

IN THE SAME CHARISM...

with responsibility



n. 1 - 2017

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

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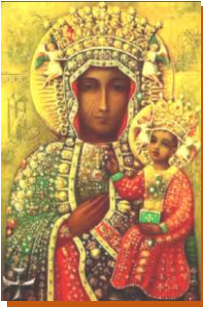
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TO THE READERS

We have received a promise from Jesus Christ and from the Madonna:

“How much they have to exult and rejoice, for in heaven a new crown of glory and joy is prepared for all of them, one by one”

(5th Counsel, 24-25).

I was preparing this bulletin and thinking about this year's pilgrimage to Slovakia and Poland that will take us to meet the Madonna in her shrines, a pilgrimage in preparation for the Federation's Assembly in 2018.

I was thinking about the many visions, apparitions, and promises of continual intercession made by the Mother of God, who is also our Mother Mary...

Unexpectedly I also rediscovered a promise, an announcement, good news from Saint Angela: *Tell them this good news that I announce to them on behalf of Jesus Christ and the Madonna.* She is talking about the promise of a crown of immortality.

Spontaneously the thought came to me that our life is a continuous pilgrimage. So, trusting in this promise, I would like to implore the Madonna's help for those who will go on pilgrimage and for those who will stay at home.

Exult and rejoice... I would like us to live our life, our earthly pilgrimage, joyfully, serenely. I would like us to be able to rejoice, if possible in company with one another. This is the style of a Christian, and the style of a daughter of Saint Angela can be no different.

Rejoice because, despite sufferings and difficulties, we are accompanied by the Lover of us all, by his Mother, and by our Foundress.

For in heaven, one by one... I would like us to feel joyful because the promise reserved for us is personal, individual, particular.

A new crown of glory and joy... I would like us to trust that the destination of our pilgrimage is celebration, joy... the joy of the spouse who is crowned a queen.

Therefore, certain of the promises... may you enjoy a wonderful earthly pilgrimage toward the heavenly Jerusalem!

Caterina Dalmasso

A THOUGHT FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION

... procrastination ...



Christmastime, leading into the conclusion of another year of life, suggests reflections that are certainly not unusual in our life, but at year's end make a deeper impression.

[It can't be a new year already... / I haven't finished last year yet.]

My thoughts naturally linger over those who so badly need to be sustained by hope. The passage of time gives us more or less sharp discomforts and misfortunes (especially those due to anxiety, afflicting many of us more and more). These can bring melancholy and sadness: we no longer succeed in doing what we were doing before, in being ready with our original energy, in being active and dynamic, as once upon a time we were.

Then it is a help to remind ourselves of our holy Madre's words: "... Do not be afraid.... Have **hope** and firm **faith** in God, for he will help you in everything" (Counsels, Prologue 14-15).

Therefore the two "things" that we always need, things that are never acquired once and for all and that can never be given cheap are **certain hope and firm faith!**

In the moments when we find less of the resources that have been sustaining us on the arduous road – that is, less energy, ability, and will for action and work for the Kingdom of God – precisely then it is necessary to renew our abandonment into the hands of the merciful Father.

He well knows our poverties, our desires, and our sacrifices.

He sees the efforts we make to receive and develop even the small seeds of goodness around us, inside and outside of our Companies.

The Lord knows the difficulties experienced by one who has journeyed to this moment with the baggage of customs and good traditions, one who is now urged to modify deep-rooted convictions and acquired attitudes, to let new ones grow, and to promote them.

"You must consider in what manner you must esteem them, for the more you esteem them, the more you will love them" (Counsels, Prologue 14-15) ...and it is not easy to esteem and to love those who think differently from us, who have ideas and attitudes that do not correspond to our "parameters."

This is the time for trusting in God and in people, not for retreating into ourselves, but for openness and interior freedom.

Foster growth and accompaniment, especially with prayer, because our Companies, our Groups, continue to be places where, most of all, we can find *"...the all-encompassing experience of God's love ... doing everything possible so that the Kingdom may come, grow and be great..."* within us and around us (Pope Francis to secular institutes, May 10, 2014). *"Being united and harmonious"* becomes more and more the "imperative" of this new year 2017.

Maria Razza

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

MISERY AND MERCY



At the end of the Jubilee of Mercy Pope Francis gave us an Apostolic Letter to remind us that “mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis in the life of the Church; it constitutes her very existence, through which the profound truths of the Gospel are made manifest and tangible. Everything is revealed in mercy; everything is resolved in the merciful love of the Father.”

I would like to project anew the vision of the dynamics of the sacramental life offered to us in this Letter as an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the force issuing forth for us from the sacramental life and the Word of God listened to and prayed.

The title “*Misericordia et Misera*” comes from St. Augustine’s commentary on the narration in Jn 8:1-11: *the two of them alone remained: misery and mercy,*” that is to say the woman who had sinned and Jesus. This encounter between Jesus and the sinful woman shows how mercy is a concrete act of love which, in forgiving, transforms, changes life, and opens the way to new hopefulness. I like the Pope’s invitation to reread the liturgical-sacramental life at large as a celebration of the Lord’s mercy. In fact, he reviews the sacraments of the Christian liturgy one by one in this light. *“In the liturgy, mercy is not only repeatedly evoked, but is truly received and experienced.”*

He begins with the celebration of the Lord’s Day, when the community gathers together in the presence of the Lord, ever trustful of being touched by His mercy on the holy day of resurrection. From the very beginning of the Eucharistic celebration we are summoned to entrust ourselves to God’s mercy with the invocation “*Lord have mercy*” and are then reassured of forgiveness by the words of the celebrant: “*May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life.*” Recurrent in this same celebration are invocations for forgiveness and remembrance of his forgiving mercy, unto the words in the Our Father: “*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us,*” prolonged in the pleading for

peace and deliverance from sins “*by the help of Your mercy*” and “*look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church.*” The final invocation to the Lamb of God, “*who takes away the sins of the world,*” opens the way for us to the encounter with him in the Bread of Forgiveness and Communion, a foretaste and first installment regarding the final encounter in the eternal banquet. The Pope concludes: “*The celebration of divine mercy culminates in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the memorial of Christ’s paschal mystery, the source of salvation for every human being, for history and for the whole world. In a word, each moment of the Eucharistic celebration refers to God’s mercy.*”

The sacrament of Reconciliation is the very moment in which to live “*the embrace of the Father, who comes forth to meet us and grant us the grace of being once more his sons and daughters.*” In our own perception of the distance between what we would like to and should be or do, the Lord becomes present with the face of mercy to be the first to summon us to reconciliation through his forgiveness: “*God makes us understand his great love for us precisely when we recognize that we are sinners. Grace is stronger than sin: it overcomes every possible form of resistance, because love conquers all* (cf 1 Cor 13:7). Reconciliation is forgiveness and the offer to resume closeness with him, as well as help and strength for conversion toward a life renewed by the concrete practice of charity. God offers forgiveness and asks us as well to be ready and willing to forgive others as he forgives us. It is both gift and support so we do not remain withdrawn in ourselves, in the inability to forgive, slaves to resentment, anger, and a craving for revenge, all of which are feelings that make life unhappy indeed.

