

IN THE SAME CHARISM....

with responsibility



**COMPANY OF ST. URSULA
SECULAR INSTITUTE OF ST. ANGELA MERICI
FEDERATION**

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TO THE READERS

Loving each other and living in harmony together

I have read and reread this publication: formative articles, songs, spirituality, prayers ... but especially so much news ... of Companies around the world.

I returned to these precious words of Saint Angela, that she left as a gift to us in her Testament: ***“Loving each other and living in harmony together are a sure sign that we are walking the path that is right and pleasing to God”*** (10th Legacy, 12). Here I found the reason for our humble work of composing, writing, translating, putting in order and sending out to all the sisters of the world. This publication arrives with inevitable inaccuracies, limitations, errors, but it achieves its purpose: *loving each other and living in harmony together*. I thought about the road of this connector that makes a claim to reach the various continents and I said to myself that this is also a *path that is right and pleasing to God*.

Loving each other and living in harmony together ... so far apart, so different, each weighed down with a heavy burden of difficulty, limited experience, at times of isolation, but rich in a great and always meaningful charism, that along the world's roads makes us welcome and live Love according to the spirituality of Saint Angela. ***Walking the path that is right and pleasing to God ...*** because we wish one another well, because we wish to stay united, because the Federation offers a service of unity and of accompaniment, but especially because Saint Angela has assured us that, in unity, we will find ourselves on the right road, the one of God's will.

As we read this unifying bulletin, let us pray for one another, let us think of what we may be able to do that is new in our own group, in our own Company, let us try to bring it about and then let us write about it, let us communicate it, and love will continue to grow and the Company will be ever more united and more lovely in its global reality.

Caterina Dalmasso

A THOUGHT FROM THE PRESIDENT

“All for the praise of his majesty and the good of souls”

We are in the midst of the Pauline Year and, in harmony with the Church, let us hope that our Companies and Groups may make their own the exhortation of Saint Paul: *“be slaves of the Lord Christ (Col 3:24) “... so that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God for which you are suffering” (2 Thes 1:5).*

In these verses we find echoes of the words of Saint Angela: *“...all for the praise of his Majesty and the good of souls” (Prologue to the Counsels, 18).*

The fact that we have been chosen “to be the true and virginal spouses of the Son of God” is not a remarkable privilege to guard almost jealously, but an immense gift that makes us worthy, by a special title, to collaborate in the coming of his kingdom.

We share with all secular institutes the common purpose of being “leaven in the dough,” living our specific charism according to the insight and the Rule that our holy Mother and Foundress left us.

“The greatest gift that we can give the Church as consecrated secular persons is that of displaying an ordinary life that, without losing any of its humanity, but rather exalting it, is radically handed over to the Gospel!”

This witness is the result of a consecrated secular person, discussed at the world assembly of the World Conference of Secular Institutes that took place in Mexico, and in which I participated on behalf of our institute.

It seems to me that this brief passage concisely and clearly expresses the primary and direct meaning of the presence of secular institutes in the Church and the world: to be

handed over to the Gospel, to “say” that a life of following Jesus Christ is possible and beautiful!

To make the Gospel the constant orientation of our life, able to transform us from within, in order to live our daily realities with ever more abandonment to Love!

The Church and the world need this contribution of our silent witness, serving the Gospel for “the good of souls.”

Before our eyes is “the living icon” of Saint Angela, who made this commitment to her Lover the only purpose of her existence. This is enough for us to walk with our energy ever renewed.

Maria Razza



A THOUGHT FROM
THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSISTANT
An historic-spiritual profile of the Apostle Paul

Sunday, January 25, at the conclusion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, we remember the **Conversion of Saint Paul**. Right in the middle of the Pauline Year, in the bimillennium of the birth of the Apostle to the Nations, it could be useful to devote some time to his life, to his mission and to his writings.

Paul did not know Jesus during his life in Jerusalem or Galilee. He had the experience of meeting the Risen One.

He was born a little before the year 10 of the Common Era, to a Jewish family of Tarsus in Cilicia (Turkey today). He received the biblical name Saul and the Roman name Paul, as his father had acquired Roman citizenship. He went to Jerusalem to be educated. He was instructed in Scripture and in the traditions of the ancestors, first in Tarsus and then in Jerusalem, at the feet of Gamaliel the Elder.

On account of education he had received, Saul zealously defended “*the traditions of the ancestors*” (Gal 1,14).

One day, on the road to Damascus, he heard, as we read in Acts (Acts 9,4), the famous words, “*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?*” In the account that Paul himself gave of this apparition of the Risen One can be recognized a great interior disturbance, typical of the vocational experiences of the biblical prophets: “*When the One who from my mother's womb had set me apart and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him to the Gentiles...*” (Gal. 1,15-17). Saul's conversion did not represent a change in religion or a moral conversion. He continued to live according to the law of the Lord and continued to understand himself as a Jew, just as before, and recognized that it was the “*God of our ancestors*” who now commanded him to

preach the Gospel. On account of this, he would announce the Gospel to the pagans as well as to the Jews, as long as possible. The conversion and the baptism of Paul signified that he had discovered his true and appropriate position within the life of Israel.

We do not know the exact date of this event that changed Saul's life, but it was not very long after the death and resurrection of Jesus, most likely between the years 33 and 35. The early Church in Jerusalem was newborn, gathered around "*Peter and the Eleven*" (Acts 2,14).

"*Three years later,*" Paul went to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter and "*stayed fifteen days with him*" (Gal 1:18). Paul also met "*James, the brother of the Lord*" (Gal 1:19), in this way encountering the Mother Church of Jerusalem. Fleeing an assassination attempt by Greek-speaking Jews (Acts 9,29-30), he had to leave for Tarsus, where he resumed his work as a tent-maker but continued to proclaim his new Gospel in the synagogue.

