

Happy Feast Day Sisters and Followers of St. Angela Merici,



As a young novice, I started my religious training with the Chatham Ursulines, who taught me about our foundress St. Angela Merici. Angela was inspired by the Holy Spirit to dedicate herself to the Lord and to give her life in service to the Church to help everyone grow closer to God. The original followers of St. Angela lived among the people they served.

I was greatly inspired by Angela's vision and determination in improving the lives of the women of her time. She strongly believed in education for young women, so they could better themselves. That vision is still alive today. She remains a role model for all who follow in her footsteps. Her desire of attending to the needs of her time and of the church has inspired me and the followers of the Ursuline Company to carry on her mission. Many have answered the call courageously and devoted their entire lives to St. Angela and her mission.

Some of them are deceased members of our Chatham Ursuline Order who have dedicated their lives to carry out her teachings and counsels. They also have inspired us to carry on.

Time and space seem not to hinder our different ways of responding to her call. We are like instruments, instruments that have come from all parts of the world, to carry on her good works and mission. St. Angela was an Italian religious educator and founder of the Ursulines whose deep prayer life and relationships with God bore the fruit of mystical encounters with the Lord. She was born on March 21, 1474, in Desenzano, a small town on the shore of Lake Garda, in Lombardy.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of November, 1535, Angela chose twelve virgins and laid the foundation of the order of the Ursulines in a small house near the church of St. Afra in Brescia. Having been Mother Superior of the newly-founded order for only five years, she died. Her body lies buried in the church of St. Afra at Brescia. She was beatified on April 30, 1768, by Pope Clement X111, and was canonized on May 24, 1807, by Pope Pius V11. Her feast day is celebrated on January 27.

The founding charism of our apostolic institutes was almost always in response to a lack, to a sort of poverty that challenges us today to once again pick up and heed the cry of the poor leading the way by encouraging and supporting initiatives, (e.g., Human Rights Violations, Human Trafficking Operations, Environment and Ecological Crisis, Migration, Refugees and Indigenous Rights, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights).

Our Christian vocations are ever-evolving. We are people of lifelong discernment, vigilant to God's call in our hearts and the signs of times. Angela is the best example of that vocation.

By remaining true to the charism of the past but living in the present we make the changes which have the life of the future embedded in them.---

Liguori Sullivan

As we share our joy in following St. Angela's footsteps, we share with the church and the world what we know of her holiness and her invitation to the call for each of us to make God more present in our world. So, the Chatham Ursulines' ministry involvement will continue, the charism of St. Angela will live on, and the Gospel will be proclaimed, with the help of the competent and generous followers of St. Angela Merici.

Rebecca Mak osu

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