In every aspect of the sacramental life, mercy is showered upon us in abundance. The prayer of the Church in the celebration of the sacraments always refers to God’s mercy: “*as we invoke mercy with faith, it is granted to us, and as we confess it to be vital and real, it truly transforms us. This is a fundamental element of our faith, and we must keep it constantly in mind. Even before the revelation of sin, there is the revelation of the love by which God created the world and mankind. Love is the first act whereby God makes himself known to us and comes to meet us. So let us open our hearts and trust in God’s love for us. His*

love always precedes us, accompanies us and remains with us, despite our sin.” The sacraments are an experience of the force issuing forth from divine grace, grace that renders manifest the power of love, which makes us become “new creatures” and transcends the justice that stems from the mere observance of norms. The Holy Father then invites us to place ourselves face-to-face with God’s Word itself in an attitude of religious listening to the God of mercy and forgiveness, who wishes to engage in dialogue with us. The Pope writes: “*Every one of its pages is steeped in the love of the Father who from the moment of creation wished to impress the signs of his love on the universe. Through the words of the prophets and the wisdom writings, the Holy Spirit shaped the history of Israel as a recognition of God’s tenderness and closeness, despite the people’s infidelity.*” Our relationship of filial obedience and trustful familiarity with him is gradually constructed by this loving dialogue between the Father and his sons and daughters through Sacred Scripture.

We understand the mercy and forgiveness of Jesus especially in listening to his life, attitudes and words. “*Through Sacred Scripture, (kept alive by the faith of the Church) the Lord continues to speak to his Bride... so that the mystery of love streaming from this font of mercy may be ever better understood.*”

The spiritual life of each baptized person, and all the more of each consecrated person, draws support and nourishment from the font of the sacramental life and in the relationship with the Word of God listened to and prayed in both mind and heart. The Holy Father shows us these two gifts, Word and sacraments, as stable and absolutely necessary elements for understanding and recognizing God as merciful and faithful, and for drawing from this Word and these sacraments the strength to imitate the Father’s mercy as Jesus taught us: “*Merciful as the Father.*” I would like to conclude with the quotation used at the very beginning of these brief pages: *Mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis in the life of the Church; it constitutes her very existence, through which the profound truths of the Gospel are made manifest and tangible. Everything is revealed in mercy; everything is resolved in the merciful love of the Father.*”

Ecclesiastical Assistant, +Bishop Adriano Tessarollo

FROM THE RULE OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI

Some points for reflection...

Rule Chapter IX *About Virginity* (verses 11-23)



Life in a positive light...

11 “Instead be happy and always full of charity, and faith, and hope in God.”

Instead... make use of attitudes and positive ways of acting: joy, charity, faith and hope to replace every shadow of envy and ill-will, of every discord and evil suspicion and of every other bad appetite and wish; things which Saint Angela had warned us about in the

previous verses.

This almost recalls the words of the Bible: *“Never slackening in interest, serving the Lord. Keeping spiritually aglow, joyfully hoping as you endure affliction, persistent in prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality”* (Romans 12:11-13).

It is also emphasized in our Constitutions: *“We will know how to value our femininity which will make us happy and free women, full of charity, faith and hope, available to give ourselves to all without letting ourselves be possessed by anyone”* (Constitutions 20.2).

- **Happiness...** joy, serenity.... is expressed by Saint Angela as a way of living; there is no need to make a show of it – rather, to live it.

Joy is naturally associated with consecration and virginity; it is founded not on a simple sentiment or emotion, but on the three theological virtues: charity, faith, hope.

Even Saint Paul recommends: *“Be joyful in the Lord always, again I say, Rejoice”* (Philippians 4:4).

Ours is the joy of someone who possesses and belongs to the Lord; it accompanies us in every situation, even in difficulties, because nothing and no one can take the Lord away from us: *“Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me”* (1 John, 4:11).

- **Charity...** *is the fulfillment of the law; it is the means to reach perfect spousal union with God: “not a frightened union, but one that is open to all creatures, in the simplicity of daily life” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 951).*

Love also originates from God, who loves first and asks for a life of love: *“Beloved ones: if God loved us so much, we ought to love one another also” (1 John 4:11).*

It is enough to remember what Saint Paul says: *“Love is patient and is kind; love is not jealous; love is not out for display; it is not conceited or unmannerly; it is neither self seeking nor irritable, nor does it take account of a wrong that is suffered. It takes no pleasure in injustice but sides happily with truth. It bears everything in silence, has unquenchable faith, hopes under all circumstances, endures without limit ...” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).*

- **Faith...** *is a fruit of God’s initiative: “The Lord is united to you and has chosen you.... Recognize however, that the Lord your God is God, the God who is faithful” (Deuteronomy 7:7-9).*

“Faith is an existing attitude: it gives us the conviction that we are loved, frees us from solitude and the agony of nothingness, disposes us to accept ourselves and love others, gives us courage to defy the unknown.... To believe is to be open, to come out of oneself, to trust oneself, obey, risk, to set out walking towards the unseen things, to follow Jesus...it is an attitude of an operating faith, which gives consent to God to make out history together with us beyond any human possibility” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 87-88).

- **Hope...** *to hope against all hope, because we know in whom we have placed our trust.*

“In our every activity and endeavor, we will keep alive our hope for heaven, where Jesus lives at the right hand of the Father” (Constitutions 22.3).

We could share what Saint Augustine proposes: *“So, sing as the traveler, sing and walk, without going astray, without going back, without turning around. Here below you sing in hope, up there you will sing in possession. This is the Alleluia of the road, that one will be the Alleluia of the homeland.”*

And Saint Angela invites us to hope: *“that they should place their hope and love in God alone and not in any living person”* (5th Counsel).

Exemplary behavior...

¹²“And let interaction with one’s neighbor be reasonable and modest as St. Paul says: ‘let your manners and prudence be evident to all, and let every action and speech be honest and polite.’”

Here, our behavior must visibly interpret joy, faith, hope and charity in our relationships with others.

It is behavior that can be seen and becomes a sign. It is the teaching of the Word of God: *“Be known by all the people for your considerateness”* (Philippians 4:5).

“With the profession of evangelical counsels the characteristic traits of Jesus – virgin, poor and obedient – acquire a typical visibility in the heart of the world” (Consecrated Life 1).

“The first duty of consecrated life is to render visible the wonders that God works through the human fragility of the persons called. More than words, they give witness to such wonders with the eloquent language of a transfigured existence, capable of surprising the world” (Consecrated Life 20).

