

Heart ♥ to ♥ Heart



Vol. 8, No. 5

May 2023

Recent issues of Heart to Heart have focused on “An Angela Response to the Realities of Our Times.” Areas explored have included the war in Ukraine, violence, homelessness and hunger, immigration, and climate change. For this May issue, readers were invited to reflect on these realities as they were presented in Heart to Heart and as they are experienced in one’s own life and cultural context. We are happy to share the responses and reflections sparked in some of our readers by the following questions:

What has touched you most deeply and/or changed you?

How might you continue to bring an Angela response to any of these realities?

Is there another area/reality to which you are feeling called to bring an Angela response?

As you will see, some readers share their responses to these questions. Others focus more directly on a particular reality.



What has touched me most deeply was reading about our sisters’ and colleagues’/friends’ experiences and involvement with each of the issues. Doing so has reminded me how where one of us is we all are! I was very moved reading about the war in Ukraine. It caused me to realize the suffering going on and made it real for me. Angela was a listener. I think I need to put myself in places where I don’t always have to do, but rather can listen with a curious and open heart and mind. I need to be fully present when people are sharing about issues. I believe an area that I can bring an Angela response to is dealing with parents as they continue to work through the educational system and make decisions about the best school for their child with learning and/or social differences. I have to listen to them carefully and intently, then let them know what I think and believe while making sure they know there are possibilities and options. Then I trust that the family will decide the best place for the particular child.

—Jeannie Humphries, OSU
Eastchester, NY

I appreciate the focus on St. Angela and how her spirit is alive in our world today through the Sisters, Associates, and Friends of Angela. It inspires me to see the broad representation of participants from so many countries. I appreciate the reflection questions that stretch me to internalize the topic of each monthly issue. I find the articles’ relevance to present-day realities very helpful.

—Joanne Abrams, OSU
Santa Rosa, CA

What has touched me most deeply is the frailty of democracy and justice. I hope to bring an Angela response by bringing to light injustices that are affecting OTHERS, not just myself. Another area I feel called to bring an Angela response is leadership training and mentoring in the spirit of St. Angela.

—Thomas Trunkle
Great Falls, MT

While daily violence and mass shootings affect the poor disproportionately, violence is reaching into all our communities. I know first-hand, as a principal, the terror of finding out someone was threatening to target two schools in our community, and not knowing who, where, or when. And then the terror of finding out that four of our young, vibrant University of Idaho college students were brutally murdered in their beds and, like other faculty, staff, students, and community members being concerned greatly about everyone's safety. I do not agree with those lawmakers and others who argue for more semi-automatic guns and for arming teachers in the schools rather than looking at the root problems and implementing non-lethal and loving/caring solutions. They have built calluses around their hearts which act as calluses on our hands do. They keep us from feeling the pain of others which in turn keeps us from looking at root causes and

finding positive solutions. The less we feel, the more it becomes someone else's problem, until it hits our own communities.

An Angela response to our times would be: "Be moved by the love of God and love of others in need," "Pray that God enlighten you, direct you, and teach you what you are to do," and "You will do more good by sweetness and kindness than by harsh and stern words." We need a change of heart in our legislative bodies – we need to be guided by a love for one another, and through our love help shave off the callouses. Our voices need to be heard at legislative levels to foster love and care for one another locally and nationally. I have no doubt as we work and live as Angela did, the ripple effect will reach out on a grand scale.

—Jennifer Beller
Princeton, ID

I work in the area of education, even though I am not directly involved with the students. Currently our concern is the reality of bullying. Bullying is another form of violence. If we want to have our world without violence, we have to educate our young people from the beginning to live peacefully. As in Angela's time, war and violence are destroying humanity. Angela did not give up but worked in her own way to be a peacemaker. I have learned from Angela to do what we can do, to be peacemakers wherever we are. When I am in a position to make a decision, I choose to do what will foster a peaceful and happy environment for our school community. No violence, no bullying!! I think this is Angela's dream for our world.

—Moekti Gondosasmito OSU
Jakarta, Indonesia



At Ursuline Academy in Dallas, TX, we seek to incorporate *Laudato Si'* in the science and theology curriculum as a lived reality. Pope Francis, in writing *Laudato Si'*, calls for changes to our lived reality in order to be stewards of this earth. The spiritual aspect informs the lived reality by designing experiments in the science classes to show how we are damaging our God-given domain. The students enjoy both the theological and scientific aspects of this social justice class.

—Cooper Flickinger & Suzy Frasco
Dallas, TX



“Do not lose heart, even if you should discover that you lack qualities necessary for the work to which you are called. The One who called you will not desert you, but the moment you are in need will stretch out a saving hand.” There are times when I feel that all I can do is to read and reread the above words of Angela. In our very turbulent times, there are moments when I feel too weak and incapable of responding to our world’s needs as Angela did. I admire all those who walk so closely with Angela, following her path of insight and courage. For now, my very small way of bringing an “Angela response” to our world today is to sit in “loving-kindness” meditation, holding close all those who are suffering, praying that they (and I) will “not lose heart.”

—Kathy Collongues
Hillsboro, MO

It is not easy to face all the crises in our world today. What has touched me is in the *Fifth Counsel* of St. Angela, #32: “They must not lose hope.” How we might continue to bring an Angela response to any of these realities is to act and do something for the needs of our time. “Be bound to one another by the bond of charity, esteeming each other, helping each other, bearing with each other in Jesus Christ” (*Last Counsel* #2).

—Mery Malisan, OSU
Rome, Italy



Generation Z teenagers live in an increasingly advanced technological era, where they are constantly connected to the digital world and social media. Although this technology brings many benefits and conveniences, it also has negative impacts on Generation Z.

One of the concerns that arises is their lack of ability to distinguish between right and wrong. This is caused by their tendency to rely on information obtained from social media without checking the truthfulness of the information first. Many contents on social media influence their thoughts and often they cannot differentiate between true and false information.

Furthermore, Generation Z teenagers are so busy with the digital world that they pay less attention to real life around them. They spend more time in front of smartphone or laptop screens than interacting with friends or family. This causes them to be less trained in solving social problems and less sensitive to the feelings of people around them.

As role models, educators must lead and encourage Generation Z with good and proper examples. As St. Angela said, “Act therefore in such a way that, also following your example, they may stir and spur themselves to virtuous

living” (*Counsel VI:6*). This can be done by showing positive values such as integrity, responsibility, and empathy through daily actions: for example, by showing honesty and responsibility in completing tasks, appreciating differences and empathