

**Ursuline Education  
in the Spirit of  
St Angela Merici**

# Foreword



The apostolate of education has an important place in the history of the Ursulines of the Roman Union.

The spirit of our educational mission is based on scripture and the teachings of the Church, and, in particular, the Writings of St. Angela Merici, our foundress. It is important that all those involved in collaborating with the Ursulines in this ministry know and understand the spirit of St. Angela. In order to share these values found in Angela's Writings, the General Chapter of the Ursulines of the Roman Union 2013 made the following recommendation:

*To publish an Ursuline Education Brochure based on the writings of St. Angela and our rich tradition of Ursuline education, that would state the core values of Ursuline education, for example, Gospel Values, Care of the Individual, Leadership, Serviam, etc. It will highlight the international network of Ursuline schools and the unity of core values that we share.*

The work of fulfilling this recommendation has been carried out by a commission and I would like to thank the members, Sr. Moekti Gondosasmito (General Councillor), Sr. Lois Castillon (Central Province of the USA), Sr. Leone Pallisier (Province of Australia), Sr. Brigitte Monnier (Province of France/Belgium/Spain) and Ms. Julia Waters (England), for their hard work and commitment in producing this booklet.

This booklet is designed to be a resource in Ursuline education, explaining its values and spirit, for all those who are in relation with the schools of the Ursuline tradition and charism, pupils, students, teachers and parents. Angela is present among us, alive in our midst. May she continue to bless you all in the name of the Father, and of the Son of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

M. Cecilia Wang  
OSU Prioress General

# “Ursuline Education in the Spirit of St. Angela Merici”

## An Introduction

Over our years in Ursuline schools many of us have wished for more resources to help us. Ursuline educators and others have asked us, “What resources can you recommend for us? How can we learn more about St. Angela and St. Ursula? What are some of our core

values in the world of Ursuline Education? Tell us why the word ‘Serviam’ is so important for us?” During the last two years five of us have sought to answer these questions.

We have worked to create a new resource to help Ursuline school educators - teachers,

administrators, parents, students and others interested in exploring Roman Union Ursuline education in our schools around the world. Coming from five countries and four

continents our group skyped almost every month for two years. Then we came together in Rome for five days to work further. Recently we have met with our Roman Union Ursuline

leadership group who asked us to create a booklet. Now it is a reality to be shared! We are grateful to the following global colleagues who gave us valuable suggestions and encouragement in our task: Jane Finnerty, OSU (USA); Anne Leroy, OSU (Senegal); Ms. Brigitte Nuyken (Peru); Ms. Sumitra Phongsathorn (Thailand); and Mr. Zdenek

Navratil (Czech Republic).

This booklet is now printed in English and French. It can be found as a resource on the Ursuline Roman Union website, [www.ursulines-ur.org](http://www.ursulines-ur.org). The booklet is designed with

quotes, narratives and reflections under the headings of our core values. We hope it will enable you to deepen your understanding of Ursuline Education. There is also a digital

format. We encourage all who wish to adapt it for your school culture by translating it into your languages and adapting the photos for your own school. This booklet was

created using IndDesign software.

May St. Angela always be “in your midst, lending aid to your prayers”!