“The Church must occupy herself in rendering visible her presence in everyday life. A significant contribution in this sense, she has the right of expecting called, consecrated persons to render in every situation a concrete witness of their belonging to Christ” (Consecrated Life 25).

Our virginity is a gift which God lets everyone see, so that they recognize that *only one thing is necessary*.

Virginity is an expression of our following Christ and must not be perceived as something within us, in sterile selfishness, but as the basis of every Christian vocation, an expression of charity.

Saint Angela suggests behavior which demands the ability to judge, modesty, reserve, prudence, honesty, level-headedness, understanding; behavior which safeguards the witness and preservation of virginity. It is the same behavior, the same virginity which she wants

to defend in the chapter about *how they should be dressed, and the manner of interacting in the world.*

It seems that the Mother is telling us: live in God and behave accordingly, thereby visibly illustrating your choice of the Bridegroom.

A series of ‘no’s’...

¹³*“Not naming God in vain. ¹⁴Not swearing, but only saying with modesty yes, yes or no, no, as Jesus Christ teaches, ¹⁵not answering arrogantly. ¹⁶Not doing anything unwillingly, ¹⁷not staying angry, ¹⁸not grumbling, ¹⁹not spreading gossip” (Rule 9, 13-19).*

Saint Angela certainly refers to the Word of God and to the directions of the Church of her time in these directives:

- *Not naming God in vain.....* respect for the Lord; everyone’s God.
- *Not swearing...* to live in simplicity and truth, without ambiguity: *“But let your word Yes be yes and your No, no. Anything beyond this is from the evil one” (Mt 5:37).*
- *Not answering arrogantly...* This negative directive recalls other positive quotations of Saint Angela: *“In speaking, that their words be wise and reserved, not harsh, not rude, but compassionate and leading to concord and charity” (5th Counsel 5, 12).*
- *Not doing things unwillingly...* If we always put this recommendation into practice, it would render our life more beautiful and more serene. It deals with going beyond duty with love.
- *Not staying angry...* Saint Angela does not think about her daughters as being without faults: an angry outburst could happen unexpectedly, but she does not want this to *dwell*, to remain and to be cultivated; this is a negative state of the soul. It is the actual endurance of the resentment, turning it over in one’s mind, which ravages us, blocking and complicating our relationships with others.
- *Not grumbling...* This recommendation points to grumbling about others, surely something to be avoided; it also makes us ponder our lifestyle and deeds, such as always being unhappy with everything and everybody. Perhaps because one is not capable of loving or of feeling loved and does not manage to be thankful for the gift of life and the gift of the call.

• *Not spreading gossip...* If we hear or know something, like Mary, we must ask for the gift of knowing how to keep all this in our hearts; praying, loving, trying to find a way to help whoever is in difficulty... and love will succeed: *“In listening, not taking pleasure except in hearing modest and licit and necessary things”* (5th Counsel).

The motivations of “no”...

²⁰*“Finally: not doing any act, any deed unworthy especially of one who has the name of a servant of Jesus Christ”* (Rule 9.20).

Saint Angela never proposes a denial just for the sake of denial; she always offers support, an objective, an end. Now, she motivates our behavior with a choice of our vocational: *to be servants of Jesus Christ*.

This is the objective of the Company: *“Joining together to serve his divine Majesty”* (Prologue to the Rule 4)... *“we are called to be true and unsullied spouses of the Son of God, to be separated from the shadows of the world and to be joined together to serve the Reign of God as seculars”* (Constitutions 3.1).

Christ has given everything to his bride. This is the only necessity: to give him our hearts completely, to serve him throughout our lives.

The consequences of being servants of Jesus Christ.....

²¹*“But let all our words, acts and conduct always be to teach and edify those who deal with us, ²²having charity always burning in our hearts.”*

Here Saint Angela is again positive; the chapter alternates between negative and positive themes with the aim of safeguarding a higher goal: virginity.

At this point the Foundress almost makes a résumé of all that was said previously: *words, acts, behavior..... they become not only an example, but also a teaching, an edification for others*.

If it is true that the world today is in need of witnesses... we know that the true witness teaches, edifies, leaves a sign.

This, which is also referred to in other sections, is the desire of Saint Angela when she recommends *friendliness, humanity,*

pleasantness. This is what the Constitutions suggest to us: “Our behavior will be judicious and meek, edifying and of good example for all whom we meet....” (Const. 22.3).

The testimony will be truer when charity is alive in the heart; this is the condition, so that *“Charity [may] direct everything to the honor of God and the good of souls; and move the heart to be, according to place and time, now gentle and now severe, and little or much as there is in need” (2nd Counsel, 6-7).*

We can pray with Saint Angela: *“I beg you to deign to receive this my most vile and unclean heart and to burn its every affection and passion in the blazing furnace of your divine love” (Rule 5, 36-37).*

A faithful commitment in love...

²³*“Furthermore, let each one be willing to be ready to die sooner than ever consent to stain and profane such a sacred jewel” (Rule 9, 23).*

Virginity is a double response in its great value: *a sacred jewel, sacred virginity, sister of all the angels, queen of the virtues.*

It is so pure a jewel that one must never consent to blemish and profane it, must be willing to lose one’s life rather than losing this treasure.

Spontaneously, the parables in the Gospel come to mind: *the hidden treasure in a field, the merchant who goes out looking for precious pearls ... (Mt 13:44-46).*

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also,” says the Gospel (Mt 6:21); *“Let them have Jesus Christ for their only treasure, for there also will be love,”* says Saint Angela (5th Counsel, 43).

“The only treasure of the Kingdom provokes the desire, the waiting, the commitment and the witnessing” (Consecrated Life 26).

Even for us, there is nothing further to add except to repeat: *“Give me grace to die rather than offend your divine Majesty at all today. Keep my affections and my senses safe so that they may not lead me astray, neither to the right nor to the left, nor turn me away from your brilliant face which soothes every afflicted heart” (Rule 5, 17-19).*

Kate

Prayer for Ardent Charity

*Jesus Christ, my only treasure,
help me to keep my virginity.
I willingly and joyfully give You my heart.
Because of You, my only Treasure,
I am a bride and queen, possessing many good things.
You have chosen me as a spouse of the Most High.....
See to it that my behavior may be worthy of such a call.
Help me to keep my heart pure
and my conscience clear of every evil thought,
any shadow of envy, any discord and evil suspicion,
any bad desire and ill will.
Let me be joyful, always full
of charity, faith and hope.
Ensure that my behavior and relationships
may be wise, humble, and modest,
sincere, enthusiastic, charitable and full of love.
In a few words, make sure that none of my actions make me unworthy
of being the handmaid of Jesus Christ.
On the contrary, ensure that when I speak,
the way I behave and all my actions
may always teach and edify
the people I deal with.
Grant me an ardent charity,
grant me an unconditional faithfulness.....
I would rather die than willingly mar
and desecrate such a sacred jewel.
Amen!*

Kate, Merician prayers

481st Birthday of the Company



Brescia - November 25-26, 2016

*"You must take care to have your
daughters come together...
So that, together like this,
they may 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."
(8th Legacy)*

In accord with last year's suggestion (at the 480th anniversary of the foundation) that we get together on November 25, here we were, coming from everywhere to Brescia on this significant date, so dear to every daughter of Saint Angela.

