

IN THE SAME CHARISM

with responsibility



n. 2 - 2015

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

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TO THE READERS

Not to Abandon Our First Love...

The Pope's invitation to consecrated persons is to return to our origins and *not to abandon our first Love...*

We too take up again this invitation, in the 480th anniversary of the Company's foundation, welcoming it as a reminder and as a recommendation of faithful renewal.

Not to abandon our first Love... who from the beginning has chosen us, who from the beginning was thinking of the Company, and *if it is he who planted it, who can ever uproot it?*

... our first Love... Each one in her own heart, in her own life, but united together...we must not abandon, rather we must always return to *our first Love*, as Saint Angela reminds us: *Let them have Jesus Christ for their only treasure, for there also will be love.*

Not to abandon our first Love... in our choices, in our projects, in our formation and updating, in the life of the Company and of the Companies of the Federation...let us always search for what suits our vocation, which Saint Angela considered such *a new and stupendous dignity.*

Not to abandon our first Love... who prompted the Companies to become a Federation, a Secular Institute of pontifical right. This very year we wish to rediscover and rewrite our story, to find again in our origins *the spiritual energies that are always able to trace out the path to authentic renewal.*

Not to abandon our first Love... for “*recounting our history is essential for preserving our identity, for strengthening our unity as a family and our common sense of belonging*” (cf. Pope Francis: *Letter to All Consecrated People*).

Not to abandon our first Love... *to be consoled, to have a lively faith and hope, to be blessed: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Caterina Dalmasso

A THOUGHT FROM THE PRESIDENT

Consecrated Life in the Church Today: Gospel, Prophecy, Hope

The Year of Consecrated Life opened and is developing with multiple local initiatives, especially diocesan, that encourage our participation: initiatives that involve Companies and Groups because we want to be present with our specific contribution, bringing our particular Merician experience.

Among ourselves, as we well know, in 2015 we recall and celebrate the important 480th anniversary of the foundation of the Company of St. Ursula: paying attention to these two special initiatives, we want to develop and to explore the three words that appear in the logo of the Year of Consecrated Life, according to our own spirituality.

Gospel: Saint Angela's whole life was modeled on the Gospel, lived and witnessed to in simple, ordinary, common conditions. The references to Gospel passages in the holy Madre's writings, whether explicit or implied, are always clear: Saint Angela's spirituality is eminently evangelical, that is clear, the Gospel experienced/lived "to the letter," without adapting and without cheapening it. We pure are called to live the Gospel, to interweave the Word of God with our attitudes and behaviors, our thoughts, feelings, relationships, all our actions, in happy times and more burdensome ones...

Prophecy: We could abundantly cite the advice that Saint Angela reveals to her Daughters because our "prophecy," that is, our witness, refer to a "Beyond" that we have already been granted the grace of living here on earth. Through incarnating the Gospel of love, in a concrete love for the people whom the Lord placed her with in the course of life's flow and events, Saint Angela lived a courageous "prophetic ministry": she faced physical and moral dangers, she marked out possible new pathways for living peacefully with others...

The prophecy *par excellence* is her foundation itself, the gift of the charism of consecrated life that God gave her, for herself and for so

many other women who would follow her as mother and teacher. Let us make this anniversary year our opportunity for renewed courage, for renewed fidelity to “...persevere and prosper till the end” (Rule, Prologue 10), making courageous changes simply “...according to the times and circumstances” (Last Legacy, 2).

Hope: “I have this undaunted...hope in the infinite divine goodness...” (Rule, Prologue 25). “They should place their hope and love in God alone ...” (Fifth Counsel, 22). “They must not lose hope” (Fifth Counsel, 32). “Let them set their hopes on high” (Fifth Counsel, 42).

Let us welcome the pressing invitation of our Madre, who built her life on hope. It is also our "flashlight," guiding us and not letting us be overwhelmed by distrust. "Let us embrace the future with hope" (Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father for the Year of Consecrated Life, 3). Our hope is built on God to whom we have consecrated our life and our very selves. We don't need anything except to live in joy!

Let us willingly respond to Pope Francis's expectations: “None of us should be dour, discontented and dissatisfied, for ‘a gloomy disciple is a disciple of gloom.’ Like everyone else, we have our troubles, our dark nights of the soul, our disappointments and infirmities, our experience of slowing down as we grow older. But in all these things we should be able to discover ‘perfect joy.’ For it is here that we learn to recognize the face of Christ, who became like us in all things, and to rejoice in the knowledge that we are being conformed to him who, out of love of us, did not refuse the sufferings of the cross” (Apostolic Letter of the Holy Father for the Year of Consecrated Life, II, 1).

On this road Saint Angela is our guide, teacher, and "faithful friend" who accompanies and supports us.

Maria Razza

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

The vocation of the baptized to holiness (Part 2)

In the Letter to the Ephesians we read an affirmation that helps us understand who we are before God: *“In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised holy Spirit, which is the first installment of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s possession, to the praise of his glory”* (Ephesians 1:13-14).

This long sentence lays out a pathway and the result of such a pathway. Through our listening to *the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation* and through our personal adherence *having believed in him*, we arrive at faith, through which we receive from God in Baptism the gift of the Holy Spirit, promised for the messianic times.

The fruit of the *seal of the Holy Spirit* is the guarantee that we share the *inheritance* of the life of the risen Christ, and our complete *redemption*, because we were liberated by him from the slavery of sin and death. Therefore, we have become Christians through faith and Baptism. In this way we were signed with the seal of the Holy Spirit. With this sign and seal we have been marked definitively as belonging to God, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us.

The whole Trinity is at work on humanity! The Father takes action, the Son is the Mediator, or rather the price of the ransom, and the Holy Spirit is the guarantor of our belonging to God.

The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of the promise, as the prophet Ezekiel said (36:26-28): *I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you so that you walk in my statutes, observe my ordinances, and keep them. ... You will be my people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your impurities.*

Through this liberation accomplished in us by the work of the Holy Spirit given to us by the Father, thanks to the Son, we become capable of a new life, characterized by love.

In Galatians 5:22, St. Paul affirms: "*the fruit of the Spirit is love.*" Paul is talking about the fruit of the Spirit in the singular, and then he enumerates a series of effects of this gift in us: liberation from the effects of sin that Paul calls "works of the flesh" that he lists in four groups:

- immorality/impurity/licentiousness, as a perversion of human love;
- idolatry/sorcery, as a perversion of divine worship;
- hatred/rivalry/jealousy/outbursts of fury/acts of selfishness/
dissension/factions, as the absence of love;
- drinking bouts/orgies/things of this sort, as a manifestation of human degradation.

To sin and its manifestations, Paul repeatedly contrasts the single fruit of the Spirit, love, and its multiple signs: the joy and peace that lead to patience, goodness, and kindness, things that grow in the soil of fidelity, meekness, and self-control.

Christian life is a spiritual life because it is made possible by the Spirit, gift of the Risen One, at work in us (cf. Romans 5:5), becoming within us the wellspring of that new life which is called holiness. *This is the will of God, your holiness* (1 Thessalonians 4:3). And this is everyone's vocation! Holiness, sanctification, recalls God's activity that sanctifies us through his Holy Spirit dwelling in us.

