

IN THE SAME CHARISM

with responsibility



n. 1 - 2015

**COMPANY OF SAINT URSULA
SECULAR INSTITUTE OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI
FEDERATION**

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CONTENTS

To the Readers	p. 4
A Thought from the President	p. 6
A Thought from Pope Francis	p. 8
A Thought from the Ecclesiastical Assistant	p. 10
About the Rule of Saint Angela Merici	p. 15

2015 YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

• Official Logo	p. 23
• Consolation	p. 25
• Some Questions from Pope Francis	p. 26
• Let us pray...	p. 27
• Let Us Make the Company Known	p. 28
• From Pope Francis ... Points	p. 29

FROM THE COMPANIES AND GROUPS

➤ A New Company in Toronto	p. 33
➤ The Company of Indonesia, July 2014	p. 34
➤ Initial Formation Meeting in Canicattì	p. 35
➤ The Seed of the Company in Kenya	p. 37
➤ The 20th Anniversary in Cameroun	p. 39
➤ Consecration Ceremony in England	p. 41

INCOMING MAIL	p. 42
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MEETING OF THE FEDERATION	p. 46
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TO THE READERS

Wake up the world...



In his letter for the Year of Consecrated Life, Pope Francis expresses this desire: *“I am counting on you ‘to wake up the world,’ since the distinctive sign of consecrated life is prophecy.”*

Wake up the world...

In this fragile time for consecrated life, when vocations are lacking, the Pope is calling us to something very forceful.

Wake up the world! Will we be able to do it?

The right answer is Yes: *“Consecrated persons are aware of the beauty of following Christ, according to the way they have been called, and furthermore that they straightforwardly proclaim to the world the beauty of this life, not from a position of superiority, but not from a place of inferiority either”* (Archbishop Carballo, Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life).

This is just the task for us: *“...we will participate actively in the coming of the Reign, giving our contribution by carrying the renewing strength of the Gospel into the environments where God has called us; discerning the plan of God for history; orienting daily events in the light of things above; ...”* (Constitutions 3.4).

If all consecrated people are called to wake up the world, all the more are we, consecrated seculars, who live in the world, responsible to do this by our vocation and by our mission.

To wake up the world we must meanwhile wake up ourselves; we cannot let ourselves be caught by laziness. Instead it is for us to assume our responsibility fully, aware that this is our moment, our time: *“...it is the hour now for you to awake from sleep. For our salvation is nearer now...”* (cf. Romans 13:11).

Wake up the world... *“like sentinels who keep alive in the world the desire for God and wake up that desire in the hearts of so many who thirst*

for the infinite” (Pope Francis).

Wake up the world... because *“the distinctive sign of consecrated life is prophecy,”* says the Pope.

The Year of Consecrated Life is distilled in these three words: Gospel, prophecy, hope. *“Our consecration makes us sharers in the Church of the mission of Christ Jesus, priest, king and prophet”* (Constitutions 22.1).

Wake up the world... how...

Living our vocation fully, aware of the beauty of following Christ. For us it is a matter of regaining our awareness of being chosen, as Saint Angela invites us: *“be willing to recognize what such a thing means and what a new and wondrous dignity this is”* (Rule, Prologue, 8).

Rejoice in sowing seeds of hope, trust, serenity, benevolence, as Pope Francis reminds us: *“This is the beauty of consecration: it is joy, joy.”*

Wake up the world... knowing how to *“scan the horizons of your lives and the present moment, be watchful and alert”* (Letter to Consecrated Men and Women).

Saint Angela Merici has already reminded us: *“...it is necessary that we be vigilant, and so much more so, as the undertaking is of such importance that there could be no greater”* (Rule, Prologue, 15).

Wake up the world... reviewing and rewriting our history... the history of the Companies united together in the same charism: the Federation.

In this year the Pope invites us precisely *to recall our beginnings and the successive historical developments, and then to tell our own story and praise and thank God for all his gifts.*

So we are gratefully observing the 480th anniversary of the foundation of the Company while also working to reconstruct the Federation’s history.

For us today God’s invitation still re-echoes:

“Stand beside the earliest roads, ask the pathways of old, ‘Which is the way to good?’ and walk it; thus you will find rest for your souls” (Jeremiah 6:16)

Caterina Dalmasso



A THOUGHT FROM THE PRESIDENT

480th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Company *In a continuous stretching toward Christ*

The very best way we can celebrate the foundation of the Company of St. Ursula and the Year of Consecrated Life in 2015, both personally and as Companies, consists in clinging more closely to the Lord Jesus with our whole being. When we invoke and welcome the Holy Spirit, the Spirit enables us to form within us the image of the Risen One, ever more authentically and deeply.

“Our life as consecrated seculars will have its center of unity in Christ Jesus, who restored the covenant with the Father and revealed his unreserved love for every human being” (Constitutions 3.3).

The secular consecration that we live in our institute is sustained by God’s grace and by the certainty that Saint Angela guides us and accompanies us.

Let us continue our path of holiness, with the sensitive awareness, the fidelity, the love of a spouse of Jesus Christ, our “center of unity,” that is, the One to whom we take everything: joys, sufferings, difficulties, problems... the One to whom we offer everything in a “continuous stretching.”

“Our spiritual journey is expressed in a continuous stretching toward Christ” (Constitutions 4.1). It is an interior stretching, expressed in the desire – never extinguished – to “go” toward Christ, to follow him faithfully.

Spiritual stretching is certainly not the anxiety generated by our ego, which wants to find an answer to every question, to find a solution to every difficulty ... to achieve everything.

This year, indeed a special one for us, let us make our own the words that God addressed to the prophet Isaiah: “... By waiting and by calm you shall be saved, in quiet and in trust your strength lies” (Is 30:15).

The powerful words of Pope Francis accompany and guide us, words that we are invited to contemplate and reflect on in our Companies and Groups.

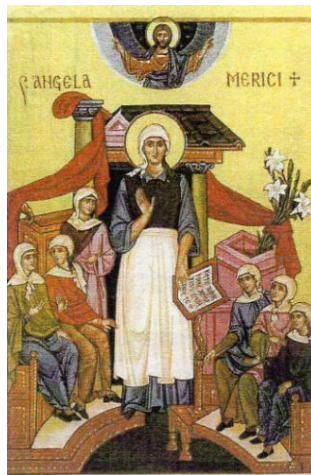
One of the objectives of the Year of Consecrated Life, says Pope Francis, is "... for each charismatic family to reflect on its origins and history, in order to thank God..." (Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated Men and Women, 1).

By a fortunate coincidence, this Year of Consecrated Life will include our meeting in August 2015 on the history of the Federation. How lucky for us!

Looking at the past with gratitude, being "grateful" to Saint Angela for having accepted God's gift of grace to her, and through her to the Church and to the world, it is inescapable that we "*live the present with passion,*" which we could "translate" according to our charism: "*... we try to bring about in our life that admirable integration of action and contemplation which was found in our Mother and in our early members...*" (Constitutions 4.1).

With these and other "interior attitudes," in obedience to the Holy Spirit who inspires them in us, let us continue our road in a *journey of faith, never finished!*

Maria Razza



A THOUGHT FROM POPE FRANCIS

Be revolutionaries with small actions...