It is necessary to wait for the beginning of year 40 to find him invited by Barnabas, in the name of the Church of Jerusalem, to announce the Gospel to Antioch of Syria, a church founded by missionaries driven out of Jerusalem. Paul began to separate from the circle of the synagogue to preach to Greeks too. In this community of Antioch arose the title "*Christians*" given to followers of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah ('Christ') preached by Paul. The Church of Antioch would from now onward be the center of the spread of the Gospel. In the course of a prayer assembly, the community's inspiration confirmed his personal vocation. The Holy Spirit's voice was heard: "*Set aside for me Barnabas and Saul for the work for which I have called them*" (Acts 13,2); then the assembly prayed, fasted, imposed hands on the two men and sent them into mission. Thus began the mission of the Apostle

Paul, to go to preach the Word of God to all people: from Antioch to Asia Minor, to Greece and to Rome.

Paul is the best known personage of the first Christian generation, both on account of the letters he wrote, which circulated for fifteen years of his lifetime, and through the story of his life narrated by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, written fifteen or twenty years after his death.

His letters represent for us a living witness to the Gospel as preached by the apostles right after the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and to its incarnation into diverse historic and cultural situations.

Paul's historic mission came to its end presumably around the middle of the 60s, but his preaching, through his writings and the testimony of the churches founded or visited by him, constituted and still does constitute one of the vital elements of Christianity and of the Good News, elements carried far and wide by the great witness to the Risen One, who became, in his image, a "*Light of the Nations*" (Isaiah 49,6; Acts 13,47).

WHAT DOES PAUL MATTER FOR US?

Those who read the writings of Saint Paul encounter above all an impassioned testimony that speaks to the young Christian community on the basis of his own experience of salvation/liberation.

For a modern person thirsty for an experience of faith, he is the interlocutor who has something to say, more than any other personage of the Christian tradition, about who Jesus Christ is, what is the difference between Christ and anyone else, and what unites every person with Christ.

Only Jesus can assure his full presence to every epoch and to every person who desires him. Paul, through his preaching and his writings, bore witness and confessed the

constant ardor of his heart, conquered by Christ. He testified to what he had experienced and what had been revealed to him. That is why those who heard him could not pull away from their fascination with his discourse.

And what can I say to us, in the present hour of our history and of our time, marked by great anguish and by growing uncertainty? Perhaps no searcher for the human essence has ever more radically laid bare the internal struggle of every person in bringing to light the divine work of a person's reconciliation with him/herself. Paul writes in Romans 7,21-25: *"I discover the principle that when I want to do right, evil is at hand. For I take delight in the law of God, in my inner self, but I see in my members another principle at war with the law of my mind, taking me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me from this mortal body? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

But immediately after this passage, he sings of the human person liberated through grace. Thanks to communion with Christ, the believer rediscovers his/her unity and faith-filled serenity: "Hence, now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has freed you from the law of sin and death" (Rom 8,1-2).

And then he opens to humanity an unexpected prospect of life-giving communion with Christ that nothing can smash ever again: *"I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom 8,38-39).

The current interest in Paul is due to his contribution to the search for humanity, for a sense of his own existence, for the destiny of his existence and of his being a person, a crucial

problem in this, our time. He speaks about the human person through the New Person, Jesus Christ, the foundation, the center and the measure of our Christian faith. Having become flesh, Christ is the answer to the question that humanity puts to itself about the sense of its existence and its destiny. For his school, all our uncertainty on how to face the problem of humanity in our day is dispelled. And at the same time Paul frees us from all doubt on the necessity of restoring faith, which is now relegated to the existential margins of today's world, to its solid foundation, as he wrote in 1 Cor 3:11: *"for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ."*

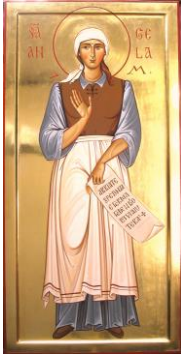
Father Adriano Tessarollo



FROM THE RULE OF SAINT ANGELA MERICI

A few points for reflection....

ON THE MANNER OF RECEIVING Chapter I



The first chapter of the Rule lays down the conditions for admission::

1. She must be a virgin...

First of all let it be recalled that everyone who is about to enter or be admitted to the Company must be a virgin.

Already in the the prologue, Angela had written: *“Prologue on the life of virgins”... and in the Testament: “God willing to call forth from the vanity of this world many women, especially virgins...”*.

It is therefore a matter of virginity.... at least from now on. This is the first condition Saint Angela lays down. It is for sure that she asks for the virginity of the heart *“must be a virgin”*. It is known that she had already accepted widows as members of the Company, so she did not expect virginity of the body, even if she wrote that *“especially virgins”* are to be called.

“Since the very beginning in the Catholic Church, one finds men and women who have renounced to the wealth of matrimony to follow “The Lamb wherever He goes (Rev. 14,4) so that they can only think about the things pertaining to God and see how to please the Lord (1 Cor.7,32) so that they can go out and meet the Bridegroom (Mt. 25,6) (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1618)

This is the meaning of the virginity Saint Angela asks for..... to follow the Bridegroom, please Him and go out to

meet Him.

2.a To have a firm intention...

And have a firm intention to serve God in this way of life

This condition has to be vouched for by the *Daughter* and examined by the person responsible for her ...

A frivolous desire, the enthusiasm of the moment or a secondary objective are not enough ... One must firmly resolve to serve God, to choose Him as the One and All in one's own life, to choose Him as the Only Bridegroom, the Treasured and Loved One.

This is a firm decision which is capable of transforming a moment's decision into a pledge for a lifetime.

One is not accepted and does not join the Company to choose Apostolic work, friendship, prayer, the persons responsible for her or the things she enjoys doingbut she does all of these always for the Love of God.

One is admitted to the Company if she **chooses to serve God in this way of life**, in this particular vocation. I can choose to serve God but not the Company, however if I choose to join the Company, I must have a firm intention to serve the Bridegroom, by means of my secular consecration, with all it implies as a Daughter of Saint Angela...

2.b The joy and free will...

Then: that she must enter joyfully and of her free will

The second part of the condition: to choose the Lord above all. It is to be expected that Saint Angela, a happy and positive lady, asks that one "*enters joyfully and of her own free will*"... then it is up to the person concerned to live up to her promise.