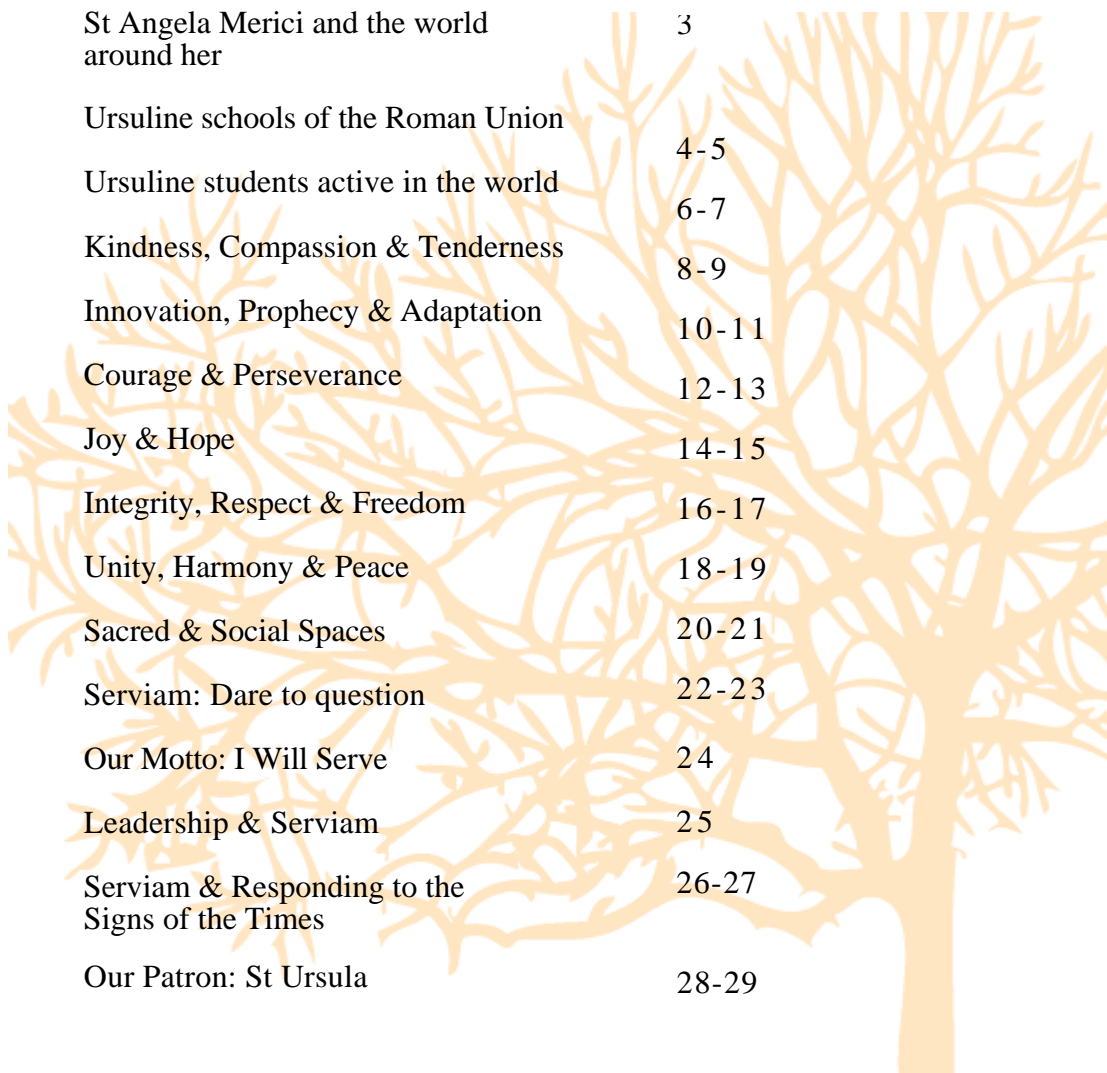
Peace and joy,

Lois Castillon, OSU (USA); Moekti Gondosasmitho, OSU (General Councillor Indonesia/Italy); Brigitte Monnier, OSU (France); Leone Pallisier, OSU (Australia); and Ms. Julia Waters (England)

June 2016

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# Ursuline Badge & History



Mère Marie de  
Saint-Jean Martin  
1876-1965  
Prioress General of  
the Roman Union of  
the Order of St.  
Ursula.

The Serviam badge was introduced in 1931 by  
Mère Marie de Saint-Jean Martin OSU *Prieure Générale (Prioress General)*



## The stars

The stars represent Ursa Minor, also known as the Little Bear, a constellation in the northern sky. In the badge these stars symbolise St Ursula.

## The cross

The Serviam badge bears a cross reminding us of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus was committed to serving the dignity and worth of others, even to death. The student wearing the badge should radiate in their life Christian joy and confidence because Christ is risen- Christ is alive!

## Green and silver

Green is the colour of hope. It is also the colour for ordinary time, and that reminds us that the ordinary days are filled with hope and possibility. Silver invites us to thread sincerity through all we do and hope for.