Therefore, whoever disregards this, disregards not a human being but God, who gives his holy Spirit to you (1 Thessalonians 4:8). To resist the invitation to a life of holiness is equivalent to scorning God himself, who in the gift of his Spirit has given us the need and the strength to live according to this Word. This is the seriousness of sin: setting oneself against the action of the Spirit. (Ephesians 4:30; Isaiah 63:10)

Fellow-citizens of the saints and members of God's family

An authentic embrace of the Gospel through faith and the action of the Holy Spirit, who is within us through Baptism, besides freeing

each of us from sin and from its consequences and putting us on the way to living a new life "in love," also makes us brothers and sisters in Christ, children of one God the Father, together forming a holy temple in which God lives through the Spirit.

Let us listen to Ephesians 2:19-22: *So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone. Through him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord; in him you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

Each of us will have to seek her own light to know better this marvelous grace that the Spirit brings about in us. *May the eyes of your hearts be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope that belongs to his call, what are the riches of glory in his inheritance among the holy ones, and what is the surpassing greatness of his power for us who believe, in accord with the exercise of his great might* (Ephesians 1:18-19).

Paul describes the new condition of those who have believed in Christ and been baptized, diametrically opposed to their previous empty devotions: *"Therefore, remember that at one time you, Gentiles in the flesh... without Christ, alienated from the community of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world"* (2:11-12). Now, instead, *"you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God."*

In antiquity, although foreigners had no rights or protection and the guest was a stranger outside his own country who surely did not share in civil rights, every Greek and Roman citizen proudly declared that he belonged to his own city-state or to the Empire, with all the rights this entitled him to! Now we are citizens of a city or of a state, but fellow-citizens "of the saints" who still live on earth, but also of the angels and saints in heaven.

This Church extends from earth to heaven and is therefore called the heavenly Jerusalem. And citizenship in this Church belongs to those

who adhere to the Gospel, becoming fellow-citizens of the saints. Let us read Hebrews 12:22-24: *You have approached Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and countless angels in festal gathering, and the assembly of the firstborn enrolled in heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks more eloquently than that of Abel.*

But the thought goes further, flowing into the expression "members of the household of God," that is, members of God's family. If "fellow-citizens" refers to the concept of the 'city' as a place where rights are recognized, rights of identity and social belonging, the idea of family or of home refers to one's birthplace, to the land of one's origin, with the warm feeling that such language evokes. First we were like orphans, homeless, but now we have become "children" in a home that has its solid foundation in the "*apostles and prophets*" (3:5; 4:11), in *Christ* (cf Isaiah 28:16)"! If the foundations are solid, all the other stones in the building are solidly united and compact and the whole building stands on stone. We recall the house build on rock. The final result: "*The whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord...built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*" See, then, the holy temple, the temple of God. Paul is thinking of the local Church. (Cf 1 Corinthians 3:16ff)

Therefore – a community that lives for God, for God's worship and glory! Here Paul passes to the second level, the individual aspect: the Christian finds dignity and greatness in the complete work to which he/she is called to contribute: to build up the temple of God, in Christ Jesus, in the Holy Spirit.

How does one live the holiness to which we have been called with the new reality that is one's Church?

Once more I refer to the final part of Benedict XVI's discourse on Christian holiness delivered in St. Peter's Square on Wednesday, April 13, 2011: *What is essential? The essential means never leaving a Sunday without an encounter with the Risen Christ in the Eucharist; this is not an additional burden but is light for the whole week.*

It means never beginning and never ending a day without at least a brief contact with God. And, on the path of our life it means following the “signposts” that God has communicated to us in the Ten Commandments, interpreted with Christ, which are merely the explanation of what love is in specific situations. It seems to me that this is the true simplicity and greatness of a life of holiness: the encounter with the Risen One on Sunday; contact with God at the beginning and at the end of the day; following, in decisions, the “signposts” that God has communicated to us, which are but forms of charity.

“Hence the true disciple of Christ is marked by love both of God and of neighbor” (Lumen Gentium, n. 42). This is the true simplicity, greatness and depth of Christian life, of being holy. This is why St Augustine, in commenting on the fourth chapter of the First Letter of St John, could make a bold statement: “Dilige et fac quod vis [Love and do what you will]” And he continued: “If you keep silent, keep silent by love: if you speak, speak by love; if you correct, correct by love; if you pardon, pardon by love; let love be rooted in you, and from the root nothing but good can grow” (7,8 pl 35).

Those who are guided by love, who live charity to the full, are guided by God, because God is love. Hence these important words apply: “Dilige et fac quod vis”, “Love and do what you will.”

We might ask ourselves: can we, with our limitations, with our weaknesses, aim so high? During the Liturgical Year, the Church invites us to commemorate a host of saints, the ones, that is, who lived charity to the full, who knew how to love and follow Christ in their daily lives.

They tell us that it is possible for everyone to take this road. In every epoch of the Church’s history, on every latitude of the world map, the saints belong to all the ages and to every state of life, they are actual faces of every people, language and nation. And they have very different characters. Actually I must say that also for my personal faith many saints, not all, are true stars in the firmament of history. And I would like to add that for me not only a few great saints whom I love and whom I know well are “signposts”, but precisely also the

simple saints, that is, the good people I see in my life who will never be canonized. They are ordinary people, so to speak, without visible heroism but in their everyday goodness I see the truth of faith. This goodness, which they have developed in the faith of the Church, is for me the most reliable apology of Christianity and the sign of where the truth lies.

In the Communion of Saints, canonized and not canonized, which the Church lives thanks to Christ in all her members, we enjoy their presence and their company and cultivate the firm hope that we shall be able to imitate their journey and share one day in the same blessed life, eternal life. Dear friends, how great and beautiful, as well as simple is the Christian vocation seen in this light!

We are all called to holiness: it is the very measure of Christian living. Once again St Paul expresses it with great intensity when he writes: “grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift.... His gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph 4:7, 11-13). I would like to ask all to open themselves to the action of the Holy Spirit, who transforms our life, to be, we too, as small pieces in the great mosaic of holiness that God continues to create in history, so that the face of Christ may shine out in the fullness of its splendor.

Let us not be afraid to aim high, for God’s heights; let us not be afraid that God will ask too much of us, but let ourselves be guided by his Word in every daily action, even when we feel poor, inadequate, sinners. It will be he who transforms us in accordance with his love.

+ Bishop Adriano Tessarollo, Assistant

ABOUT THE RULE OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI

Some points for reflection...

Rule, Chapter VIII *About obedience* (vv. 14-18)



Obedience to the Holy Spirit...

¹⁴“*And above all to obey the counsels and inspirations which the Holy Spirit continually sends into the heart.*”

We shall become capable of obeying God continually through the Holy Spirit.

This expression of Saint Angela, placed at the end of a gradual climax of obedience, makes one think...

‘Above all’ sounds like a priority; like something essential. Even if it does not eliminate the previous list, overall, it seems like a proposal for a concrete and precise exercise of obedience.

It is an expression that rebuilds one’s life, over and over; that rebuilds Saint Angela’s institute, as the Constitutions remind us: “*In obedience to the Spirit, she brought for God’s glory, the flowering, in an entirely new institution of that admirable form of life that Our Savior lived, and with Him, Our Lady, the Apostles, the Virgins and many Christians of the early Church*” (Constitutions 2.2).