What is unusual, and, in reality, unexpected in those times, is the fact that a person was given the choice of her own free will. Everything was chosen for, by others, even the choice of one's own life and that of the "right" person....

But it was not so in the Company: the choice of belonging

to the Company had to come out of one's free will, it was up to the person herself to be responsible, perseverant and faithful to her choice for life.

Once there was a freedom of choice, one had to unequivocally pledge to undertake joyfully all that was to come her way.... even unexpected events.

3 She must bind herself only to The Lord, in the Company...

Thirdly: that she should not promise herself to any monastery, nor to any man of this world.

How can you bind yourself for good if you are already bound?

The choice is deep rooted and unconditional, but is binding for life and in order to be able to choose freely, one must not belong or have promised herself to any monastery or to any man in the world. Saint Angela, in fact, insists on the promise made because a promise means to pledge oneself for life.

There is no doubt at all: when one of the Daughters of Saint Angela asks to form part of the Company, she must be free and ready to belong totally and solely to The Lord.

4. The family ties...

Fourth: if she has a father or a mother, or other superiors, she must first ask for their consent; thus the lady governors and governors of The Company will also be able to speak with them, so they would have no legitimate reason if later by any chance, they wanted to prevent her from entering into this holy obedience.

Saint Angela wanted the consent of the parents or other superiors of the person entering The Company so that nobody could prevent her from observing and obeying the Rules of The Company.

Today things are different: one is free to choose for oneself and does not need the consent of others; however one is

also free to choose whether a person should belong to The Company or not.

However it was correct of Angela to expect a person responsible and the parents to be aware of this choice because they were able to help the Daughter lead a better joyful life in the Company.

5. Age...

Fifth: that she must be at least twelve years old.

However let it be remembered that those under twelve may be accepted in the group so as to form them to the reality of this singular life.

Today even the age of entry has changed... But it was very considerate of Angela to see to and advice on the vocational “care”.

It was a matter of helping these young ladies understand the real meaning of “*this singular life*”.

We can ask ourselves:

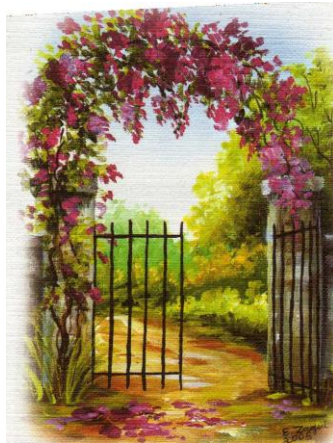
- Do I fulfil the conditions set by Saint Angela to lead the kind of life expected by The Company?
- Do I live my virginity first and foremost as a reciprocated gift?
- Have I accepted and kept alive the firm intention of serving God as is expected by The Company?
- Do I faithfully and joyfully renew my faith?
- Do I feel free to belong to The Company unconditionally and without wishing to belong to any other institution?
- Am I aware that I must pledge obedience to The Company and give myself enough time to do what is expected of me in The Company?
- Do I earnestly work hard for more vocations? Do I make others aware of the beauty of this singular life?

We can pray in this way:

*“O Lord... You do not scorn,
but accepts persons of all ages
neither do You consider a person’s condition
but accepts her as she is...
You shield Your servants with Your protection
which like a good shepherd,
You have deemed worthy
To be chosen from Your flock
To preserve their virginity for life ...
Prepare them for their undertakings of virtue and glory...
Until they prove themselves worthy
Of being united forever
With Your Son and Our Lord Jesus Christ...
May they be honoured and wholly strengthened
In faith, hope and sincere love ...
Help them to joyfully lead their lives as virgins.
Amen”.*

(Old ritual of the final benediction)

Kate



LAUNCHED INTO CYBERSPACE

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When our president Mariarosa Razza, at the direction of the Council of the Federation, called me to say, *“We thought of you for the Federation’s web site,”* I felt dizzy. It struck me as a very arduous proposal, beyond my ability. But at the same time, in a fraction of a second, there came to my mind a sentence that our beloved Pina Spagnolo, former directress of the Company of Padua, had whispered to me one day: *“You are the future of the Company,”* a sentence which at that time seemed to me truly exaggerated. However, notwithstanding my efforts at humility, I recognized that a point of pride that I had then felt was rising up again, at Mariarosa’s proposal. Or maybe the proposal arrived right on time. That was a moment of great disillusionment for me, as I had not passed the exams for Directors of Schools, for which I had carefully prepared. *“Nothing happens by chance, you will see that the Lord has his own plans,”* my wonderful “big sister” Kate consoled me. So in a few moments I thought that, if the Council of the Federation had entrusted me with this responsibility, they had faith in me.

I remember having said a “yes” that came from my heart, without resisting; I knew that I would be able to trust in the help of Saint Angela and in the collaboration of my directress, Claudia, and of my former colleague Dante Bragagnolo, from whom I would seek technical knowledge that I did not have.

In sum, my work would be from the heart, something very precious to me! I spent two years in intense research, in which I not only acquired a new competence in the use of the computer, but was able to dive in and immerse myself in the

depth of our charism, which I am always further discovering, like a treasure to receive, value, and spread!

During the process we had some difficult moments, moments of discouragement, in which I asked myself what I had gotten myself into; in these situations I felt the support through which people like Claudia, Kate and Mariarosa concretely gave me a hand. I experienced the joy of sharing not only in the Company, but also in the Federation.

Step after step I lived the powerful experience of gestation and birth. I felt that what “I carried in my womb” was a precious gift that I was given and that in my turn I was called to make available to others. At the end we were truly anxious to let this creature “see light.”

There was a concern among us, a fear that the fruit of our labor would not be welcomed and appreciated. But above all there was the great desire to make our charism shine, using essential language, clear and attractive, in the choice of words and images that would help present it, recall it, and expand upon its meaning, in a spiral movement. Yes, the important thing was not to create a perfect product, as much as to launch our site at last, “to take it public,” to explore new territory, so that knowledge of Saint Angela and of our charism can be spread and better known. For just this purpose I considered it important to launch the site with a vigil of intense prayer to the Lord, giver of every gift. He will – I am certain of it – direct it and use it in the “right” way. Finally, I wished to make that event coincide with September 8, the feast of the Nativity of Mary, to entrust the undertaking to her motherly protection in close collaboration with our Madre Angela.

