



## Marie-Therese Mbelu

June 13, 1936 - April 16, 2020

Maman Marie-Thérèse Mbelu, after a battle with heart failure for 104 days at the Wake Medical Center Raleigh Campus in Raleigh, North Carolina, passed away peacefully on Thursday April 16, 2020, 2 months short of her 84th birthday.

Born in Mueka, Kasai in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on June 13, 1936, Maman Marie-Thérèse was the second of seven daughters born to Godelieve Ngomba and Bonaventure Kabasela, then a self-employed carpenter. She was raised in several towns of the Kasai province, including the town of Kabeya Kamwanga, her father's place of origin, Mbuji-Mayi (then Bakwanga) the diamond mining center, and Dekese where she met and married her late husband Clément Prosper Lupumba, with whom they eventually settled in Kinshasa, the DRC capital since 1965.

Together they had twelve children, and traveled throughout the DRC, and to many countries in Africa, Europe, as well as the United States of America, either for his work, leisure or family visits. Maman Marie-Thérèse was a very cheerful and loving person. She was very devoted to her family that she dearly cherished and cared for, and the loving mother to Venance Lupumba, Godelieve Musungayi, Alphonse (Cintré) Lupumba, Jeanne Lupumba-Nzongola, Robertine Lupumba, Augustine Lupumba, Louis-Marie Lupumba, Noël Lupumba, Denise Lupumba, Domitille Lupumba Makombo, Charlotte

(Mbiya) Lupumba Omombo and Nanou Lupumba Lusamba. She was the sweet mother in law to Claudine Mujinga Tshibuyi, Richard Musungayi, Bébé Eseka Bindo, Georges Nzongola, Robert Nsayi clerebeaut, Euloge Makombo, Bibiane Ewale, Clotilde Mosha, Louis Omombo, and José Arthur Ilunga (Ilo).

Maman Marie-Thérèse came for the fourth time to the United States from the DRC in 2017, over a year after she lost her husband of 65 years and became a permanent resident. She resided in the town of Cary where she attended Saint Michael the Archangel Catholic Church, but she always wished to go back to rest in the DRC.

She is preceded in death by her sons Venance and Alphonse, sons-in-law Robert Clerebaut Nsayi and Richard Musungayi, and daughters Robertine and Godelieve. The passing of the latest on November 22, 2019 led to a broken heart syndrome that caused Maman Marie-Thérèse heart failure and hospitalization on January 4, 2020.

She is survived by eight children, forty five grand-children including Kalala Tshimanga, Sarah Clerebaut Babala, Natu Makombo, Lola Makombo and Ralph Makombo, just to name the ones present in the US, who used to call her 'Koko la fille', 'Kaku', 'Shakena', grandma or grand-mère; thirty-seven great grand-children that she used to call "tun kanununa tuanyi", of which Clarissa, Anaël and Costa in the US. She just missed, by one month, the birth of her first great great grandson born in Edmonton, Canada. She is also survived by her older sister, two younger sisters and numerous nephews and nieces.

Maman Marie-Thérèse was the "Matriarch" who was always up to the task, so giving and hospitable that she raised far more than her own twelve children. She took care of her younger sisters, brothers and sisters in-law, many nieces and nephews. She was therefore "Maman" to a multitude hence the nickname

of 'MUA BITABU' translated as the mother of many children. Because she feared God, she welcomed everybody without discrimination and brought comfort to many, whenever needed. She was so generous that even with the little she had in her old age, she was still helping her sisters and some nieces and nephews.

Despite her enormous responsibilities as a homemaker of a large family, Maman Marie-Thérèse used to manage some small business activities as an entrepreneur in various areas of the food industry. She was always admired as a gracious mother, and wife to her husband be it in diplomatic or government functions, among other duties as first lady of the cities of Lubumbashi and Likasi in the copper province of Katanga for many years when her was the mayor there, and a mentor to a lot of women. The prestige she sometimes had in society never altered her fairness, as she treated everyone with dignity and respect. In spite of her lack of higher education, she was so passionate about the politics that she could analyze and discuss political events with great wisdom for hours.