The Pope met on May 10, 2014, with participants in the meeting sponsored by the Italian Conference of Secular Institutes, having prepared a discourse that we published in the second 2014 issue of this bulletin.

But on that occasion, when the Pope actually met the participants, he regaled them with an improvised speech:

I wrote a discourse for you [but] I preferred to put aside the discourse, because reading it would be boring, and to say two or three little things that may perhaps help you.

Secular institutes are effectively an act of bravery, a revolutionary gesture, on the part of the Church in the time of Pius XII, giving them an institutional character.

You have done great good for the Church, with great courage because we need courage to live in this world.

Many of you live alone... but at the same time safeguard this contemplative dimension; contemplation of the Lord and the world ... the beauty of the world; the great sins of society....

*This is why **your vocation is fascinating** because it takes place right there, where the salvation of [humanity] is played out and not just of individuals but of institutions too, no? And of so many lay institutions that are necessary in the world.*

This is why I think that the Church did something truly revolutionary.

I hope that you will always maintain this attitude of going beyond, not only beyond... where everything is at play: politics, the economy, education, the family....

Perhaps at times you are tempted to think, 'But what can I do?'

*Remember the Lord spoke to us about the grain of wheat, eh!
Your life is like the grain... and like yeast....*

*Do everything possible so that the Kingdom may come, grow
and be great, and that it may protect many people.*

*A small life, a small gesture; **a normal life, but it is leaven, it is
a seed, it allows growth.***

*And this brings consolation. The results in the balance of the
Kingdom of God cannot be seen, but only the Lord enables us to
perceive something ... We will see the results there, above.*

*This is why it is important to **have so much hope!***

*It is a grace that you must ask of the Lord, always: the hope
that never disappoints. A hope that goes ahead.*

*I would advise you to read often Chapter 11 of the Letter to the
Hebrews, the chapter on hope.*

*And to realize that so many of our ancestors have taken this
road and have not seen the results, but have hailed them from afar.
Hope... this is what I wish for you.*

*Thank you so much for what you do in the Church; thank you so
much for your prayers and actions.*

***Thank you for the hope
and do not forget: Be revolutionary!***

**Faith is the realization of what is hoped for
and evidence of things unseen...**

(Hebrews 11:1)



A THOUGHT FROM THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION

The Consecration of Baptism/Confirmation: The Foundation of Every Vocation and Every Charism



The Church is now observing the Year of Consecrated Life designed by Pope Francis for further recognizing and celebrating “this unceasing work of the Holy Spirit, who in every age shows forth the richness of the practice of the evangelical counsels through a multiplicity of charisms. In this way too he makes ever present in the Church and in the world, in time and space, the mystery of Christ” (Vita Consacrata 5).

Consecrated men and women are invited to continue the renewal called for by the Council, enriching their relationship with the Lord, their brotherly and sisterly community life, their mission, and ensuring a formation adequate to the challenges of our time, in such a way as “courageously to propose anew” and with creative and “dynamic fidelity” (cf. VC 37) the experience of their founders.

There are and there will be sufficient documents and opportunities for reflection between now and February 2, 2016, when the Year of Consecrated Life ends.

I take this opportunity to offer a reflection about what stands upstream of every charism and every form of consecrated life: the consecration of Baptism/Confirmation is the foundation of every vocation and every charism, the first point of reference for the shared vocation to holiness that belongs to everyone who believes in Christ.

Some expressions in the Letter to the Ephesians can serve to guide us in this reflection of ours and to lead us to wonder and rejoice in our Christian vocation, besides nourishing a healthy and serene contemplation of what the Father has given us in Christ.

Addressing the recipients of the letter, the Apostle writes “to the holy ones who are in Ephesus, faithful in Christ Jesus.” We are

those holy ones, those consecrated to God, united in Christ, temples of the Holy Spirit, having become so in Baptism. And all this is not by our doing but by God's. The terms "holy ones," and "consecrated to God," express our reality better than the habitual term "Christians."

Paul also calls us "faithful in Christ Jesus" because it is faith, along with Baptism, that makes us Christians. According to Paul faith is a "gift" of God, as he affirms a little later: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them"* (2:8-10). But at the same time it involves our openness to God's action and our commitment to progress in good works, that is, to practice them.

Here is the grace of Baptism and the newness of life that comes with it, as Paul himself reminds the Christians of Rome: *"We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.... But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life"* (Rm 6:4,22).

Paul makes us contemplate God's action compared to ours, summarizing in a few words: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens"* (Eph 1:3). There is no briefer or more substantial way to express the full treasure of salvation that the Father has given us. The "spiritual blessing" of the Father "in Christ," that is, by means of Christ and in union with him, is in fact the gift of the Spirit. Thus the blessing is the activity of the Spirit within us by means of his personal presence in us.

What a beautiful definition of "spiritual life": the presence and activity of God's Spirit in us in union with Christ, as the Father's gift!

Also: *"in the heavens"*! A little further, in 2:6, he says God *"raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus"* In these words Paul reflects that Christ's resurrection is already our resurrection and his glorification is already ours, because

the resurrection and glorification of the Head, who is united as a single body with the members, is already the resurrection and glorification of the whole body. After all, every blessing has the goal of leading us to participation in Christ's glory. All this explains that initial "Blessed be God...": our participation in the glory of the Father and of the Son, guaranteed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, is a certainty because the head, our Lord Jesus Christ, has already united himself to us, and in him we form a single body.

The Apostle's gaze then is focused on contemplating what we have been called to, that is, our vocation: *"he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved. In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace"* (Eph 1:4-7).

In Christ Jesus, then, we are holy and without blemish. Today, who thinks, when bringing a child into the world, that from eternity this child has been the object of God's love, before any merit on his/her own part?

That's how it is for us! He has "chosen, destined" us in his son Jesus Christ, children through the Son. The Father thinks of us in close union, a single reality, with the Son: this is what makes us worthy of God's parental love. (*In Him...through Jesus Christ...grace granted to us in the beloved...in him...by his blood*). Chosen through belonging exclusively to God? Through this our life can be "without blemish" because of being holy ones, reserved for God!

Being "without blemish before him" seems like a superhuman prospect. The commentator Zerwick responds: "Yes, in fact it is more than human; it is Christian." Or have we already forgotten that we have been chosen for such holiness "in him," "in Christ"? Then we are without blemish not on our own strength or that of our natural possibilities, but as "new creatures" intimately united to Christ, re-clothed in him. Christ's holiness becomes ours, as we read in 1 Cor 1:30: *"It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for*

us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” The Father looks upon us with pleasure because Christ is in us, and Christ is the Son in whom the Father is well pleased. Paul adds *“in love”* and then further on, *“In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace”* (Eph 1:7). We know that charity is the sum of all virtues and the compendium of the whole Law as the following biblical passages remind us: Mt 22:40; Rm 13:10; Gal 5:14; James 2:8; 1 Cor 13:1-3. Where there is love/charity everything becomes precious in God’s eyes, for God is Love!