The theme of the meeting, ***"dwelling in contemporary life,"*** was proposed as an idea in continuity with the international meeting in Verona in July 2016: ***"Consecrated Secularity: Dwelling in the World."***

For those who could arrive on Friday afternoon (a train strike made it hard for some sisters and reduced the number of participants a





little), we began with an hour of Eucharistic adoration in the Sanctuary, reflecting on three fundamental elements of consecrated life: prayer, charity, and faith, reading bits drawn from Saint Angela's writings and from the Constitutions. This was followed by solemn sung Vespers, with the Very Rev. Monari, bishop of Brescia, presiding. It was a time of particular communion among us, in which we presented to the Lord all our sisters left at home, especially those who are more alone, elderly, or sick.

On Saturday, after a Mass with Mons. Olmi, superior of the Company of Brescia as the chief celebrant, we gathered to listen to two interesting presentations, rich in encouragement and in content.

The first one on "dwelling in contemporary life" was delivered by Carmela Tascone, a woman consecrated in another secular institute, who helped



us reflect on our style of being in the world. She invited us to live every moment and relationship with a Gospel radicalism that requires attention to others, presence in solidarity, and taking risks for what matters. Consecration-and-secularity is not the sum of two single aspects of life but is a synthesis: it means

expressing my self-gift to the Lord, taking on in everyday life his attention to the world, to history, to responsibility for humanity. How are we present in the common situations of life? It is the style of a presence that must connote our stance in reality. The style cannot be delegated; it is always personal. Let us be passionate about what we are building!

In the second presentation, Doctor Maria Teresa Fenaroli brought us her witness on how to “*dwelt in one’s own region as a daughter of Saint Angela*,” recounting her life story, first as a teacher and then as a lawyer. Through her experience there breathed all the passion both for her own vocation and for the mission to which the Lord has called her. This includes the responsibility to be within reality, her dedication in welcoming brothers and sisters with a fresh attentiveness that comes from him, and care for professional and personal relationships.

In the afternoon there was time for sharing, followed by Vespers.

After dinner the sisters in initial formation in north-central Italy met, enriched by the presence of Bresica’s formation guide, Giusy, and some other sisters.

With hopes of being together next year, I thank the sisters of the Company of Brescia, in particular Mariarosa P., for their warm welcome during these days, and for having organized the conference together with Maria Rosa R., the President of the Federation.

In sharing the same charism, in simplicity and sisterhood, truly we experience how grand, true, and real are the words of our Mother St. Angela: “...they [may] 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” (8th Legacy).

Paola Cameroni

Happy Birthday to the Company!

Happy birthday to the Company... and thanks for the invitation

A birthday is an important milestone on a person's path, even more the birthday of a Company, because it means exchanging good wishes, being present, sharing, and figuring out whether one is going in the right direction, whether we have the right tools, and whether our fellow-travelers are in step with us. ...

It means inhabiting ourselves, occupying our space and our time here and now, not later or tomorrow.

Happy birthday to the Company... I want to be present, to inhabit myself...

"Inhabiting contemporary life" recalls the work of architects: study every detail, light, color, harmony. Observe from outside and inside to make that place as comfortable as possible, respecting the personality of the one who lives there.

The problem, basically, is "how to be present" in contemporary life and in today's world. I want to be fully present...

Happy birthday to the Company... in good company...

At its base, this means living virginity as care for relationships, in the Company and in the world, without wanting to possess other people. The virginal heart does not betray liberty and truth. It overflows with love and tenderness.

Happy birthday to the Company... united, one heart and one spirit...

Prayer accompanies and gives meaning to the call and to the mission. It colors life and purifies our exchange of good wishes!!!

Maria Stella, Mariella, Maria Lucchesi – Company of Torino

FROM THE COMPANIES AND GROUPS

MADAGASCAR 2016



The trip that Maria Rosa Bernasconi and I made to Madagascar in August 2016 had very particular goals: to meet, to offer formation, to spend sisterly time with the Group of secular Ursulines on that island, and to

accept the consecration for life of two sisters, Clementine and

Jacqueline. Having arrived in the capital city Antananarivo, we stayed with the Nazarene Sisters for two days awaiting a flight to Tulear. When we got to Tulear, Voahangy was waiting for us. Then we left for Ihosy, stopping briefly at the National Park of Isalo, where there are stupendous mountains polished by time, a rich array of plants, and a beautiful natural environment, including the azure sea where, besides fishing, the fishermen catch shellfish to grind them up and use them to plaster houses.



In Ihosy we were welcomed into Voahangy's home, where Fr. Mombelli awaited us and Jacqueline soon arrived to greet us. During the three days that we stayed there, I had the opportunity to accompany a young nun to visit three sick people in the Italian Hospital of Sakalalina. This important experience helped me to understand the health situation in Madagascar and to see how the people live in the *brouss* (countryside). Reaching these villages takes hours on a well-trod but unpaved path, watching out for termites that can damage vehicles, not to mention the tiny bridges that are flooded and impassable in the rainy season.

After three days we reached Fianarantsoa, where the Group was already arriving from different parts of the island to being with an evening of spiritual exercises and formation. We had invited three aspirants, who eagerly participated with the sisters of the Group. The formation sessions focused on the Merician charism and on the commitments of consecration, referring to three words from Pope Francis: Prophecy, Closeness, Hope. Those were intense days. At the end of the retreat, Jacqueline and Clementine made their consecration for life in the chapel of the formation house belonging to the Vincentian Fathers of Fianarantsoa.



Vincentian Fathers presided and preached at the Eucharistic celebration, among them an elderly French bishop. Rosa B. had been delegated by the President of the Federation to receive Jacqueline's and Clementine's consecrations for life in the name of the Company and of the Church. The ceremony was enlivened by song and dance

and demonstrated profound faith and joy over receiving this great gift.

The aspirants were also happy to understand that this type of life corresponds with their desires. This year we were also moved to see and hear how difficult it was for them to get there from all parts of the island and then... to return home.

Back in Italy, I carry in my heart all these sisters who face quite a few difficulties but are so passionately faithful in a country that still has trouble understanding the choice of the consecrated woman in the world. Thanks!



Edda

CONGO

August 2016 ... New Company



In August the President and I traveled to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where we met up with the Directress of the Company of France, Geneviève; our Vice-assistant Fr. Raymond; and the Congolese. We were

welcomed by the new Company.

What followed were an evening of formation, the celebration of consecrations and admissions, preparation for the Assembly, the election of the new government, a sharing of food and space and of the situations of our Congolese sisters.