Cozzano, the faithful witness of the spirituality of the Founders, emphasises in this regard: “*God grants to such virgins a special grace: not being under the constant vigilance of superiors, as happens in monastic life, they must learn to obey the voice of the Holy Spirit to know how to keep themselves steady in the stormy sea of this world. The same Holy Spirit who operates in the heart of virgins inspired the Foundress to emphasize obedience to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit....*”

I have given you an opening, that is, I have disposed your heart to open itself to the counsels of the Holy Spirit; taught and consoled by

the Spirit, the heart can carry on in this holy life” (An answer to those who are encouraging the virgins of St. Ursula to a cloistered life).

Certainly, through the Holy Spirit our vocational response must be faithful to that charism accepted and renewed in the Church: *“With joy and gratitude, we, her daughters, welcome the charism which the Holy Spirit continually renews in fidelity to its origins and the expectations of the Church” (Constitutions 2.3).*

And surely the unique law of Christian life is docility towards the Holy Spirit’s actions, because the *new law*, the law introduced by the Gospel – not a law from a legislator – is appropriately given by the Spirit, *“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God” (Romans 8:14).*

For us who live in the world where certain choices, certain professional, social, and political responsibilities are not always easy to make or decide (or at times they must not be, e.g., professional secrecy), how much more important it is to be enlightened by the Holy Spirit!

Conditions for listening to the Holy Spirit...

¹⁵*“...whose voice we will hear all the more clearly the more purified and clean our conscience.”*

Sin is the obstacle which prevents us from listening to the voice of the Spirit.

To be enlightened by the Holy Spirit, our conscience must be cleansed of the idols of power, pleasure, and possession.

Our conscience must be pure, honest, righteous, and free of all compromise, capable of searching out the Truth, of possessing Wisdom, *of knowing all that is good in God’s eyes and consistent with God’s law.* Humility and vigilance are needed.

Cozzano, almost echoing St. Paul’s teaching, again reminds us of the pointers that will help us understand.

The inspirations coming from the Spirit bring:

- Peace: accommodations, settling for less, compromises do not bring peace;
- Harmony: helps us to be truly united with others and for others, disposed to search, and wherever possible find solutions;

- Love: what truly counts is the spiritual union with Him known as the ultimate Good;
- Joy: surrendering our self-will may hurt, but when we make it an offering, a pleasing and holy sacrifice, we rediscover true joy.

The Company will help us to live according to the Holy Spirit: *“In sharing among our sisters in Christ, we will find the help to live according to the Spirit in our personal, social and ecclesial life...”* (Constitutions 4.4)

What task has the Holy Spirit prepared for us...?

¹⁶*“since the Holy Spirit is he who (as Jesus Christ says): “docet nos omnem veritatem, that is, teaches us every truth.”*

“But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth...” (John 16:13).

In Article 4.2, the Constitutions summarize the action of the Holy Spirit in our life; indeed, they support this action in us and in our actions: *“The Holy Spirit, who is always at work in us, will make us capable of silence, wonder and wisdom like Anna, daughter of Phanuel, and will give us the strength and zeal of Judith. With the Spirit's help our life will be one of commitment to being witnesses of charity, faith and hope in the heart of the world; of responsibility for a wise discernment of lights and shadows present in the human person and in history. ...”*

Finally, this obedience to the Holy Spirit brings so much joy and hope: *“If you faithfully carry out these and other similar things, as the Holy Spirit suggests to you according to the times and circumstances, rejoice, go forward willingly”* (Last Legacy 14).

We ask you to imitate our Foundress in this docility to the Holy Spirit: *“The Foundress, Saint Angela Merici, docile to the Spirit, welcomed the mystery of Christ, sent by the Father into the world to share the history and life of humanity...”* (Constitutions 2.1).

“In the Company we will respond freely and with a joyful spirit to the call; and with docility we will let ourselves be led by the Spirit in the following of Christ, obedient, chaste and poor” (Constitutions 3.2)

Secular and universal obedience...

¹⁷“Now, in conclusion, obey God and each creature for love of God, as the Apostle says, ¹⁸as long as nothing is commanded against the honor of God and of one’s own integrity” (Rule Ch. 8, 17- 18).

This implies mutual submission in charity. We are still in the great chapter of love.

To obey God and each creature for love of God... reminds us of an expression of St. Paul: “Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law...” (Romans 13:8).

This obedience proposed by Saint Angela at the end of the chapter is truly powerful; it deals with obeying everybody, out of love. Like love, obedience will be without borders and unlimited.

We all know how difficult it is to seek out God along an uneven path, how easy it is to do wrong, if we do not heed others and let only our own hearts decide. However, we must obediently listen to others because traces of godliness may be found in every one of us.

Undoubtedly, enlightened by faith, one always has to ascertain whether one’s obedience conforms to God’s will and one’s conscience. This conformity must be verified and understood; it is always a responsible and joint responsible obedience.

Saint Angela, who knew the sisters, the leaders, the Church, and the world, emphasises the need for astute understanding:

- **of the leaders:** “Know however, that where you see clearly that the salvation and honor of your daughters are in danger, you must on no account consent to it, nor tolerate it, or have any hesitation. Yet, all this always with discernment and maturity of judgment” (Third Counsel 14-15).
- **of confessors or eventual spiritual guides:** “Be on your guard lest a confessor, or some other religious, turn them away from some good inspiration or from fasting or from the firm purpose of virginity, or from esteem for the Holy Rule divinely ordained, or other similar good things...” (Seventh Counsel 6-10).
- **regarding the world:** “If mothers or other worldly superiors should want to pressure them into such things or similar

dangers or should want to hinder them from fasting or prayer or confession or other kinds of good things, be quick to refer this to the lady governors of the Company so that they may take care of it” (Rule 3, 8-10).

For such a committed obedience it is necessary to confront and reflect on oneself in conversation with the leader within the Company.

In reviewing one’s life with the Directress, besides one’s fidelity to the Rule and Constitutions of which we have already spoken, the actual Constitutions envision a commitment of obedience still more concrete. This includes real-life situations and relationships, helping one to understand and take responsibility, which is always personal: *“She will submit to the Directress orientations and choices that might change her life in a significant way; as for example, a change of work or residence, the acceptance or refusal of public offices, of special family responsibilities and apostolic commitments, open to accept the directions that will be suggested to her” (Constitutions 19.4).*

Do we ask, review, and submit our choices? How, when?

In Saint Angela’s Fifth Counsel we find an example of the basis for this review; it truly touches every aspect of life.

For the review within the Company we recall what the Constitutions affirm in 19.3: *“In evaluation within the Company each of us will learn to discern according to her own life situations, the demands of obedience, “great light” and source of the freedom and joy born of the spiritual sacrifice of oneself.”*

We ask for wisdom and honest judgment for everyone: *“Wisdom and upright judgment will guide us consecrated women and the Directress in our journey of seeking the will of God, a journey which will be lifelong; seeking jointly, however, can never exonerate each of us from personally assuming our own responsibilities” (Constitutions 19.5).*

To live in the great light

*Holy Spirit; You who teach us all truth,
help me to practice holy obedience,
the true self denial of my own will.*

*Jesus Christ, You who came into this world
not to do your own will but that of the **Father** who sent you,
help me to understand that obedience
is a great light,
which makes my every action good and acceptable.
Your Word reminds me, Lord,
that obedience is better than sacrifice, and even more,
that it is through obedience that all I do
becomes good and acceptable.*

*Saint Angela, you who were free and obedient,
teach me once again the importance of obedience.
I want to obey the Word of God, Holy Mother Church,
Pastors and Spiritual Directors, the leaders of The Company,
the elders at home, the directors at work, and the officials of civil laws
in order to promote love everywhere.
But, above all, I want to follow the counsel and inspirations
that the Holy Spirit continually sends into my heart.
Help me, especially, to sift and cleanse my conscience
in order to be able to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.
Light up my whole life with the great light of obedience,
so that I may be able to come to the right judgment
and choose a life of integrity
worthy of a spouse of the Most High.
By means of this light, help me every day
to obey God and every creature for love of God.
Amen.*

Logo for the 480th Anniversary of the Foundation of the Company

By a happy coincidence, the Year of Consecrated Life coincides with the 480th anniversary of the foundation of the Company.

The Federation wanted to signify this important happening with its own logo and sought the help of a skilled person to bring it about.

Here it is... and an explanation on the next page.

But first, let each one try to do her own reflection on it:

What do you see? What does it inspire in you?

What sort of message does it express?



This is how some sisters have answered...

- Beautiful, colorful, full of joy and hope... for the world as it is experienced, drawn to the cross in an embrace of light, where a small, subtle ladder can be both a sign and an instrument. The cross is a good sign to each one because she finds its colorful radiance and lives fully in it.
- There are the beginnings, the ladder, the contemporary world and the words of Saint Angela... it's all there....
- The outer ring becomes the C of the Company!
- It expresses the “ancient” way and the “new” world.

This how the designer explains it:

...I tried to synthesize in forms and in colors the two charismatic focal points that I have gathered from Saint Angela's words and especially ones that are recognizable in you...:

The **sisterhood** and the **mission “from within” the world** both in a dynamic **unity**, from the origins of the Company (*the antique painting and the evocative symbol of the ladder*) to its journey through time, from century to century... growing through its adventure toward the Kingdom of God, “*faithfully and joyfully*”!

(*Colorful circles* of your sisterly reality of Gospel-based, reciprocal care for one another) through taking on the shining reality of the “*world*,” the beloved workplace of your silent and prayerful self-giving, bringing into the dailiness of ordinary relationships (figures with outstretched *hands*) the light and consolation of Christ's Paschal Mystery (the *rising sun*, bright *Cross*, *peaceful dove*, *morning star*...) like the quiet fountain that encourages and motivates human life and work (like *salt*... and *yeast*... and a *mustard seed*... in the human community).

From the shore of a *lake*...the historic prophecy entrusted to a woman for all the “*today*s” of lay Christians.

Through sky, earth, and sea, *joyful perseverance* in trust that, even to this moment, everything that is of love will flourish....

(Sr. Prisca Maria, Carmelite Monastery, Piacenza)



Scrutinize

Again we open ourselves to the challenge from the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life; this time we touch upon some thoughts from the letter **SCRUTATE** [**SCRUTINIZE**]...

Keep watch

Keep watch faithfully for the Lord

*Remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart (Acts 11:23)*¹.

Keep watch ... along the way

Pope Francis passionately encourages us to walk the way quickly and joyfully:

*Led by the Spirit, never unyielding, never closed, always open to the voice of God that speaks, that opens, that leads us and invites us to go towards the horizon.*²

Never lose enthusiasm for walking along the paths of the world, the awareness that to walk, even with halting or limping steps, is always better than staying still, enclosed in our own questions or our own sureness.

Staying alert and keeping watch

Saint Cyprian of Carthage wrote: "... The Lord acts in such a way that we do not let ourselves be weighed down by the slumber of

¹ *Italicized and highlighted text is from **Scrutate**—the Pope's letter for the Year of Consecrated Life*

² *Italicized text, in color, represents the words of Pope Francis*

infidelity; but he grants us his grace and mercy so that we may always be able to stay awake in fidelity to Him. In fact, our fidelity can stay awake in Christ" (Sermon 32, 4).

Keeping watch... in Company

Peace in a community is "such an important feature.... It is so important because the devil seeks to divide us, always. He is the father of division; through envy he divides. Jesus enables us to see this path, that of peace among us, of love among us."

Keeping watch... in my heart

Keeping watch. And guarding the heart. We must be the guardians of our hearts. Because if one does not keep watch, the heart goes everywhere; and the imagination slides backwards.

Because where my heart is, that is my treasure...

Keeping watch over my life...

- ✦ How do I keep watch in fidelity to the Lord?*
- ✦ What weighs down my fidelity to the Lord?*
- ✦ How do I walk on the Lord's road?*
- ✦ How do I keep watch in love and in sisterhood in the Company?*

Keeping Watch According to Saint Angela

✧ My very own sisters, it is necessary that we be vigilant, and so much more so, as the undertaking is of such importance that there could be none greater... (Rule Prologue 15)

✧ There is no type of evil which is not here to be resisted, considering that we are placed here in the midst of snares and dangers (Rule Prologue 19).



✳ *... All of you kindly be attentive, with great and longing heart (Rule Prologue 32).*

✳ *...give me grace to die rather than offend your divine Majesty (Rule Ch. 5, 17).*

✳ *We call upon each one to observe holy obedience, the only true self-denial of one's own will, which is within us like murky hell (Rule Ch. 8, 1-2).*

✳ *...Guard them and watch over them as most vigilant shepherds and good servants (Counsels Prologue 6).*

✳ *Be careful and vigilant to know and understand the behavior of your daughters... (Counsels 4, 1).*

✳ *Watchfulness and profound respect will direct those...responsible in helping and accompanying the sisters on their journey of continuous gift to the Lord (Constitutions 20.5).*

✳ *[The directress] will be solicitous and watchful toward the sisters, and will make every effort to be affable and human, exemplary and sincere (Constitutions 23.3).*

✳ *And thus, loving each other and living in harmony together are a sure sign that we are walking the path right and pleasing to God.... be vigilant on this point (10th Legacy 12-13).*

✳ *Let them have Jesus Christ for their only treasure, for there also will be love (Counsels 5, 43).*



Scrutinize

Scrutinize what?

...to look toward the horizons that the Spirit recommends for the Church, to understand the crackling of the morning stars, not to rely on having security exits, or improvised shortcuts, but rather to let oneself

be led to great things through small and weak signals, putting in play one's meager resources.

“Prophets receive from God the ability to scrutinize the times in which they live and to understand events; they are like sentinels who keep watch in the night and sense the coming of dawn” (cf. Is 21:11-12).

Scrutinize... go beyond

So many consecrated men and women experience the daily routines of men's and women's lives today, sharing their joys and sorrows, bringing enthusiasm to ordinary time, with the wisdom and the boldness to find new and courageous paths for gathering all together in Christ, and to go beyond, not only beyond, but both beyond and in the midst, where everything is in play.