And our sins? They have a significant weight in God’s eyes, insofar as we have been pardoned and redeemed *“through his blood.”*

We often use these words in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist: blood, pardon, cross, passion..., but maybe we do not depict vividly for ourselves what this meant for Jesus! We imagine that we were present, like Mary, like the other disciples. We often make the Way of the Cross, we sing the “Stabat Mater” that aims to involve us emotionally and really in what Jesus faced for our pardon and redemption. Truly fruitful meditation on the sacred texts can lead us to revive interiorly our praise for the pardon and redemption that have been given to us “without measure,” indeed according to the measure of “the richness of his grace.” The richness of his grace is expressed in the pardon of faults, that “through his blood” renews and changes us into the objects of his benevolence, as “new creatures” in Christ. The same thought echoes through Col 1:21-22: *“And you who once were alienated and hostile in mind because of evil deeds he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through his death, to present you holy, without blemish, and irreproachable before him.”*

I would like to conclude with the words that Benedict XVI spoke in St. Peter’s Square on Wednesday, April 13, 2011, about the holiness of a Christian: *“What does it mean to be holy? Who is called to be holy? We are often led to think that holiness is a goal reserved for a few elect. St. Paul, instead, speaks of God’s great plan and says: ‘even as he (God) chose us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him’ (Eph 1:4).*

And he was speaking about all of us. At the centre of the divine plan is Christ in whom God shows his face, in accord with the favor of his will. The Mystery hidden in the centuries is revealed in its fullness in the Word made flesh. And Paul then says: 'in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell' (Col 1:19).

"In Christ the living God made himself close, visible, audible and tangible so that each one might draw from his fullness of grace and truth (cf. Jn 1:14-16). Therefore, the whole of Christian life knows one supreme law, which St Paul expresses in a formula that recurs in all his holy writings: in Jesus Christ. Holiness, the fullness of Christian life, does not consist in carrying out extraordinary enterprises but in being united with Christ, in living his mysteries, in making our own his example, his thoughts, his behavior. The measure of holiness stems from the stature that Christ achieves in us, in as much as with the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on his.

"It is being conformed to Jesus, as St Paul says: 'For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son' (Rom 8:29). And St Augustine exclaimed: 'my life shall be a real life, being wholly filled by you' (Confessions, 10, XXVIII).

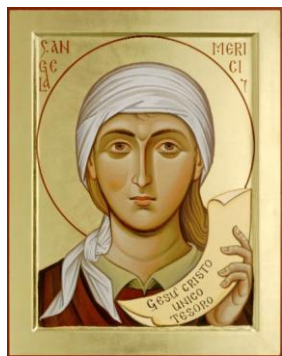
"The Second Vatican Council, in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, speaks with clarity of the universal call to holiness, saying that no one is excluded: 'The forms and tasks of life are many but holiness is one — that sanctity which is cultivated by all who act under God's Spirit and... follow Christ, poor, humble and cross-bearing, that they may deserve to be partakers of his glory' ([Lumen Gentium](#), n. 41)."

+Bishop Adriano Tessarollo, Assistant



ABOUT THE RULE OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI

Some points for reflection...



Rule, Chapter VIII About obedience (vv. 1-13)

The order of the evangelical counsels in Saint Angela...

The chapters begin with the evangelical counsels; Saint Angela begins with a sequence of her own, not without significance. Other founders and Canon Law itself specify chastity, poverty, obedience in that order. Saint Angela changes this order and puts obedience first; if we obey we will also be able to be chaste and poor.

In this chapter, more than in others, she refers directly to the Word of God, and to the example and the mission of Jesus, and in this sense obedience is fundamental. It will be obedience to the Father, as the Son obeyed the Father who sent Him.

Holy obedience...

¹***"We call upon each one to observe holy obedience."***

We call upon... And in Saint Angela's delicate style, once again it is an exhortation and not a command. This delicate approach again points towards freedom, free will, and love. Each one can accept, live, face the demands and depth of Merician obedience and can decide whether she is willing to be enlightened by this great light.

To obey is to listen with attention and passion; entering into a profound dialogue with the one who speaks, to accept such a great proposal.

Holy... was also an expression used in the sixteenth century; nevertheless, it makes one think that it is not only a human matter.... Obedience will be a gift to God of one's own will; ultimately it is a matter of faith. I will cling to the Person in whom I believe and whom I can trust and to whom I can entrust myself.

Mary is an example of holy obedience: *"Mary responded with the obedience of faith, certain that "with God nothing will be*

impossible” As St. Irenaeus says, “Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race” (Catechism of the Catholic Church.494).

Our will can be “murky”... and obedience is needed...

²***“Holy obedience, the only true self-denial of one’s own will, which is within us like murky hell.”***

These words of Saint Angela make an impact, as she values one’s will, saying that each one *should enter the Company happily and of her own will...*

Perhaps her words are clarified in the light of the Word of God: “From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts” (Mark 7:21).

In this sense obedience becomes also self-denial, renunciation....

Perhaps that *murky hell* ... would be my opposition to God’s will. Sin is precisely disobedience to God, rebellion to God, “*diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation*” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1850).

“The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to ‘the slavery of sin’” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1733).

Not to obey is the same as detaching oneself or refusing the light who is Jesus Christ and falling into the darkness of evil... for Saint Angela, all this is a dark hell.

The word and example of Jesus...

³***“Jesus Christ says: “I have not come to do my will, but that of the Father who has sent me.”***

In other Biblical texts there is this same vision:

“Behold I have come to do your will” (Hebrews 10:9).

“He humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross” (Philippians 2:8).

“For just as through the disobedience of one person the many were made sinners, so through the obedience of one the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:19).

Christ is revealed as the Servant of God, totally obedient to divine will; he puts himself in a state of complete obedience and submission to God and other people, like a slave....

He obeyed His parents, the Mosaic Law and human authority....

It was not easy for Him to obey, to subject his will to the Father at the cost of great suffering: *“Abba, Father, all things are possible to you. Take this cup away from me, but not what I will but what you will”* (Mark 14:36).

Obedience like a great light...

⁴“Because obedience is in man like a great light which makes every work good and acceptable; ⁵and so one reads: ‘Obedience is better than sacrifice.’”

Other biblical expressions come to mind:

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path... The revelation of your words sheds light...” (Psalm 119).

“The Word of God is a light for our path. We must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1802).

Obedience to the Word of God and to the will of God is surely a great light.

And now let us recall the text of 1 Samuel (15:22) already quoted by Saint Angela:

“Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to the LORD’s command? Obedience is better than sacrifice, to listen, better than the fat of rams.”

And again: *“Sacrifice and offering you did not desire; then I said, As is written of me in the scroll, Behold, I come to do your will, O God”* (Hebrews 10:5,7).

Our obedience, in line with that of Christ, renders everything good both because it conforms to the divine plan and because it is pleasing as an offering, as a sacrifice.

Doing everything in obedience...

⁶“And the sacred canons say: it is necessary for everything of ours, if it is supposed to be good, to be done in obedience.”

And this powerful expression is totally in line with the conclusion of this chapter: *Obey God and each creature for love of God.*

Here too the suggestion is delicate.... One's own interpretations of God's will and one's own choice must be submitted to evaluation and discernment. The criteria and the method of this discernment will be explained in the following lines.