There it is, now I dedicate the site to all of you, my very dear sisters who share with me this stupendous road of following Christ “in the footsteps of Angela,” all united together in one will. I count on your collaboration in helping make it known and in sending me comments and suggestions to

make it ever more lovely. TOGETHER IT IS POSSIBLE. It pleases me to close with these words of Father Milani: “It stays in my heart” – certainly the site, but above all that page of the Gospel that together we are writing by living our charism today, “quick to give a reason for the hope that is in us.”



A very big hug to all, trusting in your help and in our mutual prayer that the Lord and Saint Angela may help us to realize the dream and the plan for which we have been intended from eternity!

Very affectionately yours,
Rosanna Scapin

HYMN TO SAINT ANGELA

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the new hymn dedicated to Our Mother Saint Angela. I tried to make up a worthy text but finally I decided to adapt from the Merician writings. In reality it is not a hymn but a dialogue. The chorus, which must be repeated after every stanza, depicts us the Daughters of Saint Angela, who knock on Our Mother's door, just like the people from Brescia who hundreds of years ago knocked to pour out their doubts and troubles to their Mother. On the other hand, in the stanzas it is Angela who answers, warns, gives advice and encouragement.

I am certain that I have succeeded in praising Our Mother through singing using her own words. I greet you and wish you well in your singing.

Michelina Giraudo

Hymn to Saint Angela Merici

Lyrics and Music: Michelina Giraudo
(the text is in Italian and inspired by The Rule)

Ritornello:

Angela, tenera Madre,
ecco, noi bussiamo ancora alla tua porta.
Angela, lasciaci entrare;
sosteremo un poco e tu ci parlerai.

1a strofa:

Il Signore vi ha strappate
alle tenebre del mondo;
figlie mie diletteissime,
con gioia proclamatelo!

Ritornello: Angela, tenera Madre...

2a strofa:

Il Signore vi ha elette
vere spose del suo Figlio,
e nel giorno della luce
vi farà regine in cielo.

Ritornello: Angela, tenera Madre...

3a strofa:

Dio stesso, di sua mano,
ha piantato la Compagnia,
e nel mondo durerà
finché i giorni dureranno.

Ritornello: Angela, tenera Madre...

4a strofa:

Tutti voi che camminate
sul sentiero che vi ho tracciato
una Madre in me avrete,
amorosa, vigilante.

Ritornello: Angela, tenera Madre

Angela, tenera Madre

Canto a Sant'Angela Merici

Testo e Musica: Michelina Giraudo
(testo ispirato alla Regola)

(♩ = 76) *Ritornello*

Voce

Organo

An - ge-la, te - ne - ra Ma-dre,

ec - co noi bus - sia - mo an - co - ra al-la tua por - ta. An - ge-la, la - scia-ci-en-

1ª strofa

tra - re: so - ste-re-mo un po-co, e tu ci par - le - rai. Il Si - gno - re vi ha strap-

pa - te al-le te-ne-bre del mon-do; fi-glie mi-e di-let-tis-si-me, con gio-ia pro-cla-ma-te-lo!

FROM THE GROUPS AND THE COMPANIES



INDONESIA

BUILDING BRIDGES OF UNITY, FRIENDSHIP AND PEACE

The Company of St. Ursula Indonesia held its annual meeting last July 4-9 at the Carmelite Retreat House in Bedugul, Bali. This meeting was special because of its international character. Among the participants were Maria Rosa Razza and Caterina Dalmasso (Kate), the president and former president far tradurre ex presidente of the Federation of the Secular Institute of St. Angela Merici, Doris Cordina from Malta, councillor of the Federation, Hélène de Beauregard from France, Josephine Liow and Ebba Fernandez from Singapore. The other participants were fifteen Ursulines coming from eight dioceses in Indonesia.

The 50th anniversary of the Federation commemorated last May 25th, and the presence of Ursulines from other countries, made our theme “Building Bridges” very relevant. We realized the importance of building bridges of communication leading to unity, friendship and peace with ourselves, with God, with nature and all people.

All the material in the handbook was in English and Indonesian. Our liturgy was prepared in three languages, Italian, English and Indonesian, so that everybody could participate. No conferences were given; everything was in the book. There was time for in depth reading, questions and answers, reflection and sharing. Doris from Malta translated Italian to English and vv; Sr. Emma translated English to

Indonesian and vv. We marvelled at the answers of Maria Razza and Kate. Both witnessed a profound knowledge of and love for St. Angela and her spirituality.

“Building Bridges” proved to be a very rich and inexhaustible theme. We attempted to highlight it from various aspects: from the writings of Maria Razza and Kate, from the life and the writings of our Mother Angela Merici, the Scriptures, the Constitutions of the Federation, the writings of Pope Benedict XVI, and others. Hélène wrote: *“Many thanks for all that you have done to make our meeting so fruitful in every aspect: spiritual, social, fraternal, ecclesial ... My two companions and I were very impressed by your Indonesian group and loved every moment of our being with them!”*



Indeed, we had no time to feel bored, because of the great variety of the program. We experienced a joyful INSIEME in celebrating life: studying, praying, reflecting, sharing, playing, dancing, singing, eating, laughing, crying together as true daughters of Mother Angela and beloveds of the Son of the Most High. And moreover, the food was excellent. The cook was no less than the priest himself. Fr. Joseph Gerungan O Carm not only celebrated the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation and gave homilies. He was also the cook, the one who served at table, the driver, the guide who introduced us to the Balinese culture. And he was a real joker too, who made us fill the air with laughter. The two Italians admitted that his spaghetti tasted better than what they usually eat in Italy!