# Angela Merici: Global woman. A new way

Who was this Renaissance woman who started a **new** way for women to follow Christ while living among their neighbours, families, and those in need?



"Following this innovative presence of consecrated women in Angela's Italy, a variety of expressions of Angela's spirituality reached many people across the globe. A sense of community, a spirit of service, the blessing of growing close to Jesus as our treasure – these find a home wherever we find families, friends, alumni, students and sisterhoods of Angela Merici. As one student joyfully exclaimed, 'we are all Angela alive today!'

Angela Merici, born around 1470 in Desenzano, Italy, grew up in a farming family near Lake Garda. In 1535 she began the Ursulines in Brescia, Italy. A century later, after they spread to France, the Company of St Ursula formally began schools for girls. In over 36 countries today, Ursuline schools flourish. The spirit of St. Angela Merici is alive in the values of building community, respecting the individual, working for peace and Gospel justice, excellence in academics and 'cultivating the vine' with dynamic faith formation programmes."

*Lois Castillon OSU*

(a)



(b)

## St. Angela Merici and the world around her.

“Angela Merici lived during the Renaissance in Northern Italy on Lake Garda. She was a contemporary of Albrecht Durer and Nicholas Copernicus, of Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama, of Ignatius of Loyola and Teresa of Avila, of Martin Luther and Thomas Munzer...Angela founded her ‘Company of Saint Ursula,’ a community of women and girls who sought to combine a life dedicated to Christ according to the Evangelical Counsels of virginity, poverty and obedience with their lives in their families and their work places....This community was Angela’s answer to the needs of people in the 16th century.”

*Mary Cabrini Durkin*



# Ursuline Schools



## Africa

Cameroon  
Senegal  
South Africa

## South America

Brazil  
Chile  
Guyana  
Peru  
Venezuela

## Europe

Austria  
Belgium  
Croatia Czech  
Republic  
England  
France  
Greece  
Hungary  
Italy  
Poland  
Slovakia  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Ukraine





## of the Roman Union

### Asia

Indonesia  
Taiwan  
Thailand  
Timor-Leste



### North America

Mexico  
USA  
Barbados

### Australia

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To find out more visit our website  
[www.ursulines-ur.org](http://www.ursulines-ur.org)

# Ursuline students active in the world

Five hundred years ago Angela was a woman engaged wholeheartedly in her local community, Brescia in northern Italy. She listened to the Spirit echoing in her heart in times of prayer and solitude. She observed and pondered the social and political contexts of her town, church, country, and countries further afield.

She was attuned to the hopes and the cries of the people she met daily as she walked the streets and sat in the piazzas of her town and other towns she visited. In her imagination she explored new possibilities for living a consecrated life and in 1535 at the age of about 60 she gathered women and founded the Company of St Ursula, consecrated women living in their homes and serving in their local communities. She entrusted this Company to the lady governors at a time when men usually exercised such responsibility. Today, we might name Angela's engagement in society as prophetic.

If Angela was among us today, how might she name and respond to the local and global situations in which we find ourselves?

As people now entrusted with her charism it is our responsibility to bring imagination and courage to our times and be a transforming presence today as she was back in the 16th century.

What are the implications and challenges for leaders and teachers in our Ursuline schools? How might we nurture a prophetic imagination in our students, the future parents, teachers, professional people, political and business leaders whose lives and decisions will shape the future locally, nationally and globally.

In the pages that follow we will explore some of these issues drawing not only on Angela's legacy but on the leadership and writings of Pope Francis and the directions set by Vatican II.



## Participating in a revolution of Tenderness

Tenderness is at the heart of Angela's writings to her companions and lady governors. A revolution of tenderness begins in the hearts of tender hearted disciples...