Choosing to obey...

⁷*“For this reason let each one want to obey”*

Let each one want... obedience from the heart is personal!

No one is obliged to obey, and if obedience were imposed from outside, it would not be coming from the heart.

If we were to find a place for it... Obedience could be listed with love, freedom, choice, charity. Only this way will it become redemptive, even when it seems to lead to death: *Father, into your hands I commend my spirit!*

That is why Saint Angela speaks of willingness to obey, and not of imposition....

Perhaps that is why the Foundress has the courage to be so demanding regarding obedience, so much as to suggest it in every situation and to each person; she proposes to the virgins that they *voluntarily make a sacrifice to God of their own hearts.*

Obedience to God's Word...

⁷*“First, the commandments of God, since Scripture says: accursed is he who does not observe your commandments.”*

If there must be priorities in the duties of obedience, Saint Angela, as always, has no doubts, first to the Word of God; only this is safe and can never be wrong.

It is always a matter of obedience of faith, as it is presented to us by all of Sacred Scripture: *To obey (from the Latin ob-audire, to 'hear or listen to') in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment”* (Catechism of the Catholic Church 144).

If we had to ask ourselves, which is the most important Commandment to obey, this will lead us once more to love. In fact, in

the Gospel of Matthew (Ch. 22), when asked, “*Which commandment in the law is the greatest?*” Jesus answers, “*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

In her prayer Saint Angela asks pardon of the *most benign Lord... for not [having being] obedient to your divine precepts.*

The mediations of obedience...

Christ is the cause and basis of our obedience. *In the Church and with the Church, offering our will to God, we participate in the mystery of the obedience of Christ.*

He who “*came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me,*” has accepted, in his own turn, a series of mediations: birth, growth, subjection to his parents, to laws, to the religious traditions of his people and of his time.

Our obedience too, which is not just a pious desire or aspiration but an incarnation of the plan of God in everyday life, must incarnate itself through mediations.

Obedience to the Church...

⁸*“Then, that which Holy Mother Church commands, because Truth says: who listens to you, listens to me; who scorns you, scorns me.”*

The phrase used by Saint Angela is biblical: “*Whoever listens to you listens to me. Whoever rejects you rejects me. And whoever rejects me rejects the one who sent me*” (Luke 10:16).

In this way, the Church joins us to Christ and Christ to the Father. In other words, obedience to the Father passes through Christ, his Word and the Church, that same Church for whom Saint Angela calls for prayer that the *Lord may reform it as it pleases him...*

If we try to assess ourselves about our obedience to the Church, we must also make an examination of our conscience about our listening to, our knowledge of, and our following of its theological, moral and spiritual teachings, otherwise we could find ourselves off

track: *“Keep to the ancient way and custom of the Church, established and confirmed by so many Saints under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And live a new life”* (Seventh Counsel).

In article 14.5 our Constitutions propose: *“We will enrich our spiritual life with the study of the teachings of the Magisterium and with participation in initiatives promoted by the local Church.”*

Obedience to one’s bishop and spiritual father...

⁹“Third, to obey one’s own bishop and pastor, and one’s own spiritual father.”

Belonging to the Church becomes concrete in a precise part of it: the local Church.

According to our Constitutions, each Company, *“according to its own traditions, maintains a special bond with the bishop of the diocese in which it has its headquarters”* (1.4). And again, as members of the local Church, *“we will commit ourselves to making our contribution as consecrated lay women in the life of the diocese...”* (4.3); *“we will be attentive to the directions of our pastors, especially those of the diocesan bishop with regard to the needs of the Church for evangelization and the service of charity”* (22.4).

Regarding one’s own spiritual father, Saint Angela, in her own time, already called for the necessity of submitting oneself to his advice. This is also highlighted in the chapter about fasting.

Obedience in the Company...

¹⁰“And the governors [men and women] of the Company.”

Spontaneously there comes to mind the third Counsel, where Saint Angela recommends obedience to the mothers: *“Remain obedient to the principal mothers whom I leave in my place, since this is just. And what you do, do it as obeying them, and not as following your own judgment. For obeying them, you will be obeying me; obeying me, you will be obeying Jesus Christ....”*

Following from this commitment to obedience, our Constitutions expect a specific commitment to verification: *“By the commitment assumed with consecration, each one, in active and*

responsible dialog according to means and times that are sought and agreed upon, will verify with the Directress, or her delegate, her own commitment of fidelity to the demands of her vocation and to the charism, and her participation in the life of the Company, according to the Rule and the Constitutions” (Constitutions 19.4).

On obedience to the Rule, Saint Angela recommends: *“Take the greatest care that the good directives given, especially those in the Rule, be most diligently observed” (Last Legacy). “Tell them that they should want to be united and in concord together, all being of one will, remaining under obedience to the Rule, for in this is everything” (Fifth Counsel).*

Obedience in the family and at work...

¹¹“Furthermore, to obey their fathers and mothers, and other household superiors,¹² of whom we advise them to ask pardon once a week as a sign of deference and of preserving charity.”

In the Fifth Counsel, Saint Angela suggests to each daughter how to behave at home and socially; she recommends once more to *“be obedient and submissive to their superiors.”*

In searching for the will of God and in tangibly fulfilling it, we must relate to the environment where we live and are inserted, first of all the family and our place of work.

St. Luke reminds us that even Jesus submitted Himself to His parents while he *advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.*

“Jesus’ obedience to his mother and legal father fulfils the fourth commandment perfectly and was the temporal image of his filial obedience to his Father in heaven. The everyday obedience of Jesus to Joseph and Mary both announced and anticipated the obedience of Holy Thursday: ‘Not my will...’” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 532).

Another biblical expression reminds us of the duty to be meek and obedient in the family: *“Observe, my son, your father’s command, and do not reject your mother’s teaching.... When you lie down they will watch over you, when you wake, they will share your concerns; wherever you turn, they will guide you” (Proverbs 6:20, 22).*

How beautiful is the exhortation of Saint Angela to ask for forgiveness once a week! It is an invitation to humility but, above all, to safeguard charity and communion in the dialogue and in recognizing one's faults. If properly applied, it would be a concrete help in living more peacefully and harmoniously in our every relationship and in each situation.

Civil obedience

¹³*“Again, to obey the laws and statutes of the Lords and the governors of the republics.”*

The work of a civil authority is to assure, as well as possible, the common good of society.

The citizens' duty of obedience also entails moral obligations: *“Pay to all their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, toll to whom toll is due, respect to whom respect is due...”* (Romans 13:7).

The letter to Diognetus expresses, even in this context, the place of Christians in the world: *“They obey the prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives.... God has assigned them this illustrious position, which it were unlawful for them to forsake.”*

An old prayer of the Church invites us to pray for political authorities; perhaps it can also be adapted for our times:

“O Lord, give them health, peace, concord, and steadfastness so that they may freely exercise the sovereign power which you have entrusted to them. You, O Lord, are the heavenly King of all ages, who give to humanity glory, honor, and power on earth. Therefore, direct, O Lord, their decisions to do what is right and pleasing to You; in this way may they exercise the power which You have conferred on them in a religious spirit, with peace and with clemency, and may they be worthy of Your mercy” (Saint Clement of Rome).

