

SAINT ANGELA AND SAINT URSULA A NETWORK FOR AN INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF STUDIES ON LINE

Rough Draft of the Project

The International Center of Studies “Saint Angela and Saint Ursula” is set up as a cultural system able to collect on line a complex of systems already in operation at various levels in society.

In particular:

- The different families of consecrated life that can be identified as within the charism of Saint Angela with the objective of becoming a mediated point of reference that gives visibility to the initiatives launched by the Ursulines of the world
- The research that has highlighted and continues to highlight the essential contribution offered by Saint Angela Merici, by the Company of Saint Ursula, and by Ursuline religious toward the emancipation of women according to the good news of the Gospel
- The academic world which, in these latter years, has dedicated a great deal of study to the “History of Women” beginning with the inspiration of women religious
- Society, understood as the beneficiary of the spiritual and social activities that the Ursuline world offers daily
- The associations, societies, and movements that are active in the promotion and the preservation of the dignity of women, whether it be in the socio-cultural or ecclesial context
- The world of the school and of education, considered the particular pedagogical vocation of Ursuline religious educators, with special attention to the promotion of dialogue between educators and the young, and among these groups and families
- The institutions that have as their objective supporting the witness of lay Christians in the world with their own pedagogical and educational contribution in the everydayness of life and of relationships
- The community of “surfers,” that is, those who frequently navigate the web

The activities of the Center can be schematically divided into three intersecting “blocks”: one “internal” to the Ursuline world; another “external,” referring to the society in which we live; and a third that we will call a “block of research” with reference to the Ursuline world on the one hand, and to the academic world on the other.



Regarding the first “block,” the Center is proposed in the first place as a kind of think tank regarding the spiritual, educational, pastoral, and social problems experienced by Ursulines, secular and religious, on the various continents.

Then, as these varied experiences are diffused as publications and information placed on the internet, everyone can draw profit from them. One type of multinational benefit of the diverse Ursuline families is being able to put in common what is best and productive so that others can become part of it.

The spirit could be that of not wasting time and energy doing something that is already done by others, but rather of utilizing the experiences of others with the same charism in order to enhance it and place it back in circulation.

Regarding the second “block,” that is, the “external” block, the site proposes to become above all a virtual “window” on the variegated activities of this world. Whoever connects to it would see what is planned and what has been done by the various (Ursuline) families. Furthermore, one could find links and email addresses of the Ursulines in every country where they are present.

We should also discuss the separate area that we have designated “research.” The Center is proposed in fact as an occasion of stimulus and synthesis, supplying indispensable instruments for research and for consultation and the materials to sustain these various initiatives and works begun in various and unique situations. It is obvious that particular attention should be paid to the spiritual heritage of Saint Angela expressed by the rich and variegated Ursuline world. Therefore, publications and research of various kinds done both in Italy and outside of Italy related to Saint Angela Merici and her spiritual “ancestors,” Saint Ursula and Saint Catherine of Alexandria, etc., cultural and social, will be collected, catalogued, and promulgated on line. Special attention will also be given to examples of great holiness or of particular prominence that have developed in the Ursuline world.

A supporting subject in this research will also be “contemporaneity”, that is, the Ursuline families refounded or newly founded in the 19th and 20th centuries, considered in their own individuality but also in their complementarity.

The work of the Center, moreover, will be that of coordinating reports from the academic world, acting as a collection point for research pertaining to that particular aspect of the emancipation of women that arose from religious inspiration, given the importance of Angela Merici and her works within the greater context of the “History of Women.”



Objectives:

1. Create an international Ursuline databank
 - a. Already in operation by the various congregations and institutions worldwide
 - b. Contributions (of publications, apostolates, research) that the various congregations publish
 - c. Servants of God, Blessed, and Saints of the various companies and congregations, in relationship to the charism of Saint Angela
 - d. A web page that collects the links of all the Ursuline sites
 - e. A page to facilitate contact among the various companies and congregations, with all email addresses
2. Found a periodical on line in six languages (Italian, English, French, German, Spanish, and Portuguese) that collects and makes known summaries of the research that come into the Center and that will be made available on the web
3. Publish on line the principal sources, both documents and biographies (Nazari, Gondi, Faino, Doneda) pertaining to Saint Angela. Of particular interest will be the edition of the "Second Book of the Company"
4. Collect and put on line iconographic and multimedia material pertaining to the themes of interest to the Center
5. Set up and keep updated an international bibliographical catalog
6. Create a databank of all university faculty and of all researchers who have dealt with or continue to deal with:
 - a. The history of the emancipation of women from social and religious standpoints
 - b. How the spiritual heritage of Saint Angela has been enflashed over the centuries
 - c. Pertinent symbols of the Merician world (Saint Ursula and Saint Catherine of Alexandria)
 - d. Ursuline education
 - e. Condition of woman in the contemporary world
7. Foster contact between the Companies/Institutes and researchers
8. Promote research and international conventions

