With Angela, to be artisans of Outrageous Hope in this, our Blessed and Broken World!

Company of companions, journeying together, concrete outreach to those most in need, active listening, dialogue, getting one’s hands dirty, living with outrageous hope and all done in a world demanding MORE, a MORE only done with the grace of God. This is the story of Angela and this is the story of the Ursulines.

I attended the Ursuline staffed St. Mary’s High School in Edmonton where the Ursuline sisters not only believed in me and caused me to believe in myself, but also instilled in me a critical and analytical lens to see the world with eyes of faith. Over the years in a myriad of contexts, Ursulines became colleagues, “kinred” spirits and close friends. Mothers: Mary Janet, Frances Carmel, Angela, Bernadette, St. Cyril, Celeste, Felicity, Gerald, St. John, Elizabeth (Liz), Irene, Gemma,
Frances, Mary T, Katie, Karen, Joan, Marion, Jean, Dolores, JeanAnn, Noreen and Eileen: strong, capable, competent, deeply caring, very human and compassionate women. Graced to lovingly contemplate the pierced heart of Jesus in the heart of wounded humanity, they continue to feel today an urgency to be in a new solidarity with the displaced and excluded: with migrants and refugees, climate change, overturning environmental protections, with human trafficking, with women in the Church and in the world and with families barely surviving due to the rampant rise in the cost of living.

Angela empowers those who follow her to denounce the injustices of the present moment and to announce a new alternative vision of what could be, a vision rooted in Gospel. The profound way God instilled in Angela the heart of an educator, continues to teach us the all-inclusive love of God, loving care of self and neighbour and care for our wounded Earth. Her life was one of mutuality, of endurance, resilience, determination intermixed with stubbornness, hospitality,
graciousness, openness, optimism, laughter and even joy in hardship and so too must ours be. As followers of Angela, whether we be Ursulines of Chatham, former members and former students, members of Seeds of Hope, the Companions of Saint Angela, the Comunidad Laical Santa Angela, we are called at this moment to be “pilgrims of hope”: intentionally living synodality with outrageous hope in this, our blessed and broken world.

I am proud to be an Ursuline “boy”, a companion of Angela!

Peter McKenna, SCJ

Saint Angela, patroness of the sick, the disabled and those grieving the loss of parents, pray for us and guide us.