Kate



2015 Year of Consecrated Life



Official Logo

A dove supports on one wing a polyhedral globe, and while resting on the water, it safe-guards with the other wing three stars that arise from the water.

The dove on the waters... is the classical symbol of the action of the Holy Spirit, who is the source of life and the inspirer of creativity.... The dove, gliding above a sea swollen with yet unexpressed life, symbolizes a patient and hope-filled fecundity, while the symbols around it reveal the creative and renewing action of the Spirit. The dove also evokes the consecration of the humanity of Christ through baptism.

The waters... are made of mosaic fragments; they indicate the complexity and the harmony of the human and cosmic elements that are made to “groan” by the Spirit according to God’s mysterious plans (cf. Rom 8:26-27) so that they may converge into the hospitable and fruitful encounter that leads to a new creation. The dove flies among the waves of history, above the waters of the deluge (cf. Gen 8:8-14). The men and women whose consecration was marked by the Gospel have always been pilgrims among the nations; they live their various charismatic and diaconal presence like “good administrators of the multiform grace of God” (1Pt 4:10); they are marked by the Cross of Christ, even unto martyrdom; they journey through history equipped with the wisdom of the Gospel; indeed, a Church that embraces and heals all that is human in Christ.

The three stars... stand for the identity of consecrated life as *confessio Trinitatis*, *signum fraternitatis* e *servitium caritatis*. They express the circular relationships found in the Trinitarian love, which consecrated life is called to live daily in the world. The stars also hint to the triple halo used in the Byzantine iconography to honor Mary, the Mother of God, the first Disciple of Christ and model and patron of every consecrated life.

The small polyhedral globe... symbolizes the planet with its myriad variety of nations and cultures, as explained by Pope Francis (cf. *EG* 236). It is the breath of the Spirit that sustains it and leads it towards the future: an invitation to all consecrated persons “to become bearers of the Spirit authentically spiritual men and women, capable of endowing history with hidden fruitfulness” (*VC* 6).

The caption: consecrated life in the Church today... provides a further highlighting of the identity and prospective, experience and ideals, grace and journey that consecrated life has lived through and is still living within the Church as people of God, as it journeys together with the different nations and cultures toward the future.

Gospel... indicates the fundamental rule of consecrated life, which is the “*sequela Christi* as taught by the Gospel” (*PC* 2a). First of all as “a living memorial of Jesus’ way of living and acting” (*VC* 22), and then as vital wisdom in the light of the multiple counsels that the Lord gave to his disciples (cf. *LG* 42)....

Prophecy... reminds us of the prophetic character of consecrated life, which “takes the shape of a special form of sharing in Christ’s prophetic office, which the Holy Spirit communicates to the whole People of God” (*VC* 84). This authentic prophetic ministry is born from the Word and is nourished by the Word of God when this is welcomed and lived out in the various circumstances of life. This function is carried out through courageous denunciation and in announcing new ‘visits’ by God; also, “through the exploration of new ways to apply the Gospel in history, in expectation of the coming of God’s Kingdom” (*ibid.*).

Hope... reminds us of the ultimate fulfillment of the Christian mystery.... Consecrated life is permanently projected toward the eschatology: it witnesses that every hope will eventually have its definite fulfillment, and transforms the waiting “in work and mission, that the Kingdom may become present here and now” (*VC* 27). As a sign of hope consecrated life needs to be close to people and to show mercy; to be a paradigm of a future free from all kinds of idolatry.... called to embrace the universe... [as] catalysts of communion and unity, praying sentries on the peak of history, and to become one with humanity in its anxieties and in its silent search for the Spirit.

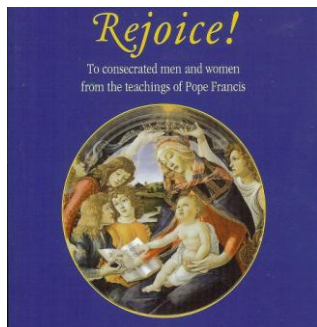
Consolation

The Congregation for Consecrated Life is writing to all consecrated people in the year dedicated to us... So far two letters have arrived and we are expecting still another. We are meditating on them.

In the first letter, **REJOICE**, we find an invitation to joy and consolation.

In our bulletin *IN THE SAME CHARISM*, number 3 of 2014, we reported St. Angela's thoughts on joy. Now we report her thoughts on consolation:

- ✱ *May the strength and true consolation of the Holy Spirit be in you all... (Prologue to the Counsels, 3)*
- ✱ *... together they can also meet each other as loving sisters, and thus, talking over spiritual matters, rejoice together, and together encourage one another (8th Legacy, 3-5).*
- ✱ *... we will cross through this momentary life with consolation... (Prologue to the Rule, 26).*
- ✱ *... comfort her, encourage her, promise her the blessing of the mercy of God, lift her heart with every consolation (2nd Counsel, 8.)*
- ✱ *Comfort them, encourage them, let them go forward willingly (5th Counsel, 23).*
- ✱ *... they will find consolation and comfort (5th Counsel, 34).*
- ✱ *...greet them; see how they are, comfort them; encourage them to stand firm in the life begun... (5th Counsel, 2)*
- ✱ *... the more one attends with great attention, faith, and contrition, the more one participates in those blessed merits and the greater consolation one receives (Rule 6:4.)*



Some Questions from Pope Francis about joy and consolation



- ✧ *But where is joy born?*
- ✧ *Look into the depths of your heart, look into your own inner depths and ask yourself: do you have a heart that desires something great, or a heart that has been lulled to sleep by things?*
- ✧ *Has your heart preserved the restlessness of seeking or have you let it be suffocated by things that end by hardening it?*
- ✧ *God awaits you, he seeks you; how do you respond to him? Are you aware of the situation of your soul?*
- ✧ *Or have you nodded off? Do you believe God is waiting for you or does this truth consist only of words?*
- ✧ *Do we feel the restlessness of love?*
- ✧ *This is important: brotherhood and sisterhood! Do not speak badly of others... would you?*



Let us pray...
That the joy of the Gospel may reach all

*Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to
communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel
may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our
world.*

*Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's
little ones,
pray for us.*

Amen. Alleluia.



Prayer for consolation



*Mary, source of consolation,
We are touched by the gaze of your sweet
eyes and welcome the comforting caress of
your smile.*

*Safeguard our lives in your arms: bless and
strengthen every desire for goodness,
revitalize and nourish our faith, sustain and
brighten the hope that stirs the soul and
our charity; guide all of us on the path of holiness.*

In the Year of Consecrated Life... Let Us Make the Company Known



The Year of Consecrated Life is a unique opportunity for us to make the Company known.

We have a creative foundress. Let us call upon her spirit to find ways of sharing the good news of our beautiful vocation!

Each Company can discover and create opportunities.

A few examples are

- Send information to the appropriate diocesan offices.
 - Provide information for parish and diocesan events.
 - If possible, respecting reserve, participate in parish and diocesan events.
-
- Update printed materials.
 - Create a website, a Facebook page, and/or a blog.
 - Write posts for blogs of others.
 - Join with other local secular institutes in making this vocation known and properly understood.
 - Speak on a local Catholic radio broadcast.
 - Ask diocesan and parish website administrators to include links to the ISSAM and other secular institute websites.
 - Other....

