



Wisdom calls aloud in the streets; she raises her voice in the public squares;
she calls out at the street corners; she delivers her message at the city gates.
(Proverbs 1: 20 – 21)

Dear Sisters, Associates, Relatives and Friends of Sister Antonia;

Sister Antonia, Helen Anthony, the sixth and youngest child of Ward and Eugenie Leonard Anthony, was born on August 20, 1928, in a family rooted in Denver and with lives intertwined with St. Dominic's parish. Her grandfather was a Denver pioneer, arriving from St. Louis in 1865 when he was 17 years old. With his team of horses he helped lay the original Colfax avenue and excavated the basement of the first St. Dominic's church and school at West. 25th and Grove.

The Anthony children were all schooled in St. Dominic's; at one time all six were enrolled. To the family their Catholic faith, many relatives, gatherings at the piano to sing, schooling, the Colorado mountains, and independent spirits were valued.

After receiving a bachelor's degree at the Jesuit University of Detroit, Sister Antonia began three years' newspaper work at the Denver Catholic Register and the Arvada Enterprise. Then, in 1953, she embarked on her Franciscan quest at Marycrest. Profession was followed by nine years in teaching in St. Elizabeth's, Holy Rosary mission, St. Agnes Alliance, Marycrest High School, and even a brief stint at Regis college after obtaining a master's degree at Notre Dame. She helped found the DeSmet Indian Center in Denver.

In the Church that had just begun to arise from Second Vatican Council in 1965, Sister Antonia, too, as a missionary in Orizabita, Mexico, experienced a new birth in the base ecclesial communities where, in fields, small huts and chapels, she reflected with small groups of Natives on the ways that they, working together, would bring their lives to greater fullness and with Jesus, be instruments of God's Kingdom on earth. The vision was exhilarating. It would help her see the world and Church through the eyes of the poor as she continued later ministries among Hispanics in Denver's housing projects, of Las Casitas and Sun Valley, and then on to South Dakota for pastoral and social concerns ministry among the Sicangu Sioux of the Rosebud reservation.

The mission that brought together her previous experiences took place in 1991 – 1995 in the parish of Palenque, Diocese of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Chiapas, the southernmost state of Mexico. Mayan descendants, believing the Gospel Good News, had begun since Vatican II to forge a dignified future for themselves and all peoples against the forces of the globalized economy that would gobble their homeland, natural wealth and cultural identities. Day to day the Indigenous took up the cross of non-violent resistance, learning that the Gospel life entailed suffering.

After returning to the United States in 1995, Sister Antonia continued to collaborate with others seeking to guarantee the right to survival and full life for all Indigenous peoples. She co-founded the Denver Chiapas Coalition and Sister parishes who formed a relationship with Oxchuc and then Ocosingo, Chipas.

Until her very last days Sister Antonia worked tirelessly for changes in our world that would lessen the distance between the have and have-nots. She continually collaborated with others to educate our world about social justice and the Gospel call to stand in solidarity with the poor of the earth.

Sr. Antonia died on November 4, 2011 in Denver, Colorado, surrounded by her Community and family. Her wake on November 8 and the Mass of the Resurrection celebrating her life the following day, was held at her beloved St. Dominic's Church where hundreds attended. Sister Antonia's ashes will be buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery on January 7, 2012.