## Let us listen to some of Angela's words

"Be kind and tender with your children... You will achieve more with gentleness and kindness, than by harsh and cutting rebukes, which must be kept only for cases of necessity, be used at the right time and place, taking account of the persons with whom you have to deal." *Second Counsel*

"Consider the respect you owe your daughters / students, for the more you respect them the more you will love them, and the more you love them the greater care you will have for them. Then it will be impossible for you not to have them all graven in your hearts night and day, each one individually, for true love acts in this way." *Introduction to the Counsels*

## Let us listen to some of Pope Francis' words

"...the Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness." *Evangelii Gaudium 88*

"Mercy is the very foundation of the Church's life... without a witness to mercy, life becomes fruitless and sterile, as if sequestered in a barren desert. The time has come for the Church to take up the joyful call to mercy once more. It is time to return to the basics and to bear the weaknesses and struggles of our brothers and sisters. Mercy is the force that reawakens us to new life and instils in us the courage to look to the future with hope."

*Misericordiae Yultus 10*

## Vatican II reminds us

"The future of humanity lies in the hands of those who are strong enough to provide coming generations with reasons for living and hoping." *Gaudium et Spes 31*

## Let us listen to the words of Jesus

"To the Jews who believed in him Jesus said: If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples; you will learn the truth, and the truth will make you free." *John 8:31*



(d)

# Kindness, Compassion & Tenderness

(e)



“We become fully  
human when we  
become more human,  
when we let God bring  
us beyond ourselves”

*Pope Francis Evangelii Gaudium 8*

St Angela invites us to love each and everyone. In her second counsel she asks us to be ‘kind and warm hearted.’

St Angela calls us to make a school a place where the quality of relationships are characterised by goodness, kindness and attentiveness to one another as signs of God’s love for every human being. The parable of the Good Samaritan is at the heart of Ursuline life.

St Angela said to her company if you see someone who is fainthearted, fearful and inclined to be discouraged, comfort her and encourage her. By remembering love is both fragile and creative everyone will keep searching as St Angela did for new ways of expressing love in daily life.

## Reflection

As teachers and parents how can we listen with greater kindness to young people?

How do we show compassion to young people?

How do we help them to move forward through difficult times?

What opportunities do we give young people to develop qualities of kindness, compassion and tenderness at home, at school and in the wider community?

How do we model kindness, compassion and tenderness to our children, to our students and to one another?



“Be attentive to the behaviour of those in your charge and be understanding so that you are aware of their needs spiritual and temporal.”

*Fourth Counsel,  
St Angela*



## St Angela speaks...

"If according to times and circumstances, the need arises to make new rules or do something differently, do it prudently and with good advice. And always let your principal recourse be to gather at the feet of Jesus Christ, and there, all of you, with all your daughters, to offer most fervent prayers. For in this way, without doubt, Jesus will be in your midst, and as a true and good master, he will enlighten and teach you what you have to do." *Last Legacy*

# Innovation, Prophecy & Adaptation

## Pope Francis speaks...

"... no one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society...An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it." *Evangelii Gaudium 183*

## Reflection

What are the contemporary issues in your country that leave people 'half dead' as in the story of the Good Samaritan?

Are there ways we can respond to the immediate needs of such people or situations?

Like the Samaritan in the story can we as a nation, in the family and as a community be moved with compassion?

Through our education in family and school, can we explore why such situations exist and think imaginatively about how a government, business, or the local community might address the causes of such social inequality?

## Jesus invites us:

"You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all our soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself" *Luke 10:27*

Jesus then shows what this love looks like by sharing a story, the story of the Good Samaritan.



# Courage & Perseverance

"Act, move, believe, strive, hope, cry out to him with all your heart, for without doubt you will see marvellous things, if you direct everything to the praise and glory of his Majesty and the good of souls." *Counsels Prologue*

Jesus has given his example of how to have courage and perseverance... his life, his passion until his death and his resurrection.



## Reflection

In what ways do we encourage our students to 'read the signs of our times' heightening their awareness of the injustices around us and encouraging them to respond in whatever manner they can?

In our world today what are the difficult questions we have to address in order for people to flourish and have life in abundance?



## St Angela says

"See that you strive with all your might to remain as you are called by God, and to seek and desire all the ways and means necessary to persevere and make progress to the very end. For it is not enough to begin, if one does not also persevere."

*Rule Prologue*

"We can have courage and perseverance when we are united in God...

Have hope and firm faith in God, for he will help you in everything. Pray to him, humble yourselves under his great power."

