

Sister Gertrudes was born on November 22, 1964, in Katchiungo, Huambo, Angola. She was the daughter of Luciano Tchimuku and Delfina Maria de Lourdes, both deceased. They had two daughters. Gertrudes was the second. After her mother's death, her father remarried and had five more children: three boys and two girls. She entered the Institute of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary on February 11, 1985, in Benguela. In the community of *São Francisco de Assis*, started her novitiate on March 25, 1986. She celebrated her temporary profession on March 25, 1988, to Mission of *Nazaré*.

After her profession, she was sent to the community of *Nossa Senhora da Esperança* in Luanda where she worked in family ministry and catechism. After having well completed her initial formation, she went to Madagascar for 6 months in 1992 to prepare for her perpetual profession, total gift to God. On May 30, 1993, in the parish *Senhora des Graças/Precol* in Luanda, Gertrudes celebrated her perpetual profession as she committed her life in the FMM family.

She was sent to Province of Mozambique. In this post, she entirely dedicated herself to catechism, women's promotion, youth, and family ministry. She also taught in a professional center.

In 1999, she returned to Angola, her home province. Angola needed a mistress of

novices. To prepare for this new role, she went to France to learn French. She then went to Rome for biblical studies and deepening the Charism. From 2000 to 2001, she completed a degree in psychopedagogy. From 2005 to 2007 she was mistress of novices and superior at the novitiate of Lubango.

In August 2007 in Rome, she prepared for the office of Provincial Superior. As a provincial, she was part of the USMRFA team (*Union of Major Superiors of Women's Congregations of Angola*). During her tenure, she worked in the pastoral care of women prisoners and founded the *Franciscan Childhood*. Gertrudes served two terms as provincial (2007-2015). During this time, she worked extensively for the unity between her sisters and their respective families with great love, attention and listening.

After finishing her terms, although tired, she said yes to the request of the General Council to resume her position as mistress of novices in Lubango for three years. It was an unexpected service because the sitting sister had just been elected provincial. She was then sent to the community of *São Francisco de Assis* in Benguela. She became involved as a member of the pre-novitiate team.

She assists with training while preparing her documents for studies in Canada. She obtained her visa and arrived on September

15, 2021, in Montreal. She completed the three-year program at the *Institut de formation humaine intégrale de Montréal* (IFHIM). In May 2023, she was diagnosed with cancer and died on August 21 at 7:50 pm after placing her soul in God's hands.

Who is Sister Gertrudes? She was a woman of faith, courageous, gentle, humble, counselling, silent, and welcoming. A gifted nun without limits. A universal woman, friend of everyone.

Wherever she went, she always had many friends, especially among her own FMM sisters. The aspirants, the sisters in initial formation and all the people who encountered her, remember her with great affection and gratitude. She always lived her vocation faithfully in great love and devotion to the Virgin Mary. She was a very dedicated, simple, serene, discreet, exemplary, available, and tireless person. She had a spirit of sacrifice and a big heart. She was sensitive to the needs of others. Her smile and kindness attracted everyone.

You left us to mourn, but we are proud because you have fully lived your consecration. You loved the FMM Charism that you transmitted through your simplicity and humility.

Thank you dear Gertrudes. You will always be a sister to us all! Intercede for us with God

the Father and Jesus our Brother. Thank you for your testimony and the legacy you have left us.

Goodbye dear mother, sister, friend, catechist, counselor... May your soul rest in peace in the splendours of perpetual light!



*Gentle harmony of colours,
Joy of embracing another.
Card found in her spiritual notebook,*



*Sister Gertrudes Tchilombo
Franciscan Missionaries of Mary*

*born in Katichiungo, Angola
November 22 1964*

*entered the Institute
in Benguela, Angola
on February 11 1985*

*died in Montreal, QC
on August 21 2023*

*in her 59th year,
the 38th of her religious life.*

May she rest in the peace of Christ!