

Heartbeats

The Company of St. Angela in the 21st Century

Vol. 2, No. 10

December 2017

This month our theme is “oneness with creation” as we continue to ponder Angela’s contemplative spirit.

There is a story told of the boat people of Southeast Asia, the Moken. They have few possessions, only carrying what they need in their small boats. Interestingly, they have no word in their vocabulary for “worry.” But when the tsunami came, they were attentive and watchful of the water; they saw the sea first come high on the beach and then recede far out. They remembered their stories, their myths of what happens to the seas, and so took their boats into deep water and survived the tsunami. The local fishermen did not survive; their boats were destroyed. They did not watch, they were not attentive.

“Be attentive with a great and longing heart...”

In January 2007, Marie Celine Miranda, OSU, spoke to the sisters in the eastern province: “Angela Merici and the New Story.” She reminded all present that we are all connected, crossing the boundary of time and space. Angela is in our midst; this is her promise to the company. Traits of Angela’s personality and spirit are present and available to us, to respond appropriately as we listen to the signs of our times.

Angela early in life was brought up on a farm. She was in touch with the rhythms of nature; she lived in surroundings where planting and harvesting depend on conditions of soil and sun, wind, temperature and moisture. Look at her writings and notice images of seeds, plantings, thorny paths becoming covered with flowers, of shepherds and shepherdesses. She speaks of air, earth, water, stars, sometimes as an ally, sometimes as a hostile judge. She speaks of light and shadow. Can we become attentive and invest time to resonate as Angela did in her vineyard to the rhythms of nature? To become more in tune with nature has a double effect. We gradually learn more clearly and more humbly to see our rightful place in the universe that has taken billions of years to evolve and has evolved into us, each of us. As we grow in understanding of our oneness with the cosmos, we can expect to grow in our sense of responsibility for it.



Mary Jane Robertshaw, OSU

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'*:

- ❖ The world is a gift we have freely received and must share with others. Environment is “on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next.” What kind of world do we want to hand on to those who come after us, to children who are growing up?” (#124,159,160)
- ❖ The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. There is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person’s face. The ideal is...to discover God in all things. (#223)
- ❖ Pope Francis calls for a revolution of tenderness, a revolution of the heart. This tenderness of solidarity should extend not only to the earth’s poor, but to the earth itself. (Ted Talk, April 2017)



LIVING SIMPLY

How can we:

- create a space of clarity and attentiveness
- give meaning and substance in our daily lives
- return to a simplicity that honors and gives space for the sacred?

Some practices:

- Give attention to our simple daily activities .
- Take an honest inventory of our life. What is taking up our time and psychic space?
- Let nature teach. Look for ways to attune to a natural simplicity of life

Ponder:

- Do we need more in our lives than love?
- Simplicity compels a return – a seeing through and within, rather than looking somewhere else.
- Attention and genuine response -awe, gratitude, appreciation and respect help transform any starkness into rich human experiences.

Spiritual Ecology: 10 Practices to Reawaken the Sacred in Everyday

*Re-read Angela's Counsels.
Ponder her desire for unity and harmony
with the call of Pope Francis and the New Story*

REMEMBERING DOROTHY KAZEL, OSU 1939-1980

Sr. Dorothy Kazel, OSU, an Ursuline from Cleveland, was one of the four churchwomen murdered in El Salvador on December 2, 1980.

During the civil war in 1977 she wrote: “I cannot leave Salvador especially now...I am committed to the persecuted church here.”

Cynthia Bourgeault reflects on Teilhard’s “*harnessing the energy of love*” as a call to step out of the boat onto the ocean of love and to discover – all our fears and skepticism to the contrary – that the water does hold us up.”

Dorothy stepped out of the boat, stayed the course, planting seeds of hope for the sake of God’s people and hers in El Salvador.

Her memory and deeds live on.