Maman Marie-Thérèse was such a strong woman, physically independent and self-caring. She was able to prepare meals until the day before her fall and illness on January 4. She was a great cook too. Her smile, her soothing voice, her kindness and her love helped to keep the family together. We miss her and her words of wisdom as a strong believer and devoted Christian. Her daily words to her children were "love God and love one another for there is no greater value than LOVE, and forgiveness".

Due to her wish to be buried next to her husband, and due to current circumstances of closed borders, the family will hold a memorial service in the upcoming weeks to honor and remember her before she can be transported to her last earthly home in Kinshasa.

A Funeral Mass will be held at 11AM Saturday, August 1, 2020 at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in Cary, 804 High House Rd. - Cary, NC, 27513. A visitation time will be held from 1-3PM following the Mass at Wake Memorial Park Mausoleum, 7002 Green Hope School Rd - Cary, NC, 27519.

The funeral mass will be streamed live at 11am at [www.livestream.com/stmichaelcary](http://www.livestream.com/stmichaelcary). The visitation can be viewed on Facebook page Wake Funeral and Cremation Services, Inc.

A PERSONAL PROTECTION FACE COVERING AND SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE REQUIRED AT BOTH EVENTS. PLEASE COME PREPARED IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the family to buy them in Kinshasa, for her memorial and funeral at the Necropole cemetery there.

Thank you for your support, kind words and wishes. You may also post them in this Tribute Wall. May God bless you.

# Previous Events

## Funeral Mass

AUG 1. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
804 High House Rd.  
Cary, NC 27513  
<http://www.stmichaeltcary.org/>

## Visitation

AUG 1. 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM (ET)

Wake Memorial Park Cemetery  
7002 Green Hope School Rd  
Cary, NC 27519  
(919) 465-0888  
<https://www.wakememorialpark.com/>

# Tribute Wall

AK

“ Il est des moments où tout s’envole, même les mots grâce auxquels on s’exprime! Que te dire ? Je t’appelais Yaya Marie Thérèse ou tout simplement Yaya. Au-delà de nos relations familiales, nous avons tissé une relation particulière et forte. Je t’avais choisie comme ma marraine de mariage il y a de cela plus de trente ans ! Signe de mon appréciation et de mon affection ! Aujourd’hui tu t’en es allée ! Ta voix rêche, voilée et joyeuse, entrecoupée de toussotements subtils me manquera à jamais... au bout de fil !  
Repose en paix Yaya. Nous vous porterons à jamais dans nos cœurs, Bukonda Clément et toi-même. RIP  
Angèle Kadima-Nzuji Kabwasa



Angele kadima-nzuji kabwasa - August 06, 2020 at 07:19 PM

AK

*Photo prise en juin 2012 a Kinshasa.*

Angele kadima-nzuji kabwasa - August 06, 2020 at 07:31 PM

VK

“ Yaya wani, ndi ngela Nzambi tuasakidila bua matuku onso atudi kaba kamue. Ne ngikala mvuluka TUSEKU tueba, tufuma ku moyi webe ne tuleja buimpa buawu. Mulopo akuakidila mu bupola bwende too ne patuapetangana kabidi  
Wenu Victorine Kadima-Nzuji

Victorine Kadima-Nzuji - August 05, 2020 at 02:53 AM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Marie-Therese Mbelu.*



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July 31, 2020 at 03:18 PM



“ *Maman Marie Therese, que Dieu vous garde dans sa Paix Eternelle! Vous avez ete une maman pour moi egalement! Votre joie de vivre ,votre dynamisme et tous les bons souvenirs que je garde de vous restent graves dans mon coeur. Chere maman Marie Therese reposez dans la paix du Seigneur. Merci a Dieu pour tout . Therese Muleka*