*Counsels Prologue*

## Pope Francis' invitation ...

"Let us open our eyes and see the misery of the world, the wounds of our brothers and sisters who are denied their dignity, and let us recognise that we are compelled to heed their cry for help!

May we reach out to them and support them so they can feel the warmth of our presence, our friendship, and our fraternity! May their cry become our own, and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that too often reign supreme and mask our hypocrisy and egoism!"

*Misericordiae Vultus 15*



(j)

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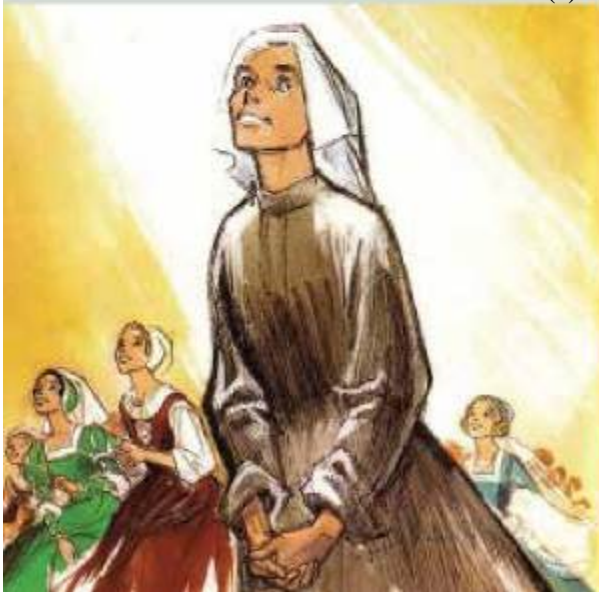
# Joy & Hope

(k)



"Persevere faithfully and joyfully in the work you have begun." *Last Legacy*

(l)



St Angela says

"Let her be joyful and always full of charity and faith, and hope in God!"

*Rule 9/11*

Our Ursuline schools are alive with St Angela's spirit of joy and hope. The richness of our Ursuline tradition is found in the quality of exchanges between teachers and students, valued for each one's unique personhood. On a daily basis, in the classroom and in other moments, the teachers and staff members show respect and joyous love and encouragement for each one's growth.

"You will not cease to prune this vine which has been entrusted to you. And after that, leave it to God; he will do marvellous things in his own time, and when it pleases him."

*8th Counsel*

## Pope Francis speaks

"No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, he makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than his life, which impels us onwards."

"Christians should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. It is not by proselytizing that the Church grows, but by attraction."

*Evangelii Gaudium 3 & 14*

## Reflection

The first mission of Angela was to comfort and console Catarina Patengola, a friend who was grieving the loss of her husband and son.

How do we help people to be more alive and to love life, to keep hope and joy when they experience failure or difficulties?

Which competencies can we develop to train the youth for building their lives on gospel values?

As teachers and parents, how can we encourage young people while studying?

How and when can they share their Christian hope and joy?

How do we train people to grow with a positive vision of the world and to discern the seeds of life in it?

How do we help students develop their creative abilities to make the world more beautiful and sustainable for everyone?



(m)

## Jesus comforts us

"Get up, and do not be afraid."

*Matthew 17:7*

"May my joy be in you and may your joy be complete."

*John 15:11*

"In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect." *Peter 3:15*



# Integrity, Respect & Freedom

According to our tradition the emphasis of Ursuline Education is to help each individual person to live life to the full. This is to open up, discover who each and everyone of us is, and discover every person is beautiful. This person has integrity.

Ursuline Education invites young people to challenge injustices and to be instruments of God's work helping those in need.

“God has given free will to everyone, and wants to force no one, but only proposes, invites and counsels.”

*Third Legacy, St Angela*

Pope Francis  
encourages us

“Each individual  
Christian and  
every community  
is called to be an  
instrument of God  
for the liberation  
and promotion of  
the poor, and for  
enabling them to  
be fully a part of  
society.”

*Evangelii Gaudium 187*

"I have come so that they may  
have life and have it to the full."

*John 10:10*

### Reflection

What aspects in your life do  
you need to develop in order to  
become fully alive?

