

Heart ♥ to ♥ Heart



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Our March issue of Heart to Heart continues our reflective Lenten focus. With the help of a variety of resources, we ponder “St. Angela and the Paschal Mystery.”

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Angela’s life was centered on Jesus Christ, on his never-ending presence through his death and resurrection. Angela’s first biographers reveal how she lived her experience of the paschal mystery. She went to the Holy Land and prayed for a long time on Mount Calvary; her two pilgrimages to Varallo enabled her to visit the newly erected chapels depicting Christ’s passion. She had scenes of the passion painted on the walls of the oratory where she gathered her first daughters. It is therefore not surprising that her spirituality is mirrored in her writings.

She asks Jesus to *forgive the sins* of her family and friends, *and of the whole world by his most sacred passion*. She suffers because of the blindness of *those poor creatures who do not know him and do not care*

to be partakers in his most sacred passion (cf Rule 5, 24-25, 32). It is through love of the passion of Jesus Christ that her leaders are requested to put her counsels into practice (cf Counsels, Prologue 20; Testament, Prologue 25).

At the same time, it is the risen and glorious Christ who illuminates Angela’s spirituality. It is he who is always *in our midst*. He is our *refuge*, our *only hope*, our *life*, forever alive. He is *truth*, enlightening us. He *teaches* us through his *Word* which we need to *keep within ourselves*, and through his example which we need to follow. Most of all, he is the One *who loves us all*.

(Adapted from a booklet prepared by the Roman Union Ursulines to celebrate the 200th anniversary of St. Angela’s canonization)

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To what extent are my faithfulness to Christ and my bonds with others rooted in Christ’s passion?



Does my Easter joy consist in being aware of Christ present, living in our midst, inviting us to search for him, personally and in community?

“...you will find no other recourse than to take refuge at the feet of Jesus Christ.”

(St. Angela, 7th Counsel)

“Penance is a great act of love which is sorely needed today in our fractured world. As for Angela, penance as love takes us to the foot of the Cross and unites us with the love and reconciliation of Jesus. At the foot of the Cross, one is led to see the love of Jesus for the world.”

(From *Lover of Us All* by Martha Buser, OSU)



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**St. Angela, help me to understand, as you did, the deep love
with which Christ offered his life for me and for the world.**

**May the living presence of the Risen Jesus
be for me a renewed call to live reconciled with him
and with all my brothers and sisters. Amen.**

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Lent, A Time of Hope

“I would like to suggest Lent to you as your personal journey of hope. Indeed, this prospect is immediately evident if we consider that Lent was instituted in the Church as a time of preparation for Easter and that, therefore, the whole meaning of this forty-day period is illuminated by the Paschal Mystery toward which it is directed. We can imagine the risen Jesus who calls us to come out of our darkness, and so we set ourselves on the path toward the One who is Light. Lent is a journey toward the risen Jesus; it is a period of repentance, also of mortification, not as an end but rather aimed at enabling us to rise with Christ, to renew our baptismal identity, that is, to be born anew ‘of the Spirit,’ by the love of God. This is why Lent is, by nature, a time of hope.”

(Excerpted from *On Hope* by Pope Francis)

Prayer on the Lenten Journey

(Jane Deren)

We travel through
Deserts and despair
As we focus on
How Christ was crucified,
And is crucified
In the world today.

We agree to make
This journey, this pilgrimage,
And to leave life as usual,
Business as usual,
To pay attention,
To be present
To pain and suffering.

The journey to the
Light of Easter
Can only go this way.

We choose to learn
This hard truth,
To accept the ashes,
To witness the darkness,
To walk the way of the Cross
As it happens in our world.

Let us journey together,
Open to the world,
So we may be renewed
And help bring to all
The renewal Of Resurrection.

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