We harvested the fruit of so much work and sacrifice by the Company of France, that for so many years has fostered the birth and growth of the Group in this land of Congo. Together we rejoiced in the incorporation of a new Company in the Federation.

The political situation is difficult in Congo: so much poverty, misery, often lack of essentials such as water and electricity....

Our sisters, most of them involved in active employment in the educational, assistive or health spheres, live in their secular and ecclesial environments, doing much good for people in difficulty and for their communities. They are truly consecrated seculars at the service of the least.

Participating in the life of the Company is difficult: there are twenty-seven sisters in Congo with enormous distances between one group and another... over 1000 km. However, they were all present at the Company's meeting, a true example for each of us who have many more opportunities and possibilities.

Forward, then, with courage and fidelity!



Kate

From Dream to Reality



During the first five days of August 2016, the Federation of Companies arrived in Congo. In effect, a delegation of the Council of the Federation arrived in Lubumbashi, the economic capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with the mission of implementing the autonomy of the new Company of Congo.

The delegation included the President, Maria Rosa Razza; the Vice-president, Kate Dalmasso; and Father Raymond Nkindji, a Congolese and Vice-assistant to the Council of the Federation.

What happiness, what joy to welcome them on August 8 in the house of the



Carmelite Fathers at the end of our annual



retreat! We celebrated as we introduced ourselves both individually and as participants in the different Groups in Congo.

The President of the Federation manifested her joy at meeting the sisters whom she had been seeing only in photos, but with whom she was now speaking face to face, and told us of the joy of belonging to the great family of Saint Angela Merici.

Before beginning the program of preparation for the Assembly of



Election, Maria Rosa and Kate explained and explored specific aspects of the Constitutions, emphasizing that we must seek the spirit of unity and sisterhood.



Specifically so as to prepare for the election of the Directress and the new Council of the Company of Congo, we met for two days, guided by the President, Maria Razza, and by the Vice-president, Kate Dalmasso, assisted by

the very able translation of Father Raymond Nkindji, Vice-assistant to the Council of the Federation. At the same time he also played the role of spiritual guidance and accompaniment.

The sessions explored the following themes: vocation, the role of the Company's leaders, planning and organizing the life of the new Company, and the new government.

The method included topical discussions, questions, individual work, group work, sharing with one another, responses, and more study.

On August 12, in the chapel of the Carmelite Fathers, Françoise Mutamba and Anastasie Mbiya made their first consecration, which was received by Geneviève Chambris of the Company of France, the leader of the Group. Father Pierre Mulowayi presided at the Eucharistic celebration during which they made their consecrations.

Finally came the elections of the Directress and her Council ... and several more days of conviviality.



Charlotte Kabanga



August Visit in CAMEROON

Gianna and I went to Cameroon in August to share an important moment in the life of our sisters there.

A heartfelt “THANK YOU” to the Federation for having offered us this

opportunity and to our Cameroonian sisters for their sharing and hospitality.

From the outset we were lodged in the spirituality center of the Pallottine Fathers located in the very center of Yaoundé.

On the day after our arrival our visits began, after an excellent breakfast offered by Nathalie.

We met with the entire group on the Monday before the actual beginning of the retreat. The consecrated sisters and the two associates, Jeanne-Françoise and Pauline, were given an opportunity to speak, and they all voiced their views and impressions on how they had lived this Jubilee Year of Mercy amid so many concerns regarding health, family issues, and all kinds of other difficulties.

Since Fr. Joseph, the assistant of the Mercian Group, was absent, Fr. Etienne guided the spiritual moments. He is a young and recently ordained priest and proved able to renew the motivation for our vocation as consecrated laywomen following the example of Mary: love, service, silence, femininity, concrete witness, consecration.

We entrusted this program of prayer and meditation to the Holy Spirit, who will act in hearts and most certainly, in his own time, produce fruits for the common good of all.

Each day Gianna and I led a time of reflection on the Constitutions, beginning with the Decree of Approval.

Each participant manifested her joy over belonging to the Company, which they all look upon as a family, a beautiful opportunity for a woman to live the call to holiness without entering a convent.

The expressions of joy were unanimous over our worldwide reality, over feeling in communion with so many women in the world despite diverse customs, cultures and mentalities.

The Company is experienced as assistance in the difficulties inherent in following Christ in a society where there are many widows, unmarried mothers and single women living in surroundings which have little respect for women. The spirituality of Saint Angela and secular consecration can provide the instruments necessary to help these women and foster the promotion of women and society.

The retreat came to an end with the celebration of the perpetual consecration of Christine Mbia-Onana in the chapel of the Pallottine Fathers. The choir rendered the liturgy all the more beautiful and solemn. Christine's friends and relatives were present and shared the festive luncheon with us.

The following days included a series of invitations and personal encounters with members of the group as well as several interested women. Jeanne-Françoise received us in her home with her mother and her large family. Considering all these encounters, foremost in our memory is the beautiful witness of our ill and elderly companions, who, despite difficulties, strive to follow the Lord "united together" in the footsteps of Angela Merici. Gianna and I cherish beautiful memories of their faith and their capacity for recollection. . .

Rev. Ignace Assiga took us to his parish in Emaná and showed us his plans for the construction of a church and farming projects for the social and economic promotion of the people in his small town. He also

took us to visit the Sanaga River, the largest river in Cameroon.

We thank the Lord for this Mercian presence in Cameroon. May he bless this Group! We have great faith, hope and trust in the Holy Spirit, who makes our charism ever timely.

Jeanne Lagrave and Gianna Stagno



THE COMPANY of ADRIA One Hundred Years for Luigina

On September 15, 2016, our Company gathered as a big family, to celebrate Luigina's 100 years.

The party had at its center the Eucharist, at which Most. Rev. Adriano Tessarollo, Bishop of Chioggia, presided, with the participation of other priests, relatives, and many people who have always been close to our institute, all present to demonstrate their grateful affection to Luigina and to the community.

Also present were some of our former students, always so dear to us, who wanted a group photo.

It was a very lovely party. We thank the Lord for the gifts that he has granted us.

In his homily, Bishop Tessarollo turned to Luigina and expressed himself in these words: *"Dear Luigina, your birth was linked with Mary's story, and in 1933 you entered this Company at the age of 17. You set out on this road signed and marked by the charism of St. Angela because you wanted to know and love Jesus Christ and to follow him as your spouse.*

From 17 to 100, you have advanced toward the Lord in St. Angela's school and, as the foundress said, you were occupied with following Christ in so many abandoned little brothers and sisters. Because the Lord has called



you, he has sustained you in the faith. You have been holding tight for these many years. Because of your simple presence and in your humility, you have kept faith with a major principle of St. Angela: 'Keep to the ancient way and lead a new life.' You have not gone off the road, either to the right or to the left, but you have stayed on the road of faith, in service to the Church.

"Your spirit is renewed each day; even as a centenarian you have a youthful spirit for leading a new life.