Scrutinize... with a contemplative gaze

It is necessary to cultivate a contemplative gaze, or it may be a look of faith, that discovers that God who lives in one's own home, on one's own streets, in one's own piazzas.

God's presence accompanies the sincere search by individuals and groups to find support and meaning for their lives. He lives among citizens, promoting solidarity, a sense of community, the desire for good, for truth, for justice. This presence does not have to be fabricated, but discovered, revealed.

Looking at my life...

- ✚ What does the letter's title, “**Scrutinize**,” bring to my mind?
- ✚ What does “**Scrutinize**” in a Gospel sense and as a commitment within the consecrated life signify for me?
- ✚ **Beyond and in the midst...** how do I locate myself in the world and among others?
- ✚ Do I have a “contemplative gaze”?
- ✚ What experience speaks to me of God's presence?



MERICIAN THOUGHT

- ✱ *...Seek out, and desire all those means and ways that are necessary to persevere and prosper till the end* (Rule Prologue, 10).
- ✱ *... It is necessary that we be vigilant ...* (Rule Prologue, 15).
- ✱ *...Thorny and rocky roads we will find flower-strewn for us, paved with finest gold* (Rule Prologue, 27).
- ✱ *...Be attentive, with great and longing heart* (Rule Prologue, 32).
- ✱ *My Lord, light up the darkness of my heart* (Rule 5, 16).
- ✱ *...obedience is in man like a great light which makes every work good and acceptable...* (Rule 8, 4).
- ✱ *...Without doubt you will see marvelous things, if you direct everything to the praise and glory of his Majesty and the good of souls* (Eighth Counsel Prologue, 18).
- ✱ *Let them set their hopes on high and not on earth* (Fifth Counsel, 42).
- ✱ *...I beg you...have engraved on your mind and heart all your dear daughters, one by one* (Second Legacy, 1).
- ✱ *...Be on guard, then, and take care especially that they are united and one in will...* (Ninth Legacy, 6-7).
- ✱ *Our spiritual journey is expressed in a continuous stretching toward Christ... with a continuous act of love, keeping alive in ourselves the expectation of the ultimate encounter with our "Lover"* (cf. Constitutions 4.1; 20.2).
- ✱ *They desire every good thing, strong and happy and blazing with divine love...* (Cozzano - To the Readers).

Let's challenge ourselves...

- *Where are consecrated people?*
- *Freed by the evangelical form of life that they profess, do they know how to live on the edge?*
- *Do they know how to stand still – like sentinels – at the margin, where their gaze becomes more clear and their thinking more sharp and humble?*

➤ *Will all consecrated life know how to welcome challenging, significant questions that emerge at the crossroads of the world? (C,D.)*

Prayer



*Hail Mary,
Lady of the New Covenant,
we call you blessed
because you have believed
and have known how to “recognize the
traces of God’s Spirit in great happenings
and also in those that seem
imperceptible»!*

*Support our night-watching,
until dawn’s light announces a new day.*

*Fulfill in us the prophecy that the joy of the Gospel
proclaims to the world,
the happiness of those who scrutinize
the new horizons of earth and sky,
those who hasten the presence of this joy
in the human community.*

*Help us to proclaim the fruitfulness of the Spirit
in the womb of the simple, the small.
Grant that we may accomplish
the courageous action of a humble person
on whom God gazes,
to whom are revealed the secrets of the Kingdom.*

Amen.

MARIA BORGATO
a life sealed as a gift!

The diocesan process for the beatification of the Servant of God Maria Borgato, of the Company of St. Ursula of Padua, was opened on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, with the hope that it reaches the level of recognizing her heroic virtue or of declaring her a martyr.

After a moment of prayer came presentations by Father Giuseppe Magrin, postulator; by Bishop Pietro Brazzale, vice-postulator; and by Claudia Bedendo, Directress of the Company of Padua. Next came the swearing in of the bishop and the members of the tribunal, a presentation by Bishop Antonio Mattiazzo, and the final blessing.

The hall of the Collegio Sacro, next to the cathedral, was full of people of all ages and backgrounds, giving the perception that Maria's witness is still alive for many people. What might have been a rather formal occasion, with a particularly juridical character, was transformed instead into a spiritual celebration of our sister's memory.

But who was Maria?

Maria Luigia Pulcheria Borgato was born at Saonaro (Padua) on September 7, 1898. Hers was a humble life, spent in the service of her neighbor.

At a young age (in 1920) she chose to join the Company of Saint Angela Merici, in which she was able to combine a complete gift of herself to Christ and daily work among her people.



To her numerous peasant relatives, to the parish, and to the people of her area, she offered her service – generous, humble, and with a predilection for the weakest.

She worked as a seamstress in a regional workshop. In the parish she made herself available for many services, from cleaning to catechesis.

After September 8, 1943, she gave herself unhesitatingly to Allied soldiers who had been recaptured after fleeing from concentration camps. She was discovered and arrested on March 13, 1944. Her Calvary began in women's prisons in Venice, where she underwent brutal interrogation without giving in. Her imprisonment continued in Bolzano, then with deportation to the extermination camp of Ravensbrück (Berlin). There Maria's life ended in April 1945. From prison, she had written: ***"Do not suffer for me, for I vowed my life to God, and therefore suffering is an advantage for me; you will see me in heaven."***

Our sister Maria Borgato, living the charism of secular consecration in the footsteps of Saint Angela, knew how to insert herself in the ordinary life of her family, parish, and civil society. She knew how to bear heroic witness to her unconditional gift of self at the risk and even the sacrifice of her own life.



Besides giving Maria a particular sensibility for the needs of her contemporaries, the specific charism of secular consecration gave her complete freedom of movement and choice and conferred that discretion, prayerful silence, and industriousness that were so strong in her.

In the historic sequence of events lived out by this sister of ours, it emerges clearly that love experienced as a selfless and silent gift makes history, a history different from the public histories that we find in books; instead this is a profound history, hidden, alternative, sacred, in which Jesus' words about becoming yeast, salt, and light for the world become real. So do the words in the First Letter of Saint John: "Only the one who loves will never die."

In silence and humility, Maria teaches us that *there is no greater love than this, that one lays down one's life for one's brothers and sisters.*

Maria's memory and prominence have grown over time in her family, in her parish, in civil society, and in the Company of Padua. Contrary to human logic, these developments also speak to us of a fruitfulness embedded in her witness, something not merely human.

In his talk, the postulator Father Giuseppe Magrin pointed out **"the visibility of Maria, which she absolutely never sought"** and her "solid faith...her loyalty to Christ – that of a lover: most faithful, steady, growing," all the way to her silent martyrdom, experienced with simplicity and with an authentic Franciscan spirit in the footsteps of Saint Angela Merici.

He further emphasized that Maria could become for the diocese a model and strong encouragement for choices based on Christian values, even to the extent of the radical Gospel nature of the

CAUSA DI BEATIFICAZIONE O DICHIARAZIONE DI MARTIRIO della serva di Dio Maria Luigia Pulcheria Borgato, fedele laica consacrata della Compagnia Sant'Orsola, istituto secolare Sant'Angela Merici

edito Tra le numerose espressioni di santità che fiorirono nella diocesi di Padova nel secolo scorso, attualmente sembra particolarmente significativa quella riguardante la fedele laica consacrata della Compagnia Sant'Orsola - istituto secolare Sant'Angela Merici.

ci: Maria Luigia Pulcheria Borgato. Si è riscontrato che ci sono tutte le condizioni per intraprendere, secondo le norme stabilite dalla chiesa, una formale causa di beatificazione o dichiarazione di martirio di questa serva di Dio.