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**Therese Muleka** - July 30, 2020 at 09:45 AM



*Très Chère Maman,  
Je reconnais que tu avais droit d'aller te reposer et Dieu a jugé qu'il fallait faire ainsi.  
Ton affection, "your tenderness" nous manquera toujours.  
Jean-Luc M. Mudiay*

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**Jean-Luc M. MUDIAY** - August 01, 2020 at 07:39 PM



“ *2 files added to the tribute wall*



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**Kalala Tshimanga** - July 29, 2020 at 02:24 AM

ET

“*Ma maman Marie-Thérèse était tendre et posée. Son doux sourire était une source de réconfort. J'étais toujours contente de l'avoir au téléphone et comme elle avait le rire facile; échanger avec elle, était pour moi un moment agréable.*

*Je peux encore l'entendre rire très fort quand elle m'avait rapporté que, s'étant fait mal au dos Jeanne se soutenait momentanément avec une canne. Comme Pr. Nzongola revenait de voyage ce jour là, j'ai dit à maman:” Kaaa udi uvua kusangana muana ne mamu'enda ne makombo”? (mère et fille avec une canne?). Elle a dit:” muna amu peba” (n'est-ce pas) et nous avons ri ensemble de tout cœur.*

*Durant nos petites conversations au téléphone, maman était très attentionnée et demandait à chaque occasion des nouvelles de la famille au Congo. Le Congo était constamment dans son esprit et nous en parlions souvent. Maman avait une vision optimiste pour l'avenir du Congo.*

*Maman Marie Thérèse: Tes enfants, petits-enfants et arrière petits-enfants, nous te pleurons...*

*Maman Lupumba, notre maman...Repose en paix.*

*Emily Tshishimbi*

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**Emily Tshishimbi** - July 23, 2020 at 11:20 PM

FL

“ A toi qui me manque!  
J'aimerais que le paradis soit équipé d'un téléphone pour entendre ta voix a nouveau. Mais hélas! Grand-ma, comme j'aimais t'appeler. Ta voix me manque, ton sourire, nos causeries à huis clos dans ta chambre.... j'en souffre énormément. Mulunda wanyi , tu étais une femme très intelligente avec un coeur pure, plein d'amour, tu nous considérais tous comme étant les fruits de tes entrailles ❤️  
Le partage était ton gain. Tu aimais bien me voir régulièrement. Je me rappelle de ta phrase par le biais de ma marraine ta fille " wamonu muaneba ku mulua kabidi? Bikila koku muaneba! Tu me manque énormément grand ma...je pense à toi en silence, je mentionne souvent ton nom et je finis avec les larmes... Tout ce que je possède sont les mémoires et nos selfies. Dieu t'a.... dans ses bras, et moi je t'ai dans mon coeur. Kayowa wanyi ndi musua kuya kuetu et ma réaction était bua tshinyi? Ta réponse était toujours avec un bon sourire sincère : bua ngikala mona koku padi bantu babita munjila ba ngela moyi: ( maman lupumba betuabu eee et après on rigolait)... A Lui seul la gloire! Tu t'en vas ds une casquette 🥲🥲❤️ je t'aime Mamie. Vas y en paix. Florence Kayowa

Florence - July 21, 2020 at 11:14 AM

YL

“ Maman Marie-Therese etait une femme aimante et courageuse, qui avait foi en Dieu. Elle va vraiment nous manquer.

Yannick Mubenga Lubamba - July 18, 2020 at 07:26 PM

FL

“ MA TRES CHERE MAMAN,tu m'as dit le 25 decembre dernier:"Luakabwanga wanyi,natshioki",Tu voulais te reposer,et ,c'est ce que tu as fait;malgre la douleur,je te souhaite un bon repos,Merci bcp.