Let us allow the Holy Spirit to guide us and help us be creative in finding different ways to spread news of our *marvelous dignity*.

Mary-Cabrini

From Pope Francis – *Letter to Consecrated Men and Women* – Points for a Merician Reader

¹*Look to the past with gratitude.... All our Institutes are heir to a history rich in charisms. At their origins we see the hand of God who, in his Spirit, calls certain individuals to follow Christ more closely, to translate the Gospel into a particular way of life, to read the signs of the times with the eyes of faith and to respond creatively to the needs of the Church.*

²*"The Holy Spirit, true author of the fruitfulness of the Life of the Church, has raised up in her the charism of secular consecration.... "Forerunner of this vocation, officially recognized by the Church in 1947, is the "Company of Saint Ursula" founded by Saint Angela Merici at Brescia on November 25, 1535" (Constitutions, Decree).*

This initial experience then matured and developed, engaging new members in new geographic and cultural contexts.... Like the seed which becomes a tree, each Institute grew and stretched out its branches.

All the Daughters of Saint Angela Merici go back to this initial Company, especially the secular Ursulines, organized in many diocesan Companies who, united in a federation, were recognized as one Secular Institute in federated form of pontifical right" (cf. Constitutions, Decree).

Our origins... *It calls for following in the footsteps of past generations in order to grasp the high ideals, and the vision and values which inspired them, beginning with the founders and foundresses and the first communities.*

"Every consecrated person will constantly refer to the Rule, the Counsels, and the Testament of Saint Angela

¹ Words in italics come from the Pope.

² Word in brown font come from our foundational texts: guides to holiness

Merici, because referring to one's origins preserves and nourishes the spiritual energies capable of always paving the way for an authentic renewal" (Constitutions 37.1).

Live the present with passion... Grateful remembrance of the past leads us, as we listen attentively to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church today, to implement ever more fully the essential aspects of our consecrated life.

"These [Constitutions] will offer to all the consecrated members of the Institute a path of holiness for a more effective witness in the Church and in the world" (Constitutions, Decree).

Unity... Our founders and foundresses were attracted by the unity of the Apostles with Christ and by the fellowship which marked the first community in Jerusalem.... each of them sought to replicate those models of evangelical living, to be of one heart and one soul, and to rejoice in the Lord's presence.

"My last word to you, by which I implore you even with my blood, is that you live in harmony, united together, all of one heart and one will" (Ninth Counsel, 1).

Embrace the future with hope... This hope is not based on statistics or accomplishments, but on the One in whom we have put our trust (cf. 2 Tim 1:2), the One for whom "nothing is impossible" (Lk 1:37). This is the hope which does not disappoint; it is the hope which enables consecrated life to keep writing its great history well into the future. It is to that future that we must always look, conscious that the Holy Spirit spurs us on so that he can still do great things with us.

"Hold this for certain: that this Rule has been planted directly by his holy hand, and he will never abandon this Company as long as the world lasts" (Testament 11:6-7).

Be happy... We are called to know and show that God is able to fill our hearts to the brim with happiness; that we need not seek our

happiness elsewhere; that the authentic fraternity/sisterhood found in our communities increases our joy...

"And in God, she has all her wealth and outside of God she sees herself impoverished of everything, being a total nothing, and with God possessing everything" (Rule 10:6).

"...so, together like this, they might also meet each other as loving sisters, and thus, talking over spiritual matters, rejoice together, and together encourage one another, which will be no small help to them" (Testament 8:3-6).

Spreading the charism... ...through lives which radiate the joy and beauty of living the Gospel and following Christ to the full.

"And may they be to all a good odour of virtue" (Fifth Counsel, 14).

Open to the world... Don't be closed in on yourselves, don't be stifled by petty squabbles, don't remain a hostage to your own problems. These will be resolved if you go forth and help others to resolve their own problems, and proclaim the Good News. You will find life by giving life, hope by giving hope, love by giving love.

"...our life will be one of commitment to being witnesses of charity, faith and hope in the heart of the world..." (Constitutions 4.2).

Sharing the charism... Indeed, around each religious family, every Society of Apostolic Life and every Secular Institute, there is a larger family, a "charismatic family", ... and especially lay faithful who feel called, precisely as lay persons, to share in the same charismatic reality.

"...associated faithful, who will commit themselves in their own state of life, to live an evangelical life in the light of the spirituality of Saint Angela Merici" (Constitutions 27.1).

The Church needs saints... ... heirs of the great saints who have written the history of Christianity. What would the Church be without Saint Benedict and Saint Basil, without Saint Augustine and Saint

Bernard, without Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, Saint Ignatius of Loyola and Saint Teresa of Avila, **Saint Angela Merici** and Saint Vincent de Paul. The list could go on and on, up to Saint John Bosco and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta.

“With joy and gratitude, we, her daughters [Angela Merici’s], welcome the charism which the Holy Spirit continually renews in fidelity to its origins and the expectations of the Church” (Constitutions 2.3).

The Virgin Mary... I entrust this Year of Consecrated Life to Mary, the Virgin of listening and contemplation, the first disciple of her beloved Son. Let us look to her, the highly -beloved daughter of the Father, endowed with every gift of grace, as the unsurpassed model for all those who follow Christ in love of God and service to their neighbour.

“Mary, Mother of Jesus, to whom we turn with filial affection, is the model of our life as consecrated women in the world and the support of our daily response to God” (Constitutions 16).

Pope Francis challenges the Company to take seriously...

- Once again, we have to ask ourselves: Is Jesus really our first and only love?
- Are our ministries, our works and our presence consonant with what the Spirit asked of our founders and foundresses? Are they suitable for carrying out today, in society and the Church, those same ministries and works?
- We need to ask ourselves about the way we relate to persons from different cultures, as our communities become increasingly international. How can we enable each member to say freely what he or she thinks, to be accepted with his or her particular gifts, and to become fully co-responsible?
- ***I expect that each form of consecrated life will question what it is that God and people today are asking of them.***

FROM THE COMPANIES AND GROUPS

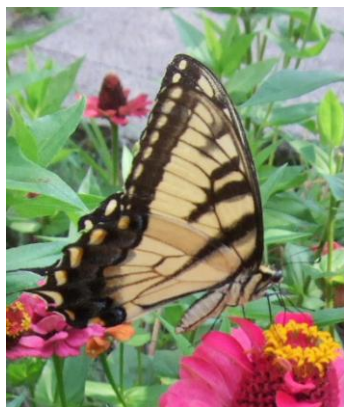
A New Company in Toronto

The butterfly takes flight:
excitement ... fear ...
fragility...

The newest Company of St. Ursula was founded in 1978 as a Group of the Company of Canada. The new Company gained approval for autonomy from the Councils of Canada and of the Federation in 2013, confirmed by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life in February 2014, shortly after the death of Marcella, their beloved local foundress.



On August 16, 2014, the members elected their first directress, Eugenia; vice-directress, Angela; and council: Gemma, Rosa, Sabina, and Barbara (pictured with Thérèse, the Directress of the Company of Canada; Angela and Gemma are absent).