Nel portare a conoscenza della diocesi di Padova e della diocesi di Berlino questo fatto consistente, invitiamo tutti i fedeli a far pervenire al Tribunale ecclesiastico di questa diocesi di Padova (curia vescovile, via Dietro Duomo 15, 35139 Padova, telefono 049-8226111, fax 049-8226150) qualsiasi scritto della serva di Dio, qualora non sia già stato consegnato al vicepostulatore di detta causa, mons. dr. Pietro Brazzale.

S'intende far riferimento ai manoscritti, diari, lettere e ogni altra scrittura privata della serva di Dio. Coloro che gradissero conservare gli originali potranno presentare copia debitamente autenticata.

Maria Luigia Pulcheria Borgato nacque a Saonara (Pd) il 7 settembre 1989. La sua fu una vita umile, spesa al servizio del prossimo. Scelse di far parte della Compagnia di Sant'Angela Merici, nella quale poteva coniugare la piena donazione a Cristo e il lavoro quotidiano accanto alla sua gente. Dopo l'8 settembre 1943, senza esitare, aiutò i ricercati in fuga dai campi di concentramento. Scoperta, fu arrestata. Il suo calvario iniziò nelle carceri femminili di Venezia, dove subì brutali interrogatori, che però non la piegarono. La prigionia proseguì a Bolzano, quindi con la deportazione nel famigerato lager di Ravensbrück (Berlino) dove, spoglia delle vesti, Maria fu avvolta alla camera a gas e bruciata in un forno crematorio nel 1945.

Conoscendo la sua dolorosa vicenda, viene da dire che i santi non sono solo quelli che hanno compiuto gesti straordinari, ma anche quelli che, come Maria Luigia Pulcheria Borgato, hanno dato prova di santità con le loro umili azioni quotidiane. La fama di santità assai viva ha spinto la diocesi di Padova a iniziare una indagine sull'esercizio in grado eroico delle virtù di questa testimone autentica del vangelo.

Stabiliamo che il presente editto rimanga affisso per la durata di due mesi alle porte delle chiese nelle parrocchie di Saonara e Villatora (diocesi di Padova) e nella sede di Padova della Compagnia di Sant'Orsola - Istituto secolare Sant'Angela Merici. Inoltre venga pubblicato sul bollettino diocesano e sul settimanale *La Difesa del popolo*.

► **Antonio Mattiazzo**, arcivescovo-vescovo di Padova
 ► **don dr. Tiziano Vanzetto**, cancelliere vescovo

dato a Padova, dal vescovo, 14 settembre 2013

consecrated life. The postulator concluded by comparing Maria to the water that surges up from the earth, characteristic of our region. It runs hidden and silent from the mountains all the way to the plain, only to reemerge pure, fresh, genuine, surprising, and abundant enough to form rivers and springs that slake thirst and bring life.

Our Bishop Mattiazzo addressed the audience, saying (among other things), “Your presence in such great numbers tells us that the figure of Maria Borgato is still alive and present among us.... **The Christian martyr is the one who sacrifices her life – not the lives of others – for Jesus, for her neighbor, and for justice.** To young people I say that if there is not something for which one is willing to sacrifice one’s life, then the meaning of life is not understood. In this superficial and arid society, Maria Borgato’s example should challenge

Christians to carry out their choices.”

The President of the Federation and the Councilor–Treasurer M. Rosa also participated in a Mass of remembrance and intercession, together with the sisters of Padua, **on March 13.**

In the name of the whole Company

of Padua I would like to express our joy over this beginning of the diocesan process of the Servant of God Maria Borgato, and to thank those who have given and who will give time and energy to this Cause.

Claudia Bedendo



Days of Spirituality for Leaders Brescia, May 1-3



There we were, unexpectedly, in such a significant year, in the presence of the mortal remains of our Madre Saint Angela, to get to know each other, see one another again, listen to one another, make comparisons and console and encourage one another to go forward with renewed commitment on the “road we’ve undertaken” that brings us together.

The occasion was offered for us by the Council of the Federation, ever attentive to carrying out its role of service “*to foster growth in sisterly communion among the Companies...supporting initiatives for...a deepening of the Rule and the Constitutions*” (Constitutions 30.2; 32.2).

The topic addressed, in fact, was about the Constitutions.

Our President welcomed us, giving us a small taste of the Pope’s special words for consecrated persons in this year dedicated to the consecrated life.

Kate then offered to all of us her comments on the two final chapters of the Constitutions. This is how she concluded her rich spiritual unfolding of the Writings: the Rule/Counsels/Testament and the Constitutions, that describe our specific “path of sanctity.” Thanks to Kate for the passion, enthusiasm, and authority with which she has

become for us an instrument of the words of Saint Angela and of the Church.

At the conclusion of the days, we were invited to look into the mirror of fifteen maladies – all the possible maladies that Pope Francis listed for the Roman Curia – but that are probably also present in our Companies.

We were also invited to look ahead, to propose topics and to express ourselves in view of the 2016 meeting.

I have the impression that we were left with a refreshed way of looking at ourselves and our Companies and with a renewed awareness of how much we need to take risks, according to our own possibilities, to be ever more a diocesan Company and also a “*Company of Companies*”: the Federation.

In saying our goodbyes, we made an appointment to get together in Rome; in the meantime, we are united in prayer to “*the Lover of us all.*”

Letizia of the Company of Trent



**Our Slovakian sisters
on pilgrimage in
Brescia at the same
time as the meeting of
the leaders.**

Two Friends of Ours ... Cardinals



***Monsignor Berhaneyesus
Demerew Souraphiel,
Archbishop
of Addis Ababa***

named by Pope Francis:

- member of the
**Congregation for the
Doctrine of the Faith;**
- member of the
**Pontifical Pastoral Council
for emigrants and itinerants.**

***Monsignor Francesco
Montenegro, Metropolitan
Archbishop of Agrigento***

named by Pope Francis:

- member of the Pontifical
Council Cor Unum;
- member of the Pontifical
**Pastoral Council for emigrants
and itinerants.**



**Good wishes and prayers that
our eminent Cardinals,
together with the whole College of Cardinals,
may be able, as Pope Francis desires,
to expand their hearts in love and service for the Church
particular and universal,
so that...**



*the more their
responsibility in
service to the Church
is enlarged,*

*so much more may their
hearts be enlarged and
expanded according to the
measure of the heart of
Christ.*

- member of the
**Pontifical Pastoral Council for emigrants and
itinerants.**



We have another Vice-Assistant to the Council of the Federation: Father Nkindji Samuangala Raymond of the Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro

[Below is the documentation of his appointment by the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.]



Prot. n. I.s. 6715/15

Eccellenza Reverendissima,

allegato alla presente trova il rescritto con la conferma della nomina del Rev.mo NKINDJI SAMUANGALA Sac. Dott. RAYMOND, sacerdote incardinato nella Diocesi di San Marino-Montefeltro e Parroco di S. Maria Ausiliatrice in Dogana (Repubblica di San Marino), quale Vice - Assistente Ecclesiastico del Consiglio della Federazione della Compagnia di Sant'Orsola, Istituto Secolare di Sant'Angela Merici.