FRANCOIS LUAKABWANGA - July 17, 2020 at 10:52 AM

BB

“ When I heard that maman Marie-Therese that I dearly called Maman was sick Hospitalized I couldn't believe it! When I heard she passed I was in shock because this was not only a mother to her own children but she was all our mother, she represented my mother by her gentle way of talking, smiling, and caring by the way, she really cared a lot about all of us! She had an infectious laugh, she was smart and wonderful to be around. I miss her and really wish I had more time to spend with her however she is in a better place now, in Haven.  
With a lot of love, I miss you “maman”!  
Bea

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Beatrice Bukasa - July 16, 2020 at 09:26 PM

ET

Ma maman Marie-Thérèse était tendre et posée. Son doux sourire était une source de réconfort. J'étais toujours contente de l'avoir au téléphone et comme elle avait le rire facile; échanger avec elle, était pour moi un moment agréable.  
Je peux encore l'entendre rire très fort quand une fois elle m'avait rapporté que, s'étant fait mal au dos Jeanne se soutenait momentanément avec une canne. Comme Pr. Nzongola revenait de voyage ce jour là, j'ai dit à maman:” kaaa udi uvua kusangana muana ne mamu'enda ne makombo”? ( mère et fille avec une canne?). Elle a dit:” muna amu peba” (n'est-ce pas) et nous avons ri ensemble de tout cœur.  
Durant nos petites conversations au téléphone, maman était très attentionnée et demandait à chaque occasion des nouvelles de la famille au Congo.  
Le Congo était constamment présent dans son esprit et nous en parlions souvent. Maman avait une vision optimiste pour l'avenir du Congo.  
Maman Marie Thérèse: Tes enfants, petits-enfants et arrière petits-enfants, nous te pleurons...  
Maman Lupumba, notre maman...Repose en paix.  
Emily Tshishimbi

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Emily Tshishimbi - July 23, 2020 at 12:19 AM

PK

“ *Mama Koko Marie- Therese otiki biso na mawa. Kende malamu epayi ya Nkolo Nzambe. Ba souvenirs otikeli biso kaka ya bolingo. Osololi na biso, Osekisi biso, opesi biso mateya. Otiki vide munene awa okeyi. Biso awa kaka mayi na misu na mawa. Kasi Nayebi ozali kuna na paradisu epayi na Nzambe. Losambo na bolingo na nga pona yo epayi ya Mkolo Nzambe.*  
*I Love You Forever Cherie Wanyi*  
*Popaul Kabaidi*

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**Popaul Kabaidi** - July 15, 2020 at 05:33 PM

JA

“ *UNFORGETTABLE.*  
*Saying goodbye to someone you really love(d) and have great memories with is hard.*  
*(Today is July 12th, so I had to say Goodbye)*  
*Ndoi na ngai, Mama KoKo Marie-Therese. Mikolo nyonso na kanisaka na yo...*  
*YOUR LOVE & KINDNESS MADE YOU UNFORGETTABLE.*  
*olikangi biso mingi, unconditionally*  
*Nalingaki yo mingi mingi sikoyo Motema na ngai mawa mingi*  
*Ozali na kati na ngai, biso*  
*And better - Ozali na kati na bolingo ya Nzambe*

*I Love you so Much,*  
*Jolie Assina*

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**Jolie Assina** - July 12, 2020 at 01:48 PM

PK

*Mama Koko Marie- Therese otiki biso na mawa. Kende malamu epayi ya Nkolo Nzambe. Ba souvenirs otikeli biso kaka ya bolingo. Osololi na biso, Osekisi biso, opesi biso mateya. Otiki vide munene awa okeyi. Biso awa kaka mayi na misu na mawa. Kasi Nayebi ozali kuna na paradisu epayi na Nzambe. Losambo na bolingo na nga pona yo epayi ya Mkolo Nzambe.*  
*I Love You Forever Cherie Wanyi*  
*Popaul Kabaidi*

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**Popaul Kabaidi** - July 15, 2020 at 04:59 PM

