St. Paul in Cinisello Balsamo and returned to France: to Nice (1973 – 1975) and then to Toulouse (1975).

In 1976 she returned to the Congo, where she would remain for more than fifteen years. From 1976 to 1981 she offered her service at USUMA ACCUEILLE, a house of hospitality for sisters coming from the missions in the villages who came to Kinshasa for various needs. There she also initiated a simple liturgical service, and collaboration with the local artists, before we had our own house.

In 1982 Sr. M. Arcangela was appointed Regional Delegate for the Congo and Local Superior in Lubumbashi. Then she alternated her presence, with tasks of responsibility, between Kinshasa and Lubumbashi until her final return to Rome in 1993. Discreet and generous, she fulfilled the roles of portress and switchboard operator until 2009, when she was transferred to the Beato Timoteo Community in Rome for health reasons, and in October of 2021, to the Divine Master Community in Albano Laziale.

Some important witnesses speak to us about her and her characteristic traits: *«I heard about Sr. M. Arcangela Brugiolo’s return to the Heavenly Father. I worked a good deal with her when the Holy Father, John Paul II, came to Lubumbashi. I would describe her as: a smiling and peacemaking woman. She was loved by all. Bishops, priests and laity. If I would*

say something more, I would risk diminishing her beautiful figure. She was small in stature but great in spirit. May she rest in peace». Br. Gaetano Trolese, SSP.

«The first time I met Sr. Maria Arcangela Brugiolo, I was a postulant. It was the celebration of the 40th anniversary of our foundation in the Congo and she was invited for the occasion. As young women in formation, we were curious to hear her speak about the beginnings of the foundation in the Congo and her experience as a protagonist in this work. She was very happy to tell us the story, which was not easy, because the political situation was unstable, the Country had barely attained independence... What struck me is that she spoke of painful situations with a gaze filled with joy and hope because, as she said, she saw in us the fruit of the many sacrifices that generated vocations. From then she attracted my liking and each time I went to Rome I did not lose the opportunity to visit her and listen willingly to her words filled with wisdom. I entrusted some of my intentions to her and she bore them in her heart» (Sr. M. Clémentine Kazadi Kasongo, General Councilor).

Sr. M. Pauline Bakari Kilombo, Delegate Superior of the Congo (RDC/RC), upon learning of the news of the eternal Passover of Sr. M. Arcangela, wrote on behalf of the Congolese sisters: *«Mother Arcangela, the pioneer of the Sister Disciples in Congo, was always happy to see us whenever we came to Rome and this joy was also ours; she always wanted to return to us, despite her age and health situation. Now, from heaven, may she intercede for the Congolese vocations, that they may be women dedicated to the Divine Master, loving and serving him with the joy that characterized you. Rest in peace and thank you for what you were and remain for us as your daughters».*

Sr. M. Arcangela herself offers us a brief synthesis of her life: *«Even my health is continually declining. Jesus makes us understand the time has come to prepare ourselves for Paradise, seeking to render ever more precious the days that he grants us, which remain a great gift. Pray that he will find me ready at the moment in which he will call me by name that I may respond: me voici (here I am), je vien (I am coming). The time of the synthesis has also come for me... The past seems to be so poor and the present sprinkled with voids. I believe with my whole heart in the infinite mercy that makes amends, forgives and is made manifest in the love of Jesus who comes as Savior!» (to M. M. Lucia Ricci, Lubumbashi 01.12.1989).*

Yes, dear Sister Arcangela, Jesus Master has invited you to his Passover and you, grateful for the long days he has granted you upon the earth, said once again: *Yes, I am coming!* Bring to him all the intentions the sisters have confidently entrusted to you!

S. H. Paolo Haucium.