Nel formulare i migliori auguri al Vice - Assistente per il servizio che si appresta a svolgere, rinnovo a Lei la nostra riconoscenza e gratitudine, assicurandoLe un particolare ricordo nella preghiera.

Con l'occasione La saluto cordialmente nel Signore.

To His Excellency the Most Reverend Adriano
TESSAROLLO Bishop of CHIOGGIA

With attachment

Prot. n.I.s. 6715/15

BEATISSIMO PADRE,

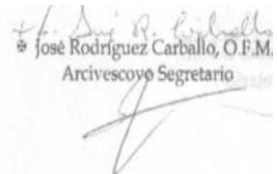
Sua Eccellenza Reverendissima mons. Adriano Tessarollo, Vescovo di Chioggia, attuale Assistente Ecclesiastico del Consiglio della Federazione della Compagnia di Sant'Orsola, Istituto Secolare di Sant'Angela Merici, ha presentato alla Sede Apostolica la richiesta di confermare la nomina del Rev.mo NKINDJI SAMUANGALA Dott. RAYMOND, sacerdote incardinato nella Diocesi di San Marino-Montefeltro e Parroco di S. Maria Ausiliatrice in Dogana (Repubblica di San Marino) quale Vice - Assistente Ecclesiastico del Consiglio della Federazione della Compagnia di Sant'Orsola, Istituto Secolare di Sant'Angela Merici, secondo quanto disposto dall'art. 36.5 delle Costituzioni del suddetto Istituto, per i motivi esposti.

La Congregazione per gli Istituti di vita consacrata e le Società di vita apostolica, valutata attentamente ogni cosa, visto il parere favorevole del Vescovo di San Marino - Montefeltro, concede quanto richiesto, confermando la nomina dei Rev.mo NKINDJI SAMUANGALA Sac. Dott. RAYMOND, sacerdote incardinato nella Diocesi di San Marino-Montefeltro e Parroco di S. Maria Ausiliatrice in Dogana (Repubblica di San Marino) quale Vice - Assistente Ecclesiastico del Consiglio della Federazione della Compagnia di Sant'Orsola, Istituto Secolare di Sant'Angela Merici.

Dato in Vaticano, il 28 gennaio 2015

Sr. Nicoletta Spezzati, ASC

Sottosegretario



* José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.
Arcivescovo Segretario

Welcome, Father Raymond!
May you have a good journey with the Company...

FROM THE COMPANIES AND GROUPS

ERITREA... 25th ANNIVERSARY OF THE GROUP



May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace!

I have the pleasure of informing you that two sisters of our Group, Freweini Alazar

and Tiegisti Ocbai, renewed their temporary consecration for three years on February 2, 2015.

Our Group also decided together to **celebrate the twenty-fifth year since the Company**



was introduced into Eritrea

Therefore we had a happy feast with a Mass of thanksgiving, celebrated by our assistant Father Siyum Gebreghergis and his assistant, Father Aron. We also invited our associates and some friends to share with us our joyful thanksgiving.



I am sending you some photographs of the consecration day. In the framed photo, we also wanted to present Lina Moser, then the President, together with Minnia, the initiator of the Group of Eritrea.



I wish you all happy Lent time, with heartfelt greetings,
Minnia Ammar



Mazzara del Vallo – Diary of a 50th Anniversary

In early December 2014, I thought about a simple way of thanking the Lord for the great gift He had given me and of a modest private celebration on January 2 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of my consecration.

My spiritual director put an end to all this. No sooner had I informed him about my wish than he insisted that I ought to thank the Lord publicly. It was useless trying to dissuade him on the pretext of my wish for discretion.

“It is the Lord who has called you, and you must bear witness to His love for you!” he told me.

I toyed with the idea for a good number of days and finally came to a compromise: “I will celebrate my anniversary on the feast of Saint Angela.”

So I started planning the event. I had to:
Inform Father Giuseppe Ponte, the parish priest;
Fix the date for the celebration; and
ask a young Ursuline to give her testimony.

I began to organize a simple ceremony, inviting people by phone or when I happened to meet them, planning everything as I usually do for each January 27, the feast of Saint Angela.

Valeria of Palermo accepted my invitation, and Graziella, the Directress, urged the Sisters of Palermo to be present.



In the meantime, I gave much importance to prayer, because the best way of thanking the Lord is to be in close contact with Him. I really had no expectations! But I never imagined what a grand and solemn ceremony it turned out to be on Sunday, February 1!

- 1) The big parish church was crowded.
- 2) There was a great number of parishioners present.
- 3) The choir, accompanied by the beautiful organ, sang vocational hymns including the song “In the Footsteps of Saint Angela.”
- 4) The Eucharistic celebration was given a lot of importance. Father Vito Saladino presided and Father Giuseppe Ponte concelebrated. The homily and Valeria’s testimony were carefully planned and all turned out to be a perfect success.

At the very end, without being told beforehand, I was asked to talk about the way I lived as a consecrated lay person!

I did it!!!

It is so true to say that at the moment of trial, the Holy Spirit intervenes!

But the surprises were not over yet..... The parish priest invited all those present to a buffet on the parish premises.

I was so astonished and, at the same time, deeply moved by such a celebration..... I thought it was only a dream.....and felt I did not deserve all this attention by the local and parochial community.

Now, that all the excitement of that unforgettable day has abated, I would like to THANK all those who worked so hard for the success of this event, and all those who phoned or sent me text messages expressing their respect and good wishes.

Maria Giacalone



From Padua to Barletta...

Companies Help Each Other in Italy, Too

Consiglia of Bari, a sister of the Company of Barletta, has left us. We were all in mourning and shared the sorrow and sense of emptiness that dear Consiglia has left behind. We offered our condolences to the sister with whom she lived, who had cared for her during her illness, to the two sisters of the Company, Angela and Anna, to the parish priest, who is their Assistant, Father Sabino Lattanzio and to the community of Barletta, which Consiglia loved so much.

There were only a few occasions when the Company of Padua visited the sisters of Barletta, but I remember those visits with joy. Consiglia was overjoyed when she knew we had arrived, and while hugging us and holding our hand firmly in hers, she would tell us: "Today is a day of celebration; we are united together in the Company and in the Federation." She would then pray for each and every one of us.

VICENZA



The small Company of Vicenza, made up of thirteen sisters, met for their spiritual retreat with their new Ecclesiastical Assistant, Fr. Giandomenico Tamiozzo, and for an extraordinary Assembly, during which they unanimously agreed to ask to be joined to the Company of Padua.

The President also took part in these events, which were held in the presence of the relic of our Mother Saint Angela. They were calm and serene moments.

Let us ask the Lord, our only Lover, to sustain us by the gift of the Holy Spirit during this time of change, remaining faithful in renewed openness of heart.

Teresa Zarpellon

CANICATTÌ



**"The voice of my
Beloved!
Behold He comes...
My Beloved is mine
and I am His."
(Song of Songs 2:8-16)**

On Saturday, April 11, 2015, by the grace of God, we were present for the ceremony of the consecration for life of a young sister of the Company of Saint Ursula of Canicatti.