On July 8th, two of our members, Maria Raring and Monica Uran, renewed their consecration for three years in a

simple but very beautiful and heart warming ceremony. It was a good occasion for all of us to renew our consecration to our ever faithful Lord. There is a time for everything: a time for welcoming and a time for saying good bye. We departed with the solemn promise to maintain the bridges that had been built and to build new ones with the Master bridge builder.



Sr. M. Emmanuel Gunanto, osu

The German sisters....

Our sister Margaret Quisner has done her perpetual consecration on the 6th August 2008 during a solemn Mass at St. Ansgar Church in Flensburg. For this occasion 14 persons were present...Fr. Hermann OSB from Ausburg; the Ecclesiastical Assistant; the Pastor of the whole parish of Flensburg; an Indian priest who was giving pastoral service in the parish during his holidays.

The German sisters With Doris



This same priest was then transferred to Milan to give some pastoral help also there after which he returned to Rome to finish his studies. The other guests were three ladies who form part of the Biblical group; two members of the Secular Institute of St. Bonifatius from Glucksburg; a Franciscan nun; a Lutheran Pastor who was a member of the Biblical group for several years; two friends from Kiel and finally Angela and Margaret our Ursuline secular sisters, After the ceremony

all the guests were invited for lunch in Margaret`s and Angela`s house. At 4.00p.m. they recited Vespers together with seven other persons of the Biblical group. It was an unforgettable day for both Margaret and Angela. May the Lord Jesus bless Margaret`s consecration to Him and may St. Angela be by their side as a beloved Mother and sister.

Doris Cordina - Malta



BANGLADESH

It has been some time now since I have been asking our sisters in Bangladesh to send us an article about them so that we publish it in our leaflet.

In this way, all of us, in different parts of the world, will get to know them better.

In order not to delay the matter further, I am going to write something about the group I am responsible for, in the Council of The Federation. Next time it will be their turn!

On the 14th January 2007, in the chapel of the Centre for Spirituality, Bethany Ashram, Nilu, Magdaleine and Mary Juno, have renewed their vows of consecration for three years, according to the charism of Saint Angela. Kate described this simple ceremony very well in the 2nd issue of 2007.

The three of them are teachers who teach in a small school in a very poor zone on the outskirts of the capital, Dhaka.

The little school, as it is called, is not recognized by the local authorities. It is situated in a nearly bare apartment, yet it offers a great opportunity to the children and adolescents who attend to learn academic subjects and character formation for six years.

At the end of the six years, they can sit for Government examinations and obtain a certificate which will enable them to follow professional courses or have a better opportunity to find a job.

Thanks to an anonymous benefactor, the school has about a hundred students of various ages and religions (Catholics, Muslims and Hindus) who come from very poor families.

Celyne is another teacher who works there; while a teacher from the state secondary school is responsible for overseeing and following the work of the personnel. Let us keep in mind that in Bangladesh only 50% of the children manage to attend school!

Nilu, Magdaleine and Mary Yuno also teach catechism and help lonely sick people. Magdaleine remotely helps in adoptions, a task which Father Arturo, a missionary of the PIME congregation, is responsible for.

Mary Juno works in a hostel for adolescents, Nilu is a liturgical animator in the parish of Saint Christina in Dhaka.

Since last July, she has gone back to form part of the group 'Gloria', and works as a lawyer defending Christian rights in the capital city. Father Francesco Rapacioli, Superior of the PIME congregation in Bangladesh, was nominated by the Council of The Federation to see to their spiritual formation, and calls them "the magnificent four".

They meet every week in each other's houses to pray, study and discuss the writings of Saint Angela, the Constitution and the letter of formation which I send them every month.

They also have monthly retreats which sometimes are also attended by some lay consecrated members.

Every year, during the month of May or June, they have spiritual exercises, after which they always send me a report translated in Italian by Sister Mable, a nun who lived for many years in Italy.

From what they write and from the emails I receive from Father Francesco, it is clear that they are very happy to belong to The Company.

They long to meet the other sisters and visit the Merician places, yet they are aware that this is not easy, since they know neither English nor Italian.

Who knows if perhaps one day their wish will come true! They always ask me to pray for their country where violence and rebellions are not opposed by the law.

In this, I intercede with you on their behalf.

Luciella

CAMEROUN

In August 2008, the group of Daughters of Saint Angela of Yaoundé gathered in the Trappist monastery for the annual spiritual exercises.



At the end of the exercises three aspirants received the medal of Saint Angela (in the photo opposite).

On September 3 we had elections.

The group elected a new leader: Marie Josephine Essomba, who has participated in several meetings and gatherings in France and in Italy (the fourth from the left).

Josephine Nzobo will be the secretary and Tarcille Akamba, the treasurer, will be charged with initial formation.

We entrust this group to your prayers and we thank you for the messages of sisterly support for our African companions that we received during the year.

The Company of France

NORTH EAST BRAZIL

*“You were
really happy!”*

This is what all those who saw the photos taken during the summer holidays in Brazil often repeated. Oh yes, Brazil does me a world of good.



Even this time it was an enriching experience and I had the opportunity to meet and greet many friendly persons.

...I came to know all the sisters of the North Eastern Company, in the State of Bahia. They gave me an exceptional welcome! And I could see for myself how good they are at

organizing meetings; the Company is made up of two groups who are 360 km apart; in fact one group is in Salvador (and is made up Herbene, Nilzete, Zelita, Avany...) and the other is in Jequié (where one finds



Edesia and Father Tom, the Assistant). Both groups love Saint Angela very dearly and long to live closely united with God. Those of them who were able to travel to Italy considered themselves very lucky and felt they were motivated even more to make Saint Angela and the Federation known to others. They meet once a month in two separate groups but meet together for the Spiritual Exercises and contribute towards the transport expenses of both groups.

I also visited the house where Nilzete gives shelter to about 120 newly born babies, children and adolescents. On entering the girls' house, one finds the name – plate which we had sent her and outside on the left there is a bakery which we helped her to build (consisting of two rooms and a store.).

... I was so happy to be able to live this experience and thank the Lord heartily for it.