How can we help our students  
to grow and become more fully  
alive?

How do we as family and a  
community work towards the  
common good of all?



(c)

# Unity, Harmony & Peace

Our world cries for reconciliation and peace. We also see this need in our school halls, classrooms, on the playgrounds and among parent gatherings. As we look at the beautiful tree image on this page we realise it needs nurturing and care to grow and bring forth its leaves. In our Ursuline educational communities, we can offer opportunities for dialogue and moments of reconciliation. In turn we can bring the fruits of the Spirit into our troubled world as we reach out to others as Angela did in her world.

“Be bound to one another by the bond of charity, esteeming each other, helping each other, bearing with each other...”

*Last Counsel, St Angela*

In his letter to the Galatians Paul tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

*Galatians 5:22*

## Reflection

Which fruits of the spirit are most evident in our family, in our school community?

Are there ways we can encourage students and staff to nurture these fruits?

How do we help people feel welcomed and valued in our community?

How do we welcome diversity in our families, in our schools, in our world?



Pope Francis shares:

“Communion  
means  
common-union,  
we form a great  
family, where  
every  
member is  
helped and  
sustained by  
the others.”

*General Audience.  
30th October 2013*

# Sacred & Social Spaces in Ursuline Schools.



In her writings Angela uses the words "Siate piazzevole" which can be translated as be kind, be gracious; be like a "piazza". "Piazzas" abounded in Brescia. Some small, others large. Many had fountains where people came for water. "Piazzas" were the social spaces, places where people gathered. Gathered to share news, to catch up on friends, to sit and rest, just to be with each other, young and old. They were places that invited hospitality. All were welcome in this public space.

Schools need such spaces. Places where students can be together in a more informal setting, where they can encounter each other and nurture strong, trusting relationships as they share the ordinary happenings in their lives.

(9)



Schools also need some quiet places, places where students can withdraw and listen to the Spirit echoing in the depths of their being. Angela had such a space for her daughters, an oratory. This space was filled with the images of strong women, women who could be models for these young women participating in the foundation of a new expression of consecrated life. The women in her murals were strong, bright, self-confident, mature, educated, single. Ursula, Elizabeth, Paula, Eustochium and Catherine of Alexandria were the saints Angela chose to encourage her daughters.

These two reflections help us to touch the spirit and the soul of Angela and how she continues to speak to us today... They draw on two spaces in Brescia — the piazzas that were the heart of social life and the oratory, that sacred space where Angela and her companions gathered regularly...

## Reflections

What are the 'piazzas' in our school community?

Do they reflect the warmth and hospitality that Angela and her companions would have experienced in Brescia?

We need both social and sacred spaces in our lives...

One to nourish our relationship with God, the mystery at the heart of our being, and the other to draw us more deeply into relationship with each other, community.



(n)

# Serviam: Daring to question

## Participating in a revolution of Mercy and Justice

### Let us listen to some of Pope Francis' words

"Just as the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say "thou shalt not" to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality. Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless. As a consequence, masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape." *Evangelii Gaudium 53*

### Jesus tells us

'How blessed are the the poor in spirit: the kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed are the gentle: they shall have the earth as inheritance. Blessed are those who mourn: they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice: they shall have their fill. Blessed are the merciful: they shall have mercy shown them. Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognised as children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of justice: the kingdom of God is theirs.'

*Matthew 5:3-10*



(s)

Throughout the Gospel there is a constant call to embrace those on the margins of society.

A revolution of mercy and justice begins when ordinary people dare to question...

Helder Camara, Archbishop in Brazil, once said ‘When I feed the poor they call me a saint, but when I ask why the poor are hungry they call me a communist.’

Staff and students from St Ursula’s Toowoomba volunteering with Rosies, a community reaching out to those most abandoned offering them experience of community and belonging.



(t)

## Reflection

When we look at our contemporary society what are the questions we would like to ask that might bring mercy and justice to those among us who are suffering?

As educators how might we heighten the consciousness of our students so that in the years ahead when they are in positions of responsibility or leadership in family, business, politics, they might ask questions that evoke change and be part of it?

