



Dear Sisters,

On May 31, 2024, the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, at 8:30 PM, the Lord visited the Divine Master Community in Hachioji – Tokyo, definitively calling to himself our sister

**SR. M. LUCE – TOMIKO CECILIA FUKUHARA
born on August 8, 1943, in Sakae Cho, Gifu Ken (Japan).**

Born into a Korean Catholic family, the last of five children, little Tomiko was carried to the baptismal font on August 21, 1943, and received the name Cecilia. Her baptismal faith was nurtured in her family and by the priests of the Society of the Divine Word who led her parish. At the age of 10, she received preparation for the Mass and liturgical instruction from a German priest, a formation that would shape her life in a particular way. In her recollections she wrote: «As we prepared the liturgy, our faith was nourished, and in the service of the liturgy we learned to adore God and to serve him. I remember that in the parish chapel – I believe it was in the fifth grade – we were taught to clean the altar and the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament. Thus, we learned to prepare ourselves for the Mass of the following day. Among other things, the priest had all of the children kneel when we entered and left the chapel and say: “I love you, Jesus, with my whole heart”. These words summarize the importance of many things that we learned and do in the Church. In effect, I believe that I made this experience of doing everything for God from my childhood. Currently, sewing the habits and the vestments for priests, I remember and always pray: “Lord, grant that the priests who wear these may be worthy of the priesthood of Christ, great priests and apostles who lead people to the life of God» (July 1997).

She came to know the Congregation of the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master and remained fascinated by the spirit of prayer, especially the Eucharistic adoration. On March 25, 1964, little more than twenty years of age, she left her family and entered the Divine Master community in Tokyo.

Following the novitiate, she made the religious profession on March 25, 1967 and, on Sunday, April 1, 1973, she made her perpetual profession.

Sociable and generous, she loved the spirit of the Sister Disciples, and she willingly placed into service her talent as a capable seamstress in the workroom in Tokyo. Already during the



Juniorate (1967 -1968), she was sent to Seoul, Korea, to the Society of St. Paul. But in 1971, she returned to Fukuoka, dedicating herself to the sewing workrooms of the Liturgical Apostolate.

She spent her life in the various communities in Japan and, from 1974 to 1978, in Korea at Seoul and Masan. She remained closely connected with her family's nation of origin and, when offered the possibility of returning for Spiritual Exercises or other formative events, she participated joyfully and fruitfully.

She spent some years in Italy: learning Italian at the University for foreigners in Perugia and then offering her missionary contribution in the House of Prayer in Camaldoli (AR). She was content when she was sent to Nice (France) to the house for priests "Les cedres" and manifested her gratitude for this experience to Mother M. Tecla Molino, the Superior General at the time. She had a special love for the person of the priests and supported their vocation and mission through daily Eucharistic adoration.

Sr. M. Luce Fukuhara was a person who received from God the gift for sewing and she used it competently. With quickness and dedication, she sewed the chasubles, albs and cassocks of many priests. She always had many orders to fill, but also found time to serve the sisters of the community as a seamstress. In the Morning and Evening Prayers she always praised God with her beautiful voice.

On the morning of June 1, her voice was not heard in the singing of the Morning Prayer by the community. When Sr. M. Loretta Omizu, the Local Superior, and the sisters went to her room to look for her, they found her lifeless body. Nothing foreshadowed such a sudden departure since, on the evening of May 31, she calmly had supper as usual. At the conclusion of the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin to her cousin Elizabeth, she – in the secret of her room – received the visit from the Lord, definitively calling her to himself.

Her death, unexpected for us, certainly did not find her unprepared. It caused shock and sorrow that was shared by many people who knew her, especially the priests who were able to appreciate her ability in the sewing ministry. There were numerous phone calls and emails participating in our sorrow, and assuring their prayers of suffrage.

The sisters of her community testify: «The witness of the hundred-fold recompense for her generous dedication to the priestly and liturgical apostolate, throughout her life, was a great comfort to those of us who were surprised and saddened by her sudden departure».

We are confident that Sr. M. Luce, in coherence with the meaning of her name, now lives in the Light of God and is able to sing with the Blessed Virgin Mary her song of endless praise.

Rome, June 2, 2024

Sr. M. Micaela Monetti

Sr. M. Micaela Monetti