Maria R.

TOGETHER WITH THE SLOVAK SISTERS

After spending the night of the 16th October 2008 at Casa S. Angela in Milano, where we were warmly welcomed by the Sisters, we caught the train to Malpensa the following morning to catch the plane for Vienna. An hour later, we flew to Kosice where Mária e Mária were waiting for us.

In the afternoon, we went sightseeing round the city and in the evening we were able to admire the characteristic fountain with many jets of water which change height and colour according to the rhythm of the music. This fountain is close to the Cathedral where we heard Mass and mentally translated the prayers. We were impressed by the solemn manner and entire participation of the congregation.



Mária e Mária took us to as many places of interest as we could see in such a short time. We saw gothic churches and beautiful works of art as well as a building complex where Mária would like to hold the meeting of the Federation. Above all, we were able to meet some of the Slovak Sisters. With them, we shared our experiences of leading our secular consecrated lives in the Company of Saint Ursula, the difficulties we meet with and what we intend to do in the future.

They lead a harder life than ours; they are spread out over a very large region and this makes meetings more difficult because of the long distances. Because of their economic situation, they cannot afford to do things on a grand scale and many of the Sisters lead a very poor life....

There are about twenty sisters in The Company of Slovakia. After listening to Mária speaking about our Secular

Institute on the radio, a number of people contacted us, but as this was something fairly recent and we will have to wait to see how things will develop.

On Sunday morning, while they carried on with their planned Council Meeting, we were praying for the Slovak Company with some of the Members in a simple room in front of The Blessed Sacrament, which the Ecclesiastical Assistant had brought to the house. The meeting ended with the Eucharistic Celebration, this was followed by a convivial dinner where we were able to taste their traditional dishes.

This was a joyful experience of real sisterly love: “....we must see the others as dear sisters”.

This experience helped us understand better and strengthen the bond that exists between sisters who live the same ideal “*being spouses of Christ*”; this also makes our prayers for this Company more fervent.

By means of this article we would like to thank heartily the Slovak Sisters for all they have done for us during those four days.

Maria, Lina, Rosa – Trento



A piece of internationality:
France, Ehtiopia, Malta, Eritrea,Germania,Slovachia



MADAGASCAR

**July 2008 :
Time of mercy for St
Angela's daughters**

Ten from our group in Madagascar met for a fortnight in Fianarantsoa. The three important moments of the meeting were:

A spiritual retirement at the Trappists' Monastery in Maromby with Father Albéric. He assisted us to think over the value of consecration through the vow of obedience, chastity and poverty.

Then, the representative of Tonina ROCCA'S Federation joined us at St Vincent de Paul's Scolasticat. She helped us to know ourselves, and to deepen the Secular Consecration according to our Constitution (Chapter III and IV).

Communication had not always been easy because of language. But Tonina solved it through gestures, mimics and sometimes through her country's dialects « Venetta » arousing smiling and laughter.

We were sorry for the physical missing of Luciella, who could not join us in Madagascar for health sake. But personally, I know her on the occasion of the bicentenary of St Angela's Canonisation in Rome in 2007. I felt her among us through my trough my prayer, and the great friendship during these meeting days.

The great delight, the summit of the meeting was Sunday July 13th 2008: Day of First Consecration of Gertrude and Annick and my Consecration for life.

Since Gertrude and Annick with their families had come from the Eastern coast of Madagascar, (Diocese of Farafangana) 300 km far from Fianarantsoa, and my family from Antananarivo, Capital of Madagascar, about 400km North far from Fianarantsoa, it is an opportunity for our another, to make exchange and to tighten friendship.

According to Malagasy customs and tradition, festive for a happy event begins at the eve. Moreover, an eve of prayers was a moment of intense collect of thoughts for all the assembly.



The Mass on Sunday, July 13th was said by Father Arcangelo BERETTA – Assistant of the group in Madagascar with four (4) co-sayers among those Father Attilio MOMBELLI. Co-sisters, Vincentian Seminarists and the families animated the liturgy.

All these moments were lived so strongly by everybody and all fully felt GOD'S mercy upon us. It was friendship, sharing of delights, common prayers within an atmosphere of family with religious and friends. I thank the Lord for the mercy upon my life consecration. I pray St Angela so that she would accompany me and back me to live that consecration with perseverance and joy.

On behalf of all Malagasy co-sisters, I express our indebtedness to the Federation which comforted us to go ahead to our vocation lane.

Some sincere thanks to the Come Company and mainly a particular thank to Tonina ROCCA, Ambassador of St. Angela.

Voahangy



INCOMING MAIL

From Burundi

Dearest sisters and friends of Saint Angela, I am writing to you about the testimony given by a certain Théofhile, one of the youngsters I met while visiting groups of young people I follow, in many different schools. My question was: *“who inspired you to follow your vocation?”*



Burundi: the first group

In his answer, he explained that when he was still very young his mother gave birth to twins. According to their traditions, the parents were expected to perform ceremonial rites so that the twins would be blessed with favours by God.

The paternal grandmother was expected to lead the ceremony but she refused to do so because she had quarrelled with her son. So they asked Cornelia's advice on what should be done and Cornelia happened to be the daughter of Saint Angela. The latter, in order to pacify the family, suggested that they substitute the old ceremony with prayers and rites which were far from easy to follow. She asked them to burn all the idols they had in the house. She also advised them to say the Rosary three times a day, in the morning, at noon and in the evening for a whole week. Cornelia herself led the prayers.

Some people threatened the parents saying that the twins would die if they did not follow the traditional rites. The father however kept his promise to Cornelia. The two babies are now grown ups and that decision has played an important role in the faith of Théophile's family.

When this daughter of Saint Angela learnt that he wanted to become a missionary she was overjoyed.

There was nothing extraordinary in the story, however it was a fact worth mentioning. To me, this testimony reflects the good work the Daughters of Saint Angela are doing by living among the people and by being ready to intervene when the Lord inspires them to do so.