# Our Motto: Serviam, I will Serve

Throughout his life Jesus served the community. In the routines of daily life he was there to listen, to respond, to heal, to encourage, to forgive, to comfort, to challenge. On the final night Jesus shared a meal with his disciples. In this meal he entrusts himself to us in the sharing of blessed bread and wine. In Luke's gospel he tells the disciples during the meal, "I am among you as one who serves!" *Luke 22:27*

In John's gospel, there is no bread and wine but the routine gesture of washing the feet of disciples, usually a task of the slaves of the household. At the conclusion of this Jesus says:

"Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly, so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you." *John 13:13-15*

## Reflection

How are we there for others in our local, national and international communities?

How do we as a school welcome students into our community and inspire them to live their motto Serviam in the daily routines of life?

Jesus washes the feet of his disciples



(u)

# Leadership and Serviam

Throughout her writings Angela encourages her leaders and daughters to nurture relationships built on trust, respect, and really knowing each other in their strengths and their weakness.

Such trustworthy relationships are essential in any community which is entrusted with the responsibility of educating children and young adults.

A high trust culture in a school enables both staff and students to flourish as it encourages a sharing of wisdom without fear of criticism or rebuke. And bringing diversity of experience and wisdom broadens and enriches the decision making within a community. In sharing wisdom we are living Serviam.

## Reflection

How do we nurture such trust?

What are the opportunities within your school community for the staff to nurture and share faith?

Name the ways we nourish the heart and spirit of our students?

What are some structures or routines that strengthen the relationships between:

- Staff and staff?
- Staff and students?
- Students and students?
- School and parents?

A heart nourished by Spirit and Word, enables staff and students to look at the situations in the school and in the wider community with different eyes, the eyes of a disciple. Such leadership is counter cultural in a world where so many decisions are made for economic reasons.

On many occasions Pope Francis reminds us that we are a global community not a global economy and urges leaders to look at the people affected by decisions not just the 'bottom line'.

By nourishing our heart and spirit in quiet contemplation, pondering scripture, creating opportunities to share faith with each other. In the gospel Jesus tells us:

*If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples; you will learn the truth, and the truth will make you free.*

*John 8:31*

*An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave the earth somehow better than we found it.'*

*Evangelii Gaudium 183*

# Serviam & Responding to the Signs of the Times

In Matthew's gospel Jesus reminds the disciples:

"Come, you whom my father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me."

*Matthew 25*



(a1)

As disciples on mission and as students of Ursulines schools with the motto, Serviam: I will serve, we are compelled to take our role in the world seriously.

The 'signs of the times' are ever changing:

- advances in technology
- the instability of governments in various places within the world
- the degradation of so much of our natural environment
- the changing nature of human relationships with digital technology
- global inequalities
- the fear of the other which is promoted in many countries as we seek ways to respond with open hearts and open borders to the many refugees seeking refuge at this time in our global history.

The world we and our students will be living in within just 10 years will be vastly different from today.

So the challenge for schools today is to educate in such a way that we are preparing students to question many of the above situations and structures and to imagine new ways of creating a more just and equitable world. As Einstein reminds us: No problem can be solved with the same thinking or level of consciousness that created it. So stirring the imagination and encouraging creativity in all areas of learning and school life is essential if our students are to live their Serviam motto into the future.

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In many schools students involved in outreach programmes in the local community have their eyes opened to the poverty so often hidden in communities. Such an experience can prompt different questions to be asked in the various areas of learning, and a heart of mercy can be nurtured in these face to face encounters. Students experience first hand the 'signs of the times'.

Our hope is in years to come we will continue to see Ursuline ex-students taking a stand for justice and mercy in a great variety of situations, in their local communities and in countries throughout the world.

A final word from Pope Francis, our Leader:

"The Church is commissioned to announce the mercy of God, the beating heart of the Gospel, which in its own way must penetrate the heart and mind of each person."

*Misericordiae Vultus 12*

Ursuline students in the spirit of Angela and Serviam are sent forth to be the Beating Heart of the Gospel...

(b1)

## Pope Francis reminds us

"Our world is being torn apart by wars and violence, and wounded by widespread individualism which divides human beings, setting them against one another as they pursue their own well being ... I ask Christians in communities throughout the world to offer a radiant and attractive witness to fraternal communion."

