

This is the testimony of Marcelline, a survivor of the Rwandan genocide

The genocide has made it impossible for me to shake off a permanent sense of sadness and apathy. My husband was killed in our home in Kigali, and my relatives and in-laws were among those massacred in Cyangugu and Gitarama. The militia in my neighbourhood would take me to a nearby mass grave, but instead of killing me, they raped me instead.

I feel very alone. I need to have people around me to listen to my story. I am still unable to recover from the emptiness left by the death of the people I loved.

I fell ill in 1995, with a persistent cough, malaria and then TB. But it was the knowledge that I had contracted HIV/AIDS which made my world crumble.

I got the positive result in 1996, but I refused to accept it. I felt deeply agitated and the whole thing was unbearable for me. I was completely desperate. Friends come visit me in order to comfort me, but it was as if I couldn't see them. I remained enveloped in my solitude. When I try think about HIV, I find that I can't. I tell myself that death is taking it's time.

Today's Reading of the Testimonies marks the 15th Anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, in support of survivors like Marcelline.