SC

“ *My koko gros,my koko la fille. I don't know how to say how much we'll miss you. Thank you for all you've done for us. Tu as fait de ns des femmes fortes. I ll always love you grandma.*

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**Sarah clerebaut** - July 08, 2020 at 07:20 PM

CL

“ *My great grandmother I love and will miss u I will never forgot the way you called me larrisa I will always remember all the memories and will treasure it forever . Rest in paradise clarrisa*

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**clarrisa** - July 08, 2020 at 07:06 PM

TE

“ *My heart was deeply saddened when I heard about ma-Mbelu passing. She will truly be missed. Heaven has gained another angel. May her soul rest in peace. Sincere condolences to Jeanne Nzongola and family from Theo and Paul Evans.*

*Theo Evans - 11 seconds ago*

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**Theo Evans** - July 04, 2020 at 01:44 PM

JE

*Thank you so much, may God bless you.*

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**Jeanne** - July 07, 2020 at 09:15 AM

LD

“ *May maman Marie-Therese Mbelu rest in peace. She will be terribly missed by everyone who knew her. Our sympathies to your entire family. Lily Disengomoka & Family.*

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**Lily Mabolia Disengomoka** - June 26, 2020 at 03:32 PM

JE

*Thank you so much Lily. May God bless you*

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**Jeanne** - June 30, 2020 at 11:10 PM

TE

*My heart was deeply saddened when I heard about ma-Mbelu passing. She will truly be missed. Heaven has gained another angel. May her soul rest in peace. Sincere condolences to Jeanne Nzongola and family from Theo and Paul Evans.*

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**Theo Evans** - July 04, 2020 at 01:36 PM

PH

“ *Maman Lupumba was such a lovely and caring mother, not only for her own children, but to all the children in our neighbourhood. We love her. May her seed be blessed.*  
*Muepu*

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**Phinees** - June 26, 2020 at 05:29 AM

SB

*Mua Bitabu, une grande mère et une mère à la fois pour moi. Je garde d'elle, les souvenirs d'une vertueuse et aimante. Que Dieu l'acceuille dans sa félicité. Paix éternelle Maman Lupumba. Dans nos coeurs tu vis* 🥺🌸🌺🌹

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**Sandy Bokombe** - June 26, 2020 at 06:03 AM

JE

*Amen Sandra, elle nous manque terriblement. Sois bénie.*

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**Jeanne** - June 30, 2020 at 11:12 PM

MD

“ *Ma koko la fille tu nous manque tellement et tu laisses un gros vide dans nos cœurs. Mais nous bénissons Dieu de t'avoir eu dans nos vies et peu importe que tu ne sois plus près de nous physiquement, tu restes et resteras toujours présente dans nos cœurs. We love you* ❤️

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**Mbelu Deborah** - June 23, 2020 at 04:11 PM

JE

*Oui ma fille, elle nous manque. Love*

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**Jeanne** - June 30, 2020 at 11:15 PM

JM

“ *A heartbreak is very difficult to deal with, Koko mine shattered to pieces, But what keeps me comforted is knowing that you're safe and with your loved ones in heaven. I believe that God wanted his Angel (you) back home and I am grateful that we on earth was given the chance to witness an Angel. I love you, Koko. You can rest in peace now.*

*- Jenny - Brenda Musungay*

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**Jenny Brenda Musungay** - June 23, 2020 at 05:23 AM

JE

*Amen Jenny. Love*

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**Jeanne** - June 30, 2020 at 11:16 PM

GZ

“ *Thanks for everything Koko la fille May your soul Rest In Peace*

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**gregory aziyadimbu zengamambu** - June 23, 2020 at 04:25 AM

AL

“ Rest In Peace Maman tu seras toujours gravé dans nos coeur❤️

alipha - June 22, 2020 at 10:09 PM

LM

*No words can describe how sorry I'm for your loss. Few months ago was my best friend, sister, family and husband who passed now mum. She was a mum for all who was around Gode; will be missed by many. May your peace bring comfort, courage to face the days ahead with living memories your mum has left behind. Accept my deep condolences. MALOU Esele*