*Evangelii Gaudium 99*

## Reflection

**Name the 'signs of the times' in your country?**

**In what ways are students encouraged to engage in these issues?**

**Are teachers aware of ways to address these questions and issues in their teaching?**



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## OUR PATRON St Ursula

St Ursula is symbolised by the star constellation Ursa Minor. In his 1933 address to Ursuline students Pope Pius XI says, ‘this field of stars in heraldic language symbolises, heights, elevation, the zenith. It is towards these heights we must always aspire.... These stars are not arranged by chance...

We can recognise the Little Bear, which recalls the patron saint of your Mothers, St Ursula, the great saint and martyr, and she reminds us of purity, of struggle, and effort. Like Ursula let these stars guide us in our life’s pilgrimage so that like her we can be courageous in the difficult moments.





According to legend, around the 4th or 5th century (dates uncertain), St. Ursula, daughter of a king in ancient Britain, was sought in marriage by a pagan prince, but she promised fidelity to Christ. She asked for a three-year delay to make a pilgrimage to Rome with a number of other young women. On the way back, St. Ursula and her companions were killed by the barbarians in Cologne, Germany, for resisting their demands. The Church of St. Ursula in Cologne stands over the place where their bodies were discovered many years later.

The story of St. Ursula has been painted by a number of artists for example, Carpaccio and Moretto in Italy, and Hans Memling in Belgium. We celebrate the feast of St. Ursula, patroness of the Ursuline Order on October 21st. The initials OSU after Ursuline Sisters' names stand for "Order of St. Ursula".

St. Ursula, we pray for the courage, bravery, and loyalty you had in following God's call in your life. St. Ursula, pray for us.



(w)

# Appendix

## Image gallery

Title page: Joao Batista, Piauí, Brazil

- (a) Sister Mary Jane Robertshaw  
OSU of New Rochelle, New York,  
USA
- (b) Anna Rosa Porro OSU
- (c) Margaret Beaudette SC,  
of New York, USA
- (d) Brescia House School,  
Bryanston, South Africa
- (e) Silver Surfers Club, Ursuline  
High School, Wimbledon, England
- (f) Painting of St  
Angela, Huet Germana
- (g) St Angela - Artist: E. Piccolruaz.  
St Ursula's Kingsgrove, Australia
- (h) Fundação Santa Ângela  
Pedro II, Brazil
- (i) Ursuline of the  
Roman Union Cross
- (j) St Angela Ursuline Convent  
Via Nomentana 34, Rome, Italy.  
Artist: Barnaba Porro (2000)



## Image gallery

- (k) Szkola Podstawowa Krakow, Poland
- (l) Ste Angele from Alain d'Orange Edition du Signe
- (m) St Angela Merici School, Bamuyanga, Cameroon
- (n) St Ursula with Two Angels and a Donor by Benozzo Gozzoli c.1455-60  
now in National Gallery of Art Washington DC, USA
- (o) Sefhare, Botswana
- (p) Sunrise over Lake Garda, Italy, 2015
- (q) Ursuline High School, Wimbledon, England
- (r) (r1)& (r2) St Angela Brescia House, Bryanston,  
South Africa
- (s) Ursuline Academy of Dallas, Texas, USA
- (t) St Ursula's Toowoomba, Australia
- (u) Jesus washes the feet of his disciples, Marko Rupnik
- (v) Sculpture of St Ursula, Hendrick Douverman
- (w) St Ursula, the Patron Saint of Gozo, Malta
- (x) St Angela Stained Glass Window, Cleveland, Ohio, USA
- (y) Images from page 3-4
  - (i) Zespół Szkół Urszulanek Wrocław Poland
  - (ii) Fundação Santa Angela Pedro II Brazil
  - (iii) Goth Anniversary Vasudevi Thailand
- (a1) Colégio Santa Úrsula Ribeirão Preto, Brazil
- (b1) Colégio Santa Úrsula Ribeirão Preto, Brazil

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(r2)

St Angela, watch over the days of our  
youth St Ursula, protect our future.