This was a great gift, not only for the Company and for us, but also for all those who were present. So many things made it a unique occasion, the best undoubtedly being the consecration itself, when the young sister said **"Yes, I wish it"** in answer to God's call. She was surrounded by her family, her friends, the Daughters of Saint Angela, and many priests who concelebrated with Father Franco, the diocesan Assistant of the Company.

During the entire emotional ceremony there was an atmosphere of joy and enthusiasm. Everybody was moved when the young woman knelt in front of the altar before the whole congregation and when, as a sign of her total offering to God, she was given a crucifix. It was really a moment of deep spirituality and joy. We thank her for her deep love for God and pray that she may be an example to others who want to attain **real** happiness.

I experienced that day as though it were my own celebration. I was especially moved by the "Yes" of total gift to Jesus. Jesus loves us, but it is up to us to love Him and follow Him every day. Thank you for

all the joy you have given us! You are a precious gift both to God and to the Company. May Jesus, our heavenly Mother, and Saint Angela guide you toward sanctity.

Savia, aspirant

PIEMONTE – Regional Meeting April 26, 2015

Church of God, people manifesting joy, sing, the Lord is with you.

Sisters, Daughters of Saint Angela, the Company is celebrating; our Madre is with us as a mother who welcomes us and opens her heart to us.

We welcome you, President Maria Rosa! We welcome also the Directress and sisters of Cuneo!

Our Madre has called us together, sisters among sisters; what a beautiful experience it is to be together, to rejoice, to console each other and to recharge our feelings of trust and hope! It was Saint Angela herself who wanted and proposed this, she who was an expert in the art of communication and human relations. One can endure suffering and everyday trials better if they are shared with others, because unity gives courage and renewal and above all because the Risen Christ is always with us. His Spirit guides the way of each and every daughter and of the Company ...

In the Constitutions we read: “In sharing among our Sisters in Christ we will find help in order to live according to the Spirit in our personal, social and ecclesial life and support for overcoming the trials of our earthly pilgrimage.”.

Let us appreciate what great gifts these opportunities are, in the Company itself, among Companies, and as a Federation.

Angela, Directress of the Company of Turin

On Sunday, April 26, we, the Sisters of the Company of Turin, joyfully welcomed the President, Maria Rosa Razza, and Kate and the sisters of Cuneo for the regional meeting held in Casa Sant'Angela. On the same day, the world was celebrating the day dedicated to vocations: ***“How beautiful it is be with you!”*** Yes, it is truly beautiful, because, by the grace of His call, we feel loved, at peace with ourselves and with others.

After welcoming our guests and saying Morning Prayer, we met for the President's report, based on the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis ***“To All Consecrated Men and Women.”***

The Pope often invites us to go beyond ourselves. At times we are imprisoned by our own problems when in reality we ought to free ourselves from our preconceptions and pay attention to the times we are living in.



Holy Mass, offered by Father Milone, was an intense celebration, and the Word of

God had a healing power in our hearts.

After lunch we met again to discuss further the topic of the day.

At the end of the day, we greeted and embraced each other, promising to meet again for the spiritual exercises, anticipating already the joy of being together again.

Thanks to everyone.

*Maria and Mariella,
Company of Turin*



INCOMING MAIL

From the United States

I have just received the booklet *IN THE SAME CHARISM*. It is the best that I have received and, during this year dedicated to consecrated life, I will do my utmost to make good use of it during prayer time. There are very good and beautiful

articles in it. Thank you for all your hard work.

*In Angela,
Liliane*

From Lodi

I have just received the first issue of the booklet *IN THE SAME CHARISM* 2015.

Well done for all the articles in the booklet, especially the reflections on the Rule.....

When I read through the pages I do not feel alone because it is as though I am taking an active part in the work of the Company and I keep renewing the joy of my consecration.

I would like to be present at your meetings and especially the International Meeting to be held in Rome.... be sure that I will be with you in thought and in prayer!

In the year dedicated to consecrated life, on the 21st February 2015, Lodi's daily newspaper – *Il Cittadino* – published an article about the Daughters of Saint Angela.



You can see my photo, an eighty-six-year-old homemaker, but an “ardent reader”..... I was interviewed, and I was happy to talk about my vocation and the Company.

Some of my comments were quoted in the article:

We are in the world but do not belong to it!

Living my years of consecrated life in my daily activity: family life, 40 years in the art of good cooking, catechist, helper in the parish, managing a guest house belonging to the Company..... always present at Company meetings and faithful to the three holy bonds: obedience, chastity and poverty.

Today, at my age, I live on my own but feel part of The Company. I appreciate our printed material, the booklet of the Federation that helps me in my formation and brings me news of the sisters spread all over the world.

I must set an example for others, so I try to smile at everyone and I invite people for coffee. I say the Rosary, do the housework, read, and listen to religious programmes on television, which I find of great help.

Pope Francis said that the lay consecrated woman must be a mother not a spinster. I try to be a mother.

These are a few things that were reported in the newspaper. I send you my warmest wishes and unite myself to you in prayer.

Regards,

Carla Ferioli

Another Article about Us...

From Modena

Nostro Tempo, Modena's weekly Catholic paper, published an article called: **“Secularity... an intuition and a challenge. The Secular Institute ‘Company of Saint Ursula’ has been in Modena since the 17th century.”**

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The Company of Modena originated in 1617 and has never stopped functioning. Recently an inter-diocesan Company made up of eleven members was formed together with that of Bologna.

We are strengthened by Saint Angela's words: Hold this for certain: that this Company has been planted directly by His holy hand, and He will never abandon the Company as long as the world lasts.

The Daughters of Saint Angela of Modena

From Cuneo



*Like Jacob's dream... the
stairway...
A stairway with many young
women
climbing toward heaven.
With a few young women the
first group of Ursulines was
formed.*

On January 27, the feast of Saint Angela, Father Romano

Fiandra, a parish priest and friend of the Company, wrote an article in *La Guida*, the weekly paper of the Diocese of Cuneo.

The article presents Saint Angela as an example to all:

"Saint Angela Merici understood the struggle of the Church of her time and eventually became a "feminist" ahead of her time, openly declaring her great faith in women's abilities to discern and judge, to manage themselves and freely chose what type of life to lead.

... Very much aware of the role women were expected to adopt in her time, she managed to find a solution between the custom of having women either married or cloistered and the desire of many young women to be able to consecrate themselves to God outside the monastery.

Her institute was a real form of consecrated life outside the convent but with the same binding daily duties of personal sanctification and the glory of God.

...Thanks to the pen of her faithful friend and secretary Gabriele Cozzano, Saint Angela left us extraordinary pages about asceticism. Taking into consideration that lay people now play a more important role in the Church – especially after the Second Vatican Council – the writings of Saint Angela are pearls not only for her "daughters" but for all Christians who want to live the life of the Gospels.

Saint Angela Merici's writings were intended for her "daughters" but are of great value not only for the Ursulines but also for all Christians who seek a life of asceticism.

Attention!

MEETING OF THE FEDERATION 2015 A SPECIAL MEETING in a special year ...

**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**

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