Father Modesto

From Singapore

Dear Maria and Kate,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

We are already back here in Singapore. We had a very pleasant flight and we came home with wonderful memories of our time together. Praise God for His goodness!



**The Sisters of the Singapore
and the President**

This letter comes with thanksgiving in my heart for a Spirit-filled Assembly of Secular Ursulines from Italy, Malta, France, Indonesia and Singapore. What a joy it was for us all to be together in a spirit of fraternity and sharing the same vision under the umbrella of the Company of St Ursula!

Our Mother Angela said, “ Please go often, as you have time and opportunity, especially on feast days, and visit your dear daughters and sisters, and greet them, see how they are, comfort them, encourage them to stand firm in the life begun.” (Counsels 5, 1-2)

You have done all that. Thank you for visiting and greeting us. You have brought us joy, sharing with us many happy days – in prayer, in fellowship, in eating together, and you also shared our laughter and even our tears when it was time to say goodbye....till we meet again. And it is really our hope that you can come and grace the occasion when we make our perpetual vows on the Feast of St Angela on 27 January 2010.

Thank you for comforting us and encouraging us to hold on to Christ, our only Treasure, and to persevere in spite of times when we may feel a little isolated and lonely. Please know that your presence meant a great deal to us in Singapore as we are only two in number and the assembly in Bali was our first experience of meeting other Secular Ursulines. It was an eye-opening experience which has certainly enriched us. We have benefitted also from your clear explanations of Chapter Five of the Constitutions. You gave us a deeper insight and we are impressed by your wealth of knowledge and experience in the Company. You certainly spoke with great conviction and clarity.

Language proved to be no barrier as we all tried to “speak” with love through our sharing and through our smiles each time we met one another. Nevertheless, we do want to say a special ‘Thank you’ to Doris Cordina from Malta as she really did very well translating our English into Italian, thus allowing a smooth flow of ideas. Praise God for Doris!

One more thing is that we are happy to receive the newsletter that you send periodically. It helps us to remain connected with our sisters in other parts of the world. I

remember that the first time I received it I thanked God at once and said a little prayer for everyone. Thank you for not forgetting us here in Singapore! And now that we have met you in Bali, we know that you have us in your hearts. If God be willing, may He help us to form many Companies in Asia, including Singapore! We count on your prayers and you can be sure that we too pray for all our sisters throughout the world.

May God bless you abundantly!

12.07.2008

Yours in Christ, Josephine Liow



From Ethiopia

I would like to relate to you some of the customs in my country which is Ethiopia.

First of all I would like to inform you that on the 1st. September 2008 we shall be celebrating the Giubilee of the 2000 anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. Our calendar is different to that in Europe. There is the Gregorian calendar and the Oriental calendar.

We follow the Oriental calendar. Therefore we are eight years behind Europe. In our calendar there are 13 months which are called sunny months.

Pope Benedict the XVI will be sending a cardinal in Ethiopia to celebrate our Giubilee. Our country will be celebrating a great feast.

* Then we have a tradition of how to receive guests. All the guests are welcomed in various families as Abraham has welcomed the the

three angels in the desert and has given them a meal.

* Our flag is made up of three colours: the green which signifies hope; the yellow which signifies faith; and the red which signifies

love.

* In Ethiopia there is great devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary, the saints and the angels. We have also a great devotion for St.

Angela and we consider her as our second mother.

* We have also our own tradition in our attire.

I would like that all of you would come to Ethiopia one day to see our traditions and enjoy our faith.

Hanna

From Sanremo

I thank you for sending me the booklet “IN THE SAME CHARISM with responsibility, which is a wonderful present I enjoy receiving at home. It is a light which brightens up my way and I read it all and meditate. Let us all be united in Saint Angela who made us meet and get to know one another. I think of you and give you a sisterly hug.

Mirella, a friend

From Germany

*May Yahweh bless you and keep you.
May Yahweh let His face shine on you
and bring you peace .Nb. 6,24-25*

Thank you for the booklet of the Federation “IN THE SAME CHARISM with responsibility”.

I pray that the Lord will bless you and I send you my best regards.

Sr Clara Luig OSU German Federation.

From Lodi 19.04.2008

While the Pope was visiting the United States, the President of the Companies of Saint Ursula visited the house of Saint Angela in Castelfidardo Street in Lodi.

She was welcomed by Carla Ferioli who is the Leader responsible for the Company of Lodi. It was up to Giusy Natali to speak about the important events of the past.

Many persons, who are closely united to the Company and understand and appreciate the Merician Spirit, were present for the mass that was celebrated in the Company's chapel.

Now the visit is over, the problems are still there but it is astonishing how a new ray of faith and hope fills our heart and gives us the strength of the gospel to carry on with our daily life..

From New Hamburg – South Brazil

We are here united in New Hamburg for our formation meeting; we would like to let you know that we willingly submitted ourselves to the Company and the Federation.

We regularly receive the booklet IN THE SAME CHARISM with responsibility..... We find it interesting and very helpful. Thank you for everything. Best wishes and regards.

Ursula Ines

From United States of America

To connect with the Company of St. Ursula as it exists in the United States of America and reaches out to cyber-visitors, please visit us at www.companyofstursula.org.

Mary-Cabrini Durkin

SHE HAS LEFT US



Adelma with Mariarosa B.
in the transition of August 1995

Adelina Pettarìn

25/09/1922 - 3/07/2008

former directress of the
Company of Rome
former counselor and, for
many years, treasurer of
the Council of the
Federation
accompanying and
guiding the formation of
the group of Eritrean
sisters in Italy,
welcomed, during a long
illness, at the Casa
Sant'Angela of Padua

It was long, so long, this “Way of the Cross” traveled by sister Adelma, following the cross of her Lord! Now this “way” has reached its fulfillment. Now, finally, our sister is in God’s light, where all sufferings are soothed, where all our “why’s” find a true and satisfying answer; even the “why” of an existence so long distressed, not only on the physical level, but also in regard to full mental clarity.