Eugenia, the new directress, reflected, “God has prepared me since 2008 as a delegated leader. Our Lord listened to our prayers, sending us dedicated members. In August four will make their final consecration. I am praying for more vocations to come.”

For guidance she looks to Jesus, who came “not to be served, but to serve,” and to St. Angela, who taught, “God has given free will to everyone and wants to force no one, but only proposes, invites and counsels” and called leaders to be guardians and mothers of the “spouses of the Most High.”

Eugenia expressed gratitude to the leaders of the Company of Canada, who had paved the way for the new Company, and to the Toronto members “for their trust and confidence in me.”

She trusts “Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, our mother; St. Angela.” The foundress assured her daughters, “Now I can and want to help [you] more.” Jesus promised, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.... Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.”

The Company of Indonesia, July 2014



**Dear Sisters,
Greetings from
Indonesia!**

**We had our
annual meeting from
July 3 to 7, 2014. Ebba
and Josephine from
Singapore and Monica
from Australia were
with us. So we had an**

English version of our program and material.



**The consecration for life
of Lilyana and Yustine took
place in the side chapel of the
Ursuline Sisters attached to the
big parish church in a simple
but beautiful ceremony.**

**Nine Indonesian sisters
attended, plus three from
Singapore and Australia. There**

**was a great sense of joy and unity
throughout the meeting.**





We experienced the presence of our Beloved Lord, and we fell in love with him again.

Everybody went home with burning hearts, ready to love and serve Him in our brothers and Sisters.

With love and prayers from

*Meity Wijaya, Sr. Emmanuel Gunanto,
and the Company of Indonesia*

Initial Formation Regional Meeting in Canicatti, May 2014



Together with Saint Angela..... this was the name given to the meeting held on May 15, 2014, at Saint Angela House in Canicatti, where I was a guest, warmly welcomed by her Daughters. For all this I am really grateful.

Saint Angela

was our spiritual guide during prayers and meditation.

After reading her writings, we meditated on the meaning of vocation and our call, which is indeed a sign of hope based on our faith.

Saint Angela invites us to keep our faith alive, nourishing it with regular prayer, perseverance and never-ending confidence; in this way, we will be able to love God, the source of every vocation.

All we have to do is to love Him with all our hearts and minds; give ourselves to Him unconditionally, without fear, just like Saint Angela. By surrendering her will to that of the Holy Spirit, she became an instrument of God's mercy, a living and effective example of the



gospel, a messenger of peace and truth; a wise yet humble teacher at the same time....

I entrust our spiritual journey to Saint Angela, who loved her beloved Spouse, Jesus Christ, unconditionally

while having an ardent zeal to save souls. Following her example, we become brilliant rays of the never-setting sun which made all her words and actions shine even more brightly.

Living in constant union with Christ, we can transmit this shining light to all those we meet on our journey.

Like little sparks of the same flame which burns in the ardent furnace of the Divine Love, we will be able to rekindle the hearts of those who live in icy cold indifference.

Like little flowers from the garden of our Lord, in whom we find our only hope and life, we can pour out and be for all perfumes of virtue.

Rita Catalano, aspirant

The Seed of the Company in Kenya

The seed of a new Company of St. Ursula is being planted in Kenya.

In a ceremony during Mass on September 27, Perpetua made her first consecration (for two years), and Eunice was admitted.

This planting is under the care of the General Council of the Federation, represented by US member Mary-Cabrini.

Those attending the ceremony – relatives and friends of the new

members and the priest concelebrants – gave an enthusiastic welcome to the Company and expressed the conviction that many Kenyan women will find their vocation in this way of life.

Groups of secular Ursulines in Congo, Cameroun, Burundi, and Madagascar, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Eritrea... demonstrate that Africa is the garden in which the Company is growing most rapidly.

“Divine Gardener, Source of all life, teach me how to tend the corner of your garden that you have entrusted to me. Strengthen my faith! Amen.”

Mary-Cabrini Durkin

And now we devote space to the impressions of those directly involved: Perpetua and Eunice, who express their joy to us....

“First I would like to thank the President of the Federation, Maria Razza, and her councilors for facilitating Mary-Cabrini to be present at our celebration in Kenya. We felt united and happy together....

“Three years ago I made up my mind after prayer to find more about the Company and the possibility of becoming a member. I was happy to get a positive response from Mary-Cabrini.



“Two years ago, I was admitted by the President of the Federation, with the consent of her Council, to the period of initial trial... and finally, on September 27, 2014, I was able to make my first consecration. It was a lovely, colorful day. The spirit of our Mother Angela was felt by those who joined us to celebrate also the initial stage of Eunice.

“The formation journey unwrapped the joy of belonging to the Company for me. I seek to mirror God’s loving presence in my job each day. My colleagues at work enjoy my company. They always ask me what sustains me. The joy in my heart as I belong to a secular institute and being fully consecrated renews my zeal and a state of being a child of God. As I continue with my life-long formation and studying the writings of St. Angela, I hope and pray that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit I will be formed to be a fragrance for others.”

Perpetua

“I came to know about the Company through Sr. Jacinta, an Ursuline Sister in Kenya, who introduced me to Perpetua. I shared with her my background and my heart’s desires. She told me about the Company of St Ursula Secular Institute of St. Angela. I felt that is the kind of life I have been searching for. She linked me with Mary-Cabrini Durkin, who has been a spiritual mother from the word go.



“On 27 September 2014, I started my initial trial in the Company of St. Ursula’s way of life. It was one of my happiest days. It was a beginning of another chapter in my life. I and my companion Perpetua, who made her first commitment, saw God’s hand at work.”

Eunice

The 20th Anniversary of the Group in Cameroun

From January 23 to February 2, 2014, I was with Michelle Langlois in Cameroon to take part in the celebration commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Company in that country, and we were



present for the election of the leaders of the group of Yaoundé.

The celebration of the anniversary took place on January 27, the feast day of Saint Angela Merici.

During the Eucharistic celebration we welcomed a new



candidate, Rita Fanta, who began the period of initial trial.

After Mass, the consecrated members, associates and about thirty guests tasted the anniversary cake that was made especially for this occasion.

Tarcille Akamba-Assogo is the Delegate of the French Company for Cameroon.

We said Vespers together to thank the Lord for the group's twentieth anniversary, for the wonders he has worked in this country, and for these Sisters.



I returned to Yaoundé in August for the celebration of Maria Elisabeth Embolo-Ngandi's consecration for life and the renewal of the vows of Rufine Mfoumou-Mbele.

Jeanne Françoise Ntolo-Bikula and Paolino Nsegue-Nkoumou have renewed their commitment as associates.

The sisters of the French Company and I congratulate the group for their vitality, for the new posts of responsibility, and for all those who in one way or another want to follow Saint Angela Merici's footsteps along a path of spirituality and charism.

Let us pray for them that they may faithfully and joyfully persevere to the very end.

Jeanne Lagrave



Consecration Ceremony in England



The first two secular Ursulines in England made their consecration for life on November 25, 2014, the 479th anniversary of the foundation of the Company.