"May the Lord accompany you through all the time that will be given to you. May you live it in holy peace, always seeking the protection of St. Angela and of the Virgin Mary, that in difficult times you may never have to bow your head in depression, but rather may lift it to face the goal. Congratulations!"

Luigina's centenary celebration was also recorded in Chioggia's newspaper, *Nuova Scintilla* (n. 36, October 2, 2016). Here are some thoughts reported in the newspaper by Barbara Braghin:

"...Luigina Trapella has completed 100 years; she celebrated in the community of the Daughters of Saint Angela Merici, the 'Angelines,' of Adria. From her 30s to her 80s her home was an orphanage, and she worked hard there.... In the church Mayor Massimo Barbujani gave Luigina a white rose and a tribute. Many representatives of the cathedral showed their affection for the valuable witness that Luigina has always given to the city of Adria. Besides the many friends at the cutting of the 100-year cake, Luigina's sister Antonietta, 94 years old, sat close to her. The community of Angelines is particularly recognized in Adria for its various works in service to young people. To all of them, thanks from those who have gotten to know them and to appreciate the fruitful work of these many years of valuable service."

And all together let us thank the Lord for so many gifts.

Luisa Celio

Moving Mountains in Africa ...
BURUNDI – October 13-19, 2016



Before the President and I started out on our journey to Burundi, a friend of mine sent me this message: *a demanding work beckons you... to accompany and support one hundred beautiful souls, involved in assisting their suffering neighbors, women who can move the mountains in wonderful Africa. I am sure you*

will point them the right way ahead and provide them with the proper tools.

Basically, believing the Gospel is the key: *if you have faith... you will move mountains.*

This time in Burundi we truly have met more than 100 Bene Angela for a temporary consecration... others will soon have their first consecration... others have asked to be admitted: a total of about 130 persons.

An event made great by the grace of the Lord: the Holy Spirit preceded us... many persons have worked... and now we reap a rich harvest.

Least among the least...

The Bene Angela in Burundi are not only serving the poor and the least... they are themselves poor and least. Mainly farmers, without money and other basic commodities, they live on their own or in their families, have problems affording transportation, education, health care, and sometimes even making a living. They have also been without any legal recognition...



until their Bishop, Most Rev. Simon, came to Italy, asking the Federation about the process for being assimilated into the Company.

But their story shows perseverance and fidelity: for more than 60 years some of them have already been living in the world in a form of total consecration to God, in the footsteps of Angela Merici.

The last will be first...

The Federation took action, consulted with the Holy See, and initiated a formation process and a personal admission process for a first group, then a second and so forth until the current group: the eighth.

Each year there has been a trip to Burundi for formation and support and to receive the many consecrations. Always accompanied on site by Father Modesto, a Xaverian missionary in Burundi with Italian roots (Trentino), and encouraged by Bishop Simon.



In this way the Bene Angela are now part of the *Company of St. Ursula Secular Institute of St. Angela Merici* Federation. There is only other Institute in Burundi of pontifical right.

Saint Angela is completely right when saying: *“How many... important persons there are, who with the many riches and possessions they have, will not be able to find true relief in some extreme need! And yet these little ones, poor as they are, will find consolation and comfort”* (5th Counsel, 33-34).

Two of them, Pascalina and Paulina, came to Italy to learn Italian and now are respectively leader and vice-leader of the Council of the Group of Burundi.

The formation will continue also this year for all the consecrated members, in view of their hope to become a new Company in the Federation. The assembly had asked for admission into the Federation. After the deliberation of the Federation Council and the approval of the Holy See, they will become the interdiocesan Company of Burundi. Next year, God willing, the first two groups will make their consecration for life; then the assembly for the election of the Directress and her Council will follow.



A new and astonishing dignity...

We have tried to point the Burundian sisters to the right way ahead, the Gospel way, laid out by the Rule of Saint Angela Merici; we have provided them with the proper tools to go down the path, the ones included in the Constitutions of the Company.

Now they and all of us, *united together*, will continue the journey: *to seek and desire all the ways and means necessary to persevere and make progress to the very end (cf Prologue to the Counsels, 10).*

So the “least ones” in Burundi, *chosen to be spouses of the Son of God*, have gained *a new and wonderful dignity*. And we have taken part in a new spring, a new wonderful blooming of vocations, a multitude of consecrated virgins able to “move the mountains” not only of Africa, but of the whole worldwide Company.

To find again such big numbers, such crowded group pictures, we need to go back to the nineteenth century... but we are now in the third millennium... What a grace, what a wonder!

And now, therefore, all of you, please be attentive, with great and eager hearts...

Come then, let us all embrace this holy Rule, which God in His grace has offered us...

So we shall find the thorny and stony paths blossoming for us and covered with paving of finest gold.

May the strength and the true comfort of the Holy Spirit be always with us.

Kate



BURUNDI
Newness Born of Humility
Letter from Padre Modesto



*Dearest daughters of St. Angela,
Maria Rosa and Kate!*

*Bear with me if I pen these
few lines to you after your
departure, to you and also to the
daughters of St. Angela in Burundi,
in order to convey feelings of
gratitude to God and St. Angela in*

the joy of having had you here with us.

***A small miracle!** Last year we missed you so much, since you had been prevented from coming to Burundi by various agencies due to the risky and dangerous political situation. This year you swept away any hesitation and apprehension. But you were almost prevented from coming this year as well! On the eve of your departure from Italy it seemed we would have had to resign ourselves to not having you with us yet again. You will remember that the first reaction had been to cancel the meeting and the three days to be attended by 96 Bene Angela. That's when we said to ourselves: "Let's place our trust in the Lord; let's ask all the sisters to pray. In their simplicity they will be heard." And great was the joy, for you first of all, and for all the sisters, when seeing that at the very last moment you found a solution. That was an additional and intense reason for rejoicing in the Lord, for joyfully embracing one another. Your driving motive had been and was to prepare the way for the autonomy of the Company of Burundi in full joint responsibility with the Federation of Companies.*

***What's new in this stage?** The newness was underscored by Natalia, the leader for many years, since the birth of the Bene Angela: Natalia said: "We were considered like a strange idea of a young priest, who had had very much the right intuition when explaining on the feast of St. Angela that she and her "companions" were not*

“convent sisters” but silent and unknown consecrated women amid the people, among the cabins of the poor. Their home was the world. And young Burundian women, often unschooled, had asked to imitate this St. Angela.”



*This year we went to the tomb of this priest who started it all, **Rev. Pietro Nkundwa**, and so strongly did we feel his joy in seeing us around him to thank him that you, yes you secular Ursulines of Burundi, the most disregarded and unknown of women, if not to say “strange” women, “misled” women destined to disappear with the death of the poor founder, who during the last years of his life lived legless in a wheel chair due to untreated diabetes. . .”*

***Let us relish this new reality!** Bene Angela, destined to disappear, you have discovered with inexpressible joy that with the necessary stages of formation and growth you could become part of the international Company recognized by no less than the Holy See as one of pontifical right.... You have progressively discovered that you have sisters all around the world and that you yourselves are missionaries.*

Together with Mary of the Magnificat, you too belong to the “lowly ones” exalted by the Lord. “Blessed are you who have believed!” says Elizabeth to you too.