Adelma’s life was precious and blessed because it was full of both simple and great gifts: the gift of a good and generous life, enriched and made precious by a clear, solid, uncomplicated faith; the gift of consecration in the family of the Daughters of St. Angela, which she loved and in which, with ecclesial and missionary participation, she poured out her good heart, that of a ready, wise, hospitable woman...

In this house and in this Company of Padua, Adelma found during all these years not only hospitality – almost by right, so to speak – but constant, attentive, and loving care.

Now for Adelma all has become clear; now for her all has become peace and fullness of life; now all is marked by happiness and joyous song. And let this thought, this certainty be a comfort also for us, for her dear ones, for all who have wished her well; stronger than bereavement, let it be an assurance of communion, of aid, of intercession.

(from the homily of Bishop Giuseppe Padovan of Padua)

***“Precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful ones.”***

Psalm 115

Nel mese di luglio 2008 Adelma Pettarin è tornata alla casa del Padre ed ha iniziato la nuova vita, senza tramonto.

My wish to offer a small sign of merited recognition, in the hope of understanding and making it understood that, in her life, Adelma was a great person, wise, always available and capable of teaching through understanding and through living.

I know that, in regard to the Federation she held the responsibility of councillor and of treasurer. Thus she involved herself in the organization of meetings, of gatherings and of the accompanying activities, besides welcoming into the eternal city those who needed orientation (presidents and councillors).

As a teacher, her work responsibilities involved her with school-aged children, recovered at the Policlinico Gemelli.

And what might one say about the Company of Rome?

For long years she was the leader and very dear sister.

The Daughters of Saint Angela of Eritrea, whom she described as “Africans,” present in Rome for work, testify that Adelma was their mamma in every aspect. The frequent meetings during formation took place in her house, and often their weekly day off (which they enjoyed as household workers), was spent with her in her home.

She long involved herself, with understandable difficulty, with each one of them, even regarding their wage contributions for the sake of an eventual pension.

The present four Eritrean daughters of Saint Angela still in Rome declare that they were consecrated, entering to take part in the Company, primarily with the help of God, but with the decisive and strong collaboration of Adelma.

Her assistance was never lacking, in prayer and even finances, and with priests too, especially foreigners. One of these succeeded in overcoming a profound crisis of faith, thanks to her prayer, to her advice and to frequent conversations over a long time.

It is sad to think that in her last years, passed in the Casa Sant’Angela at Padua, she had the misfortune of losing her mental faculties, but this did not diminish the personhood of a consecrated soul, faithful to her belief and to her deep Christian charity, always practiced according to the Rule of Saint Angela.

Gemma Menara – Roma

Attention ... special message to the readers of **IN THE SAME CHARISM...** with responsibility

This instrument of connection with one another has received a warm welcome, but it requires everyone's collaboration. A heartfelt thanks to those who already work together on it.

They serve us again and always: news from Companies and groups, photos, truly important announcements, suggestions and new ideas that help us live our vocation, our spirituality and our charism better.

The translators into English and French are very valuable. We are also looking for more people available for this service.

Write to us right away when you have something to communicate, because it takes quite a long time to prepare for the three booklets in Italian, French and English.

Make the effort to write immediately as much as you want to communicate and then **send it right away, simply**. Don't wait to make it too "brilliant," because with three issues per year (one of them devoted to the Federation meeting) you may find that there is no room for your articles, or that they are not included because they have arrived too late.

Be so good as to accept some modifications, considering that our connector reaches worldwide and cannot dwell too long on details.

Remember that what you write must be read by and must be helpful to the sisters and Companies of the whole world.

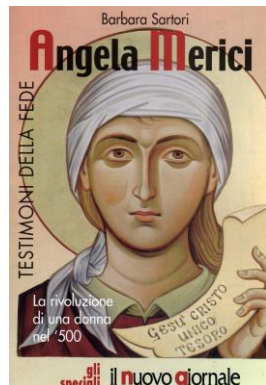
**And ... especially: short articles and short sentences
to help all and to allow room for others!**

Send to: kate16@alice.it

Reports

Latest News

The pamphlet **ANGELA MERICI** *The Revolution of a woman in the 15th Century* by Barbara Sartori has just been published as part of the series *Testimony of Faith, Special issues - the new newspaper* (size 12 x 17 in Italian) . This booklet is a correct and updated summary of the life and work of our Holy Mother and Foundress. This booklet is illustrated and is intended to spread and help make known the life and innovative teaching methods of Saint Angela.



The Federation felt it was its duty **to offer a new, yet simple and updated tool** which Companies, Groups, and Associate Members could use in the Parishes; in Group Meetings and friendly discussions (or whenever the occasion arose!) to make the greatness and holiness of Saint Angela known to others!

If you wish to order the pamphlet, please contact Esther Passamonti, Archivio Federazione, Casa Betania, Via S. Vittore, 49 20123 Milano tel. 02 48014358 e-mail: com.sami@tiscali.it

The following articles are also available

- **The printed edition of The Writings of Saint Angela Merici Trivulziana edition**
- **The comments on the Constitution by Caterina Dalmasso**
- **A life based on listening to the advice given by Saint Angela by Elisa Taralli**
- **An insight into the secular spirituality of Angela Merici by Alberto Margoni. In English**



Appointments

1-3 May 2009: Brescia - Meeting for leaders
Venue: Casa Sant'Angela



Brescia 26th April 2008; Reunion for leaders
Meeting with Mons. Luciano Monari

Rome 22-26th July 2009
International Meeting
at *The Salesianum* .

CMIS

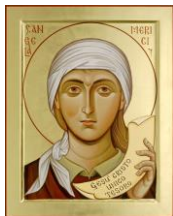
Meeting 2008

GUADALAJARA (MÉXICO)
19-23/11/2008

*We were all represented by our President for this
International Meeting for Secular Institutes*



As a follow up of this CMIS Meeting we will be visiting Silvia, who at the moment is the only lay secular Ursuline in Mexico. We will be communicating the details of this trip in our next issue.



CHI SIAMO

RADICI

STORIA

SPIRITUALITA'

DOVE SIAMO

SCRITTI

TESTIMONIANZE

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