



May 27, 2019

Dear Family, Friends and Companions,

In May of 1860, Mother Xavier Le Bihan, foundress of the Ursuline Sisters of Chatham, and 3 companions, arrived in the Chatham-Kent region in response to a request made by the Jesuit pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Chatham. Very soon after their arrival, the Sisters began a school for girls, and established long-standing and life-giving relationships with the people of Chatham-Kent. 159 years later, we, the Chatham Ursulines, find ourselves at a crossroad.

Over the past few years, we have been addressing the reality of our changing community composition, now 64 Sisters. We have done so in a spirit of mutual support and through many community gatherings, attentive to the collective spirit among us. We recognize and remain convinced that the Spirit continues to invite us each day to live life fully. This has brought us a deep sense of freedom, and at our 2017 General Chapter, in a spirit of prayer and discernment, the entire Ursuline Community made the decision to, in time, sell Villa Angela and to rent back living space. This decision also supported our collective desire to remain in the Chatham-Kent area, and continue to be active in the region long into the future.

True to our Spirit and Mission, it was our hope that an interested and potential purchaser, one who held very similar values and a care-driven core purpose, would come into our lives when the timing was right. It did not take long for the God of Surprises to bring Jarlette Health Services into our lives. In conversation, we soon recognized that we, the Ursulines, and Jarlette Health Services together, endeavor to follow in the footsteps of our founders, and remain committed to those we serve in a spirit of openness, devotion and compassion.

It is our hope that as we move closer to finalizing the proposed sale agreement, that we will continue to believe in the One who calls us to life each and every day, to offer our gifts and our service to those who cross our paths, and continue to respond to the needs of the times with new and innovative approaches.

As we prepare to let go of the ownership of Villa Angela, we believe that our call to be a compassionate presence and Gospel witness to the people where we live will continue to flourish. The freedom of this moment enables us to dream a new future for ourselves, as we continue to be present and active in the Chatham-Kent region, and wherever our Sisters may find themselves ministering.

Sincerely,

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