***Behold the newness!** You, who were comfortable this year even when sleeping on the ground because there were so many of you and not enough beds to go around, have been exalted in this honor. You have reached an unexpected and **surprising record**.*

The meeting room was also the refectory; hence, nourishment for both the spirit and the body. We couldn’t have hoped for anything better! The church was that of the contemplative Visitation sisters, next door to our diocesan reception center.

International, missionaries, and therefore also sent forth to be “contemplatives” of God in the midst of his poor People in ordinary and humble daily life, with the spirituality of daily life in order to imbue with trust the many poor people who toil with you in order to live, but find strength and solace in God. May God bless you in your mission! The people of Burundi need your “company.”

This country is closed in upon itself and suffers in travelling the journey of life. But you are open to the world in your hearts of faith and will help open new horizons of a Church true in its poverty. We are joined in prayer for this beloved Burundi.

Maria Rosa and Kate, I almost forgot to return to the question you asked them: “How are you able to live amidst so much poverty, in your homes, in the concrete and historical situation you experience each and every day? What work do you do! What title do you have?”

Peasants, farmers, sacristans, volunteer catechists ... some teachers, nurses, seamstresses.... But in your moderation and tenacity you can both survive and enable orphans and the poor to live, thanks to your often calloused hands and your determination in overcoming difficulties. With humility you are also able to sustain your Company, to be “autonomous,” and you motivate others to holiness in this world, which struggles to believe.

***Next year** we will gather together at the Foyer de Charité in the capital, Bujumbura, because you are many in number and come from different dioceses. For many of you it will be your first time in the capital, even though Burundi is as small as the Lombardy region of Italy.*



United in prayer and wishing all good in the Lord,

Fr. Modesto Todeschi, Xaverian Missionary

October 19, 2016

On Lake Babogaia at Debrezeiti ETHIOPIA – October 19-26, 2016



It is by now a habit: on our way back from Burundi, the President and I make a stop in Ethiopia. We need to change flights, so what an occasion to visit our small Ethiopian group.

Because the communications are always complicated...

we are afraid of not finding the group on site on those days, as agreed last year, and we are not sure of what this stop will hold for us, who will welcome us, or who will be there with us.

He is going ahead of you into Galilee... says the Gospel. He, the *Lover of us all*, has really gone ahead of us and with Saint Angela has remained with us and accompanied us in each step in Ethiopia.

Hanna, always attentive and careful, welcomed us at the airport, together with the dear Ursuline Nuns of Addis Abeba, who for years now have been hosting us with their familial hospitality as *dear sisters*.

Last year we proposed to the small Group of our Secular Ursulines, nine sisters, a three-day retreat.

It took place at a Jesuit location on the magnificent Lake Babogaia, about 50 km away



from the capital city. A heaven-on-earth place, a marvelous site because of nature, silence, adequate places for meetings, the Church... but especially because of the presence of the sisters and the abundant, overflowing grace of the Lord.



An intense formation event: we listened to each other, discussed problems and hopes, reflected and prayed, shared together our vocation and our mission. We sought and confirmed each one's vocational choices and our commitment of fidelity and perseverance.

Keeping in mind the Constitutions and the writings of Saint Angela, we drew up the program for their retreats and annual spiritual exercises in the months ahead.



We rethought the assignments in the group, in order to involve those most recently consecrated also in the organization: treasurer, secretary, liaison with the Federation. The

Group's leader still remains Maddalena, the first African daughter of Saint Angela, a wise person, formed and balanced.

We were accompanied with great care, understanding, patience, and skill, by Abbà Bazazeb, Prior of the Cistercian Fathers in Ethiopia, who knows Italian well; he was our interpreter, agreeing to act as Ecclesiastic Assistant of the small Group.

On the last day, four sisters renewed their consecration for three years: a simple celebration, the President received their consecrations

during the Eucharistic celebration. Abbà Bazazeb presided in an eastern liturgy, with rich vestments, gestures, songs...

Finally we made the feelings and the emotions of the wonderful celebration and of the days lived together resound again, with thanksgiving and with the commitment to continue our journey in fidelity and gladness. A sung Magnificat naturally poured out as an expression of our feelings and of our commitments for the future.

The President and I have told each other: our wishes have fully come true, actually they have been surpassed by reality, and we really had an experience of Company. The Lord really went ahead of us to Debrezeiti.

Kate



INCOMING MAIL



From the Company of Indonesia



In the Company of Indonesia there are a total of sixteen persons from the regions of Java, Kupang, and Flores. Fourteen are consecrated for life; two are in initial formation.

Once a year we hold a national meeting in July, in Java. We meet monthly in our respective regions.

Some members are still actively working, and some others are already retired.

Those who are employed work in care facilities, in schools, in public offices and in private businesses.

Sincerely, Ona Cresensia

From the Company of Canada – Quebec, 2016

Mary-Cabrini Durkin;
Gertrude Guimond;
Réjeanne Leduc;
Jacqueline Morin;
Thérèse Bolduc;
Jean-Claude Hould,
Ecclesiastical Assistant;
Muguette Joazile;
Rita Bolduc



From the Company of Trent 140th anniversary of the foundation

On Saturday, September 10, 2016, with twenty sisters of the Company of Trent, we celebrated the 140th anniversary of our foundation by going to visit the little church of Saint Angela, dating to 1865, in Tiarno di Sotto in Val di Ledro (70 km from Trent). We prayed and spent a lovely time in sisterhood.



The town's mayor,

Renato Girardi, welcomed us and thanked us for our presence. He said that he felt honored by our visit, because in the valley there is a need not only for tourism but for a bit of faith.

At the end of the celebration of Mass in the little church dedicated to Saint Angela, the priest in charge of the church, together with some local faithful who had come to share this event with us, recited the prayer to Saint Angela that they always say together at the end of every liturgy, as they are called “friends of St. Angela.” Here is the prayer:

PRAYER TO ST. ANGELA MERICI

*Obtain for us, Saint Angela, the grace
that we may contemplate in our daily life
the face of Jesus Christ,
your lover, ours, and the lover of the whole Church.
Obtain for us the grace of listening to the Holy Spirit,
“whose voice we will hear all the more clearly,
the more cleansed and purified our conscience.”
Obtain for us from God the Father this grace
which we confidently ask of you.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen*

From the *Bene Angela* of Burundi ... still more vocations in another region

A Message from the Group's leader:

On October 30, 2016,
I went to Bugwana,
where Father Modesto
now lives, because he
had called me to meet
five women who want
to become daughters
of Saint Angela:

Joseline, 51;

Letizia, 45;

Consolait, 41;

Marie Letizia, 40; and

Aliraine, 25.