The two women, both named Marie, are linked with the Company of St. Ursula of Slovakia.

The directress of that Company, Maria Dravecka, has guided their formation through two years of preparation and five years of temporary commitment. She received their consecration in the church of St. Thomas More in Lancaster, England.

Canon Luiz invited the congregation to “look at the leaves”: women whose wisdom and experience might be as rich and interesting as the autumn leaves, but whose commitment was a sign of new life, as consecrated women.

Sister Zela Proctor, OSU, an Ursuline of the Roman Union, has fostered the development of this new secular Ursuline presence in England.

A third Englishwoman has made her temporary commitment in the Company. She is not named “Marie”!



From www.angelamerici.it



INCOMING MAIL

From Brazil

..... I am united with you in thought and in prayer for all the work you do as a Federation.

Give my warmest wishes to all the sisters and remind them that, notwithstanding old age, the best thing to do is to keep up the hard work and never stop.

I have so much to do and think about ... and I am always ready to be of service to others.

In the morning, I work with the children, and in the afternoon I see to the formation of their educators, according to the Montessori Method, a method I still use today. I work especially for those who have no rights or opportunities. Best regards and prayers.

M. Nicole, a ninety-year-old

From Germany

After reading the booklet *IN THE SAME CHARISM*, I gratefully thank the Federation for the precious gift which is compiled with so much love and care. My thanks also go to those who care for the Company. Be assured that the Lord Jesus Christ, who knows all that is done in his name, will not forget them.

Teresa Hofle



From Bangladesh

I have been going through a very sad period of my life; my relatives have passed away, I have lost my job, my house, I am going through economic problems and my sisters have lost their vocation.... I have remained all by myself in Bangladesh.

I asked myself: *What do I do? Where do I go?* I could not understand what I was going through.

Notwithstanding all this, I did not lose my faith, because I was sure that God and Saint Angela would assist me.

Never for a moment did I abandon the Lord and repeatedly told Jesus: *You are my spouse, you are my all, you are there and will be with me forever.*

My annual retreat for 2014 helped me a lot. I thought about my past experiences and understood that unless I forget all about them, I could not start afresh.

Although the priest was very busy, he found the time to give me a very personal retreat.

I do not know if we will ever meet again, but if possible, do come and visit me, your sister.



Jhunu

From Brazil... a New Bishop



On November 23, 2014, Pope Francis named Fr. Antonio Tourinho Neto, then Vicar General of the diocese of Jequié, as the new Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Olinda and Recife (Brazil).

This was a historic moment for Jequié.

Emotionally overwhelmed, Fr. Antonio Tourinho Neto, is reported to have said: *"My heart is full of joy, but let all this be for the glory of God. I understand that to be a bishop of the church of Christ is to be of service to others."*

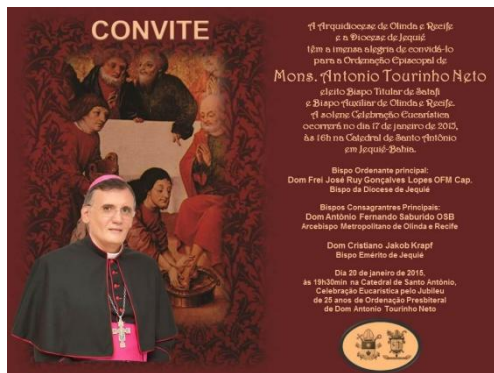
Fr. Antonio Tourinho Neto was born in Jequié fifty years ago and has been a priest for 25 years.

Besides his various duties, Fr. Tom was also Ecclesiastical Assistant of *the Company of Saint Ursula – Northeast – Secular Institute of Saint Angela Merici*.

His consecration as bishop will be celebrated on January 17, the feast day of his patron saint and during the novena of Saint Angela Merici.

We are also proud of the fact that Fr. Tom is the son of Edesia, a widow and vice-directress of the Northeast Company.

This is what Fr. Tom wrote in the invitation he sent us:



“By the grace of God, Pope Francis named me as Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Olinda and Recife, in the state of Pernambuco.

“I ask you to pray for me. I am very proud that I have taken part in the events that built the history of the Daughters of Saint Angela Merici in Brazil.

“I ask all the Companies of the Federation to pray for me, because I respect and appreciate the life of the consecrated Daughters of Saint Angela, whose Ecclesiastical Assistant I have been here in Brazil for twelve years.”

Bishop Antonio Tourinho (Father Tom)

Our best wishes Father Tom! Rest assured that you can rely on our prayers and Saint Angela's intercession: Jesus Christ, the true and good teacher will enlighten and guide you.

From Poland

An Italian Company donated a relic of Saint Angela Merici to the Polish Sanctuary where one can find a large collection of relics of many saints. However, that of our foundress was missing. So we thought it was fitting that she too might find a place in this Sanctuary.....

After all, as Pope Francis wrote in one of his letters addressed to consecrated lay people, *“What would the church be without ... Saint Angela Merici...?”* He also mentioned eleven other founders, *“great saints who have built the history of Christianity.”*

So, as soon as the permission was granted, Ada, Directress of the Company of Poland, presented the relic of our foundress to the rector of the Sanctuary.

Now may Saint Angela intercede for new vocations in Poland and elsewhere....



From Germany



Greetings to all the members of the Council of the Federation and all the Sisters in the world.

We thank you for all the literature which links us together: circulars, letters, *In the same Charism....* We cannot take part in the General and International Meetings because travelling has become very tiring for us, particularly long trips.

We are active members in our local church and get on very well with the other institutes of consecrated life.

We form part of the pastoral commission; we are well acquainted with the Order of the German Ursuline Sisters and take part in the gatherings of secular institutes, which give us a great spiritual benefit.

Angela and Margarete

Attention!



The Year of Consecrated Life

480th anniversary of the foundation of the Company

*“During this Year,
it would be appropriate for each
charismatic family to reflect
on its origins and history,
in order to thank God who grants the
Church a variety of gifts
which embellish her
and equip her for every good work.*



*Recounting our history is essential
for preserving our identity,
for strengthening our unity as a family
and our common sense of belonging.”*

(Pope Francis: Letter to Consecrated Men and Women)

MEETING OF THE FEDERATION 2015

*Company of Saint Ursula – The Federation
from its origin to our own day
«in the ancient way and a new life»*

Rome August 1-5, 2015

A SPECIAL MEETING in a special year...

The presenters:

- History of the Federation I and II

Paolo Gheda, professor of modern history
Università della Valle d'Aosta

- Consecrated Life in the 1900s

Gaetano Zito, professor of Church history
Chiesa Studio teologico S. Paolo di Catania

- The Federation's Path of Spirituality

Massimo Naro, professor of Trinitarian theology
Facoltà teologica di Sicilia, Palermo

- Canonical Structure in the Federatione

Gian Carlo Rocca, director
Dictionary of Institutes of Perfection

- The Merician Charism in the Federation's Lived Experience

Adriano Tessarollo, Bishop of Chioggia and Ecclesiastical
Assistant to the Council of the Federation

- Testimonies from the Continents:

Europe, Africa, the Americas and Asia

- Conclusions

Francesco Bonini, Rector of LUMSA University in Roma

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