Lesele Amba Malou - June 23, 2020 at 02:27 PM

JE

*Oh ya Malou, to God be all the glory! Thank you.*

Jeanne - June 30, 2020 at 11:18 PM

EN

“ *En ce moment douloureux, je viens en mon nom et a toute ma famille pour presenter nos condoleances les plus attristees a la famille Mbelu Marie-Therese. Que l' Eternel puisse consoler les coeurs brises. De la part de Emmanuel Nzeza et Famille*

Emmanuel Nzeza - June 22, 2020 at 09:35 PM

JE

*Merci beaucoup Emmanuel, que Dieu vous bénisse.*

Jeanne - June 30, 2020 at 11:20 PM

DS

“ My sincere condolences to the Mbelu family. It's painful to loose a loved one especially during this pandemic time. May the Lord of all comfort, comfort you in ways that He alone can.

I have known mama Marie for a few years now when she would come with her daughter to our fellowship, and more closely when we was admitted at WakeMed. Mama Marie, we sure miss you dearly but I know we will meet again when we will be worshipping together before our Father. So long mama, I thank God for the time He allowed us to meet here on earth.

Doris



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**Doris Sande** - June 22, 2020 at 09:33 PM

LM

*Maman Thérèse, vous nous quittez une à une après le départ de vos amoureux et vous nous laissez mains bredouilles. Tu as laissé ton amie , Mamu Louise seule ? Que lui dire ? Tu nous manques déjà. Tes rires et le son de ta voix nous manqueront mais nous gardons jalousement tes doux souvenirs dans nos cœurs. Et tu resteras notre "maman Thérèse Lupumba"*

*Forever in our hearts. Rest in peace.*

*Comme a dit Jean d'Omerson " il y a quelque chose de plus fort que la mort, la présence des absents dans la mémoire des vivants".*

*We love you*

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**Liliane Mubanga** - June 25, 2020 at 06:36 PM

MT

*Bonjour à tous,*

*Je m'appelle Mathilde Lusamba Tubajika, Je veux partager quelque chose en memoire de maman Mbelu Marie-Thérèse: Je suis l'amie de Jeanne (sa fille) J'ai rencontré maman MBelu en 2017, quand elle est arrivée ici en Caroline du Nord. On avait l'habitude d'aller visiter Jeanne. Un jour, nous sommes allés les visiter pour la mort subite de la fille aînée de maman Mbelu, pendant cette periode là de tristesse, elle me disa qu'elle voulait rentrer au pays à cause de tout ses problèmes qui sont arrivés, alors je lui ai dit qu' à votre retour au pays vous allez enseigner l'anglais à vos grands enfants au Congo! Et elle rigola très fort. Après, elle m'a dit qu'elle ne connaît pas l'anglais et que tous ce qu'elle connaît c'est: "I love you" et quand elle a dit ça elle a encore rigolé très fort et je lui ai dit que vous allez enseigner seulement le peu là. Elle a continué à rigoler au moins, j'ai dû changer le sujet pour le reste de temps qu'on était là. Après ça, on est passé à table pour manger la viande de chèvre que j'avais apporté pour la circonstance. J'ai encore tant des choses à raconter mais je laisse la place aux autres. La maman a été un modèle pour nous. A travers elle, nous voyions nos mamans qui nous ont quitté. Je présente à Jeanne et à toute sa famille, mes condoléances les plus attristées. Que la terre de nos ancêtres lui soit douce et légère et que son âme repose en paix.*

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**Mathilde Tubajika** - June 28, 2020 at 02:40 PM

JE

*Amen maman Mathilde, demeurez bénie. Merci beaucoup.*

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**Jeanne** - June 30, 2020 at 11:23 PM