Voices of Sisters
Spirituality



"En el vacío de la vida siempre me guía el Corazón de Jesús con esperanza. Como maya q'eqchi', desde nuestra espiritualidad, lo llamamos Corazón del Cielo y Corazón de la Tierra como me enseñaron mis ancestros": Hna. Dora Estela Tuìl May. (Foto: Pexels)



Sr. Dora Estela Tupil May

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Allow me to introduce myself: I am Dora Estela Tupil May, originally from San Juan Chamelco, Alta Verapaz. My mother tongue is Maya Q'eqchi', and I identify myself as a Mayan woman of the Indigenous peoples. I am currently on mission in Carpino, in the Puglia region of Italy. I am part of the religious family of the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus under the protection of St. Joseph.

I would like to briefly share my experience of consecrated life and my commitment to the diversity of nations, cultures and languages. I have been on mission in my own country, Guatemala, as well as in Mexico and El Salvador, and I am currently in Italy. For me, it is a rich blessing to be able to share the talents and gifts that God has given me with joy and enthusiasm.

Strength to face the unknown emerges from the depths of my being as a woman, always placing trust in God. I am consistently guided with hope by the Heart of Jesus in the emptiness of life. In our spirituality as Mayan Q'eqchi', we refer to it as the Heart of Heaven and the Heart of the Earth, as taught by my ancestors — grandparents. This connection envelops me in harmony, propelling me to share who I am and what I have with my sisters and brothers from other cultures and nations. The inherent power of being a Mayan woman lights the way for me to be a diverse presence in the place where I am.

> The lives of martyrs, catechists, and women and men, teaches me to defend and value life with generous commitment, and to not remain silent in situations of violence and injustice.
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"Las riquezas y potencias de cada ser humano me ayudan a crecer porque nutren las relaciones y pautas de comportamientos en cada dimensión de mi ser de mujer maya": Hna. Dora Estela Tupil May. (Foto: cortesía Dora Tupil)

With whom have I shared at the pastoral and mission levels during these years? I have been involved in ministry with children, youth, families and women. This could be described as a triple ministry: prophetic, liturgical and social. Working together has been key in these stages of mission. I have learned a lot by working alongside laity, religious and priests. I have been empowered to be, feel, do, share and think critically and, with a generous heart, to be a co-partner of change, live with the

people, carry their pain and be connected to their personal experiences.

What can I say in the face of this richness received from everyone? Words and thoughts are abundant, but the true testimony is in the hearts of our brothers and sisters in the places I have been. I have met hearts full of joy and hope on this journey, but also hearts filled with pain. I am invited to listen with my heart because every word is sacred; every story is sacred ground. I share with them the true essence and depth of the person by listening to them, and I can nurture the vocation that God has entrusted to me.

> Strength to face the unknown emerges from the depths of my being a woman, always placing my trust in God.
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The values that have sustained my mission are prayer, the Eucharist, meditation on the Word of God, times of silence, spiritual exercises, discernment and community life. At the same time, reality constantly challenges me to balance thought, will and community decisions, and to strengthen all facets of the human condition. The context, the sociocultural environment, and the richness and potential of every human being helps me to grow because they nurture relationships and patterns of behavior in every dimension of my being as a Mayan woman. Interaction with other peoples, cultures, languages and nations has enriched my journey.

The lives of martyrs, catechists, women and men teaches me to defend and value life with generous commitment, and to not remain silent in situations of violence and injustice in order to be a true disciple of Jesus.

The diverse faces of children, young people, women and men are impossible to describe and explain. I discover in them the presence of God, living and active, and commit myself to be creative, innovative in my ways of being and thinking, deepening my spirituality so as not to fall into the traps of the moment — immediacy and efficiency — since what is most needed today is simply to be. This experience is challenging, demanding and unsettling, and it invites me to live life with meaning.

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Today's reality invites me to remain steadfast, with my feet firmly planted on the ground and my heart filled with the spirit of wisdom. Although the reality may seem difficult, I am called to keep my heart, eyes and ears wide open, and to have confidence in the heart of God who accompanies me with tenderness, sustaining and guiding my life and my vocation every day.

This road I have traveled encourages me to go forward with greater courage. The worries and difficulties I encounter in the mission make me stronger, allowing me to grow in both human and spiritual life.

All this has been possible, thanks to the gift of God, Mother and Father, and the energy I receive from Him every day.

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