Padre Modesto had spoken with Letizia, who works in the parish, and also to the sacristan, presenting the vocation of a consecrated woman in the world. Letizia became very happy because no one had ever brought news of such a thing. After Father Modesto had put forth the proposal to four other women friends, they were also happy about it.

I went to meet them with Melanie, and we ascertained that they were thirsty to know their call. We sought to explain to them Saint Angela's life and charism. They will request to be admitted to the Company.

Furthermore, on November 27, 2016, at the cathedral of Gitega, Bishop Simon presided at the celebration of the consecration of another group of Bene Angela, with Padre Giuseppe, the Assistant, present.

Pascaline

Padre Modesto writes again:

We must truly thank the Lord together that, with his surprises, he is surely seen as the “God of surprises.”

Who would ever have thought of such a possibility?

After so many years as a missionary in Burundi (50 years ago, on July 3, 1966, I arrived in Burundi for the first time), who would ever have thought of finding such a surprise? ... Daughters of St. Angela in the forest, unaware that on other continents there are other daughters of this same foundress? Consecrated women in ordinary life, in the world, fertile soil for God’s grace. A world so strange, twisted, and at the same time marvelous, especially among the poorest, who so serenely manifest God’s smile and God’s marvels.

Pascaline came to my mission territory with Melania, a Council member, stayed with the nuns, and met with the first five women. They traveled by motorcycle on a paved highway for 20 km: the two of them and the cyclist. Saint Angela went on horseback and they on a motorcycle. Thanks be to God!

Padre Modesto



From the Company of Brazil South New bishop

We are happy that Father Otacilio Ferreira de Lacerda of Guarulhos was chosen as auxiliary bishop of Belo Horizont – Minas Gerais – Brazil.

An old friend of the Company, he used to lead our retreats. When I attended Mass in his parish, he asked me to speak after Communion about our vocation and about the Company.

He will be a pastoral bishop, humble and sincere.

Ursula, Directress, Company of Brazil South

From the Company of Caltanissetta One hundred years of Merician presence in Montedoro



*“Look to the past with
gratitude,
live the present
with passion,
embrace the future
with hope.”*
Pope Francis

With these sentiments we have celebrated a Merician jubilee in Montedoro. It was a celebration to express gratitude that became prayer, joy, festivity, and sharing. We thanked the Lord for having inspired Saint Angela Merici to begin such a noble Company and thanked the Venerable Marianna Amico Roxas for having brought it here and made it known in our land of Sicily.

Our thoughts naturally went out to the sisters who have been part of this group, to so many no longer here and so many still here. With open hands, they have all planted so many spiritual and material goods in the Church, in society, and especially in families.

Thanks go out to the pastor, Father Salvatore Asaro, who welcomed the celebration of the Merician centenary joyfully and enthusiastically.

Our Assistant, Father Maruzio Vullo, presided at the Eucharistic celebration and in the homily lifted up the beauty of consecration and of the Merician charism. Thanks also to Carmela Perricone, who, in telling the Company’s history from its origins to the arrival in Sicily, clearly brought out the beauty and greatness of secular consecration in the Secular Institute of Saint Angela.

The sisters of Barrafranca and of Agrigento shared with us the thanksgiving, the prayer, and the joy of the festivity. We were also blessed with the sharing and closeness of the President, Maria Rosa, through her affectionate message, and of Kate through her beautiful message of good wishes.

We must thank the whole community of Montedoro for its welcome and prayer, and also for the marvelous and very delicious cake prepared for the occasion.

We left Montedoro amid farewells and hugs and with hearts full of emotion and great hope, counting on Saint Angela's certitude that *"This Company was planted by his holy hand and he will never abandon it as long as the world shall last."*

Carmelina



From the Company of Ragusa

In October 2016 Maria Zisa reached her heavenly home. She was a former directress of the Company of Ragusa. Her sisters remember her as a woman of extraordinary intelligence and great faith.

From the Group of Madagascar

I would like to thank you again for all you offer us and for how you nourish us daily in our vocation with the publication "***IN THE SAME CHARISM...***" which is A PRECIOUS GIFT for us. We especially thank the Lord for having given us the Company and all those who commit themselves to our human, spiritual, and vocational growth. Thanks, heartfelt thanks!

Voahangy

From Abruzzo

Greetings and thanks for all that I've read in ***IN THE SAME CHARISM...*** I was inspired to reread the articles once more because they made me so joyful and happy.

It's really a breath of fresh air, giving new life and new energy to everyone who decides to follow Christ, our Savior and Lover. May Saint Angela always protect all her daughters and in particular those who contribute to the harmony produced in the Federation and the Congresses. A hug from...

Maria Tartaglia

From the Company of Brazil Northeast

A consecration for life

Luzinete began her vocational journey during the Christmas gathering of the group of Jequiè on December 20, 2009, in the presence of Father Tom (now Most Rev. Antonio Tourinho Neto, auxiliary bishop of Recife and Olinda). He greeted the Angelines, whose assistant he had been for thirteen years.

Luzinete has always been faithful to the formation meetings and annual retreat and, besides, has demonstrated her interest in getting to know the Company's Rule and Constitutions and has been constant in prayer.

She made her consecration for life on December 18, 2016, into the hands of the Directress of the Company of Brazil Northeast, Hayse Lyra Machado and in the presence of the Vice-directress Ana Fernandes de Mendonça



and the other sisters, and, once again, of Bishop “Father Tom.” It was the beginning of the Marian year when she became a true and worthy spouse of the Son of God in the charism of the foundress.

May the Holy Spirit always shine on her that she may be an

example of love and of fidelity to Jesus, to the Institute, and to Saint Angela. May she be salt and leaven in the surroundings where the Lord will call her.

Ana, for the Company of Brazil Northeast



From the Group of Kenya: Consecrations...

Our two members in Kenya took important new steps in the Company.

On December 3 in Nairobi, Eunice made her first consecration, for two

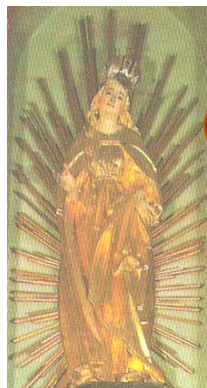
years. Perpetua renewed her temporary consecration for three years.

Father Francesco Pierli, MCCJ, presided at the Mass. Mary-Cabrini, a Federation councilor, was present as the delegate of the President to receive the consecrations.

Five interested women gathered on December 2 to learn about the Company, St. Angela, and the vocation of secular consecration.

Mary-Cabrini





Pilgrimage of the Federation 2017



July 23-29
Slovakia & Poland



Itinerary: Venice – Slovakia - Poland
Poland – Venice



Visits: *Kosice, Spisska Kapitula, Czestohova,
Wadowice*

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