Hello, Heartdwellers Family. May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

I was inspired by the testimony of fellow Heartdwellers and decided to share mine as well.

I was born in Luanda, the capital of Angola. I am the first of seven children. My parents were humble people who always took care of their children, trying to give the best possible education. When I was a year old, my grandmother told me that one day while she was walking with me, she heard a voice saying, "This boy is going to die". At that time, we were still connected to traditions of men. She took me to a lady who had a small chapel and, in that chapel, [was] an image of Our Lady. So, in that place, she gave me out to our Lady’s protection. I think that ever since that moment the Blessed Mother has taken care of me.

I was always a very curious child, and because of that the enemy tried, and almost managed to pervert me through pornography. When I was little, about 10 or 11 years old, a family member invited me to watch a pornographic movie. I remember I was sneaking, and he saw me. Maybe he thought it was good for me. He used to leave adult magazines on his drawer and because we slept in the same room I was driven by curiosity. I would go there and look at the magazines.

During that period I thought everything was fine, it was normal to watch and see those things. But I didn't know it was opening a big hole in my soul and it would have serious consequences later on. I started to have many impure thoughts to satisfy the desires of my flesh. I was a slave to impurity… It wasn’t until I started high school that I started gaining control over my emotions, or these feelings.

I grew up in a Catholic environment, but I wasn't exactly a Catholic. I didn't pray the Rosary, I didn't believe in Our Lady, and I criticized people who did. I used to say that I was a Protestant in the church. But I remember that I liked the images of the Saints. I had a certain admiration for them.

Now, I remember that I knew how to pray the Hail Mary, even though I didn't pray the Rosary… Jesus, forgive my ignorance…[continuing]…I have never joined any youth ministry group in my church. I tried several times to finish the catechesis, but I couldn't, there was always some distraction—it was school or friends—we used to play soccer. It was mostly on Saturdays.

In 1995, as I remember, the persecutions started. It was the moment, that year, I started reading the Bible. I read the Old Testament a lot, I liked the stories. But there were some books, like Ezekiel and Jeremiah that I did not read. They were so enigmatic for me.

During that year, my family was strongly persecuted by a family friend who joined forces with some relatives and had cast curses against us. At that time I had many nightmares about unknown animals attacking me and sometimes I heard people's voices in my room, but I couldn't see their faces. I got sick many times during that year. I had a lot of cramps and dysentery; the reason was unknown to us. When my father also got seriously sick, and, at that time, we didn't know God the way we know—we didn’t have a relationship with God. We looked for several sources who told us that my father was under a death curse and that very day he would die if he wasn't treated. Due to the panic, and we did not have anybody to instruct us or to give us guidance, we found a lady—she was not Christian, but she managed to heal my father. After that, we had some time of peace in the family.

In April 2001, I was sent to Ghana to pursue my higher education. In 2003 I was baptized, received my First Communion and Confirmation at the Church of the Lady of Holy Rosary in Kumasi, Ghana. Although I had a superficial knowledge of the sacraments, God allowed me to have them because I had the desire, I remember I had the desire to receive the sacraments.

During those four years [when] I lived in Ghana, I got a little closer to God. It was a very beautiful time, a time of spiritual growth. The church in Ghana was very lively and that included the Catholic Church as well. I was fascinated to know that the Catholic Church was not only liturgic but that the Holy Spirit also did the same thing as in the Pentecostal church.

I remember a retreat we did for a week in a region called Adum Fie. It was awesome! It was the first time I had felt the presence of the Holy Spirit. I saw people falling from their seats, the whole room smelled of olive oil… I said, “Wow, how different they are!” Today I know that it was a Charismatic Renewal community…

I returned to Angola in May 2005 to start working. Unfortunately, the enemy was already working against me, and I was not aware of it. To start work, my documents were hidden. I was supposed to start in July, and I could only start in October.

In 2006, I was sent to France to attend a technical course. The night before the final exam I had a dream in which a voice told me I wouldn't be able to complete the course, I would fail. The next morning I forgot everything I had learned, everything went dark. In the theoretical exam, my computer blocked, and it was a 6-months computer, it was still brand new. But the Lord did a miracle, they gave me another opportunity to take the following tests and if I scored 85% in all tests, or exams, I would be on probation, and I did score more than 85% in the exams. I had the help of some colleagues from Italy and India who were ready to help me. In the end, I passed the course on condition.

Three months later I returned to Angola, and my life turned more to material things. The fire of God that burned in me during my life in Ghana, little by little was being suppressed by the world or by my worldly life. I started to be more interested in having money and enjoying life. Getting married, settling down, was not something for me. Everything seemed to go very well, I had a good job, good salary, even though it was a tough job. I used to work offshore. For those who know, offshore life is not easy. But when you are onshore you spend what you earn offshore.

So, because of a lack of promotion in my career, professional career, I decided to leave my job in December 2007. I didn’t look for God’s guidance because I didn’t know [about] it at that time. I spent almost two years without working. It was a very hard time because a lot of strange things happened. I had good qualifications but couldn't get a job. Sometimes I passed the tests, but they didn't hire me. One time I was already hired, but the next day my name was removed from the list of workers in the company database…I believe [at] that time the Lord was already working in my life. But there is something that happened before I [lost] the job. I remember in that year I was dating somebody. And one day I felt something in my spirit. I didn’t know what that was, but I knew that something would happen. In the evening I went out with the girl I was dating. After we got involved, in the morning the feeling stopped. To me, that was a sign from my guardian angel. After that, things just started going in the wrong direction and I lost my job, as I mentioned before.

Finally, in October 2009, I got a job that was lighter and gave me more time to do other things. I met a girl who was completely turned to the world. Even though I was far from God, I was aware of sin because of my background. I knew what was and wasn't allowed in dating. And I was completely on fire and blinded by this girl. I ignored the voice of my conscience that clearly warned me about what I was doing.

In 2009 or 2010, I don't remember the date very well, I started receiving in my mailbox a message in Spanish that spoke of the Blessed Mother. I believe they were about the apparitions in Garabandal or Fátima, but as I didn't believe in Mary, I ignored those posts. Who is Mary, who is she? she is normal, she’s in heaven, she cannot speak to us.

But Blessed Mother never stopped interceding for me, she knew I how ignorant I was. So in May 2011, the week after I spent a day with the girl, it was on Sunday, I still remember…it was on Sunday. Because it was on Sunday, I remember I offended God. After having spent this day with the girl, on Monday when I went to work, I opened my mailbox and guess what? there was the message in Spanish that spoke of the Blessed Mother, I don't know how, and why—I think it was my guardian angel who was tired of seeing me offending God, who inspired me, so I decided to open the message and read what was there. The message talked about apparitions of the Blessed Mother. This made me curious, and I continued to read the message and opened the various links connected to it until I arrived at the Brazilian website of a seer, a mystic that published, or posted messages from the Blessed Mother.

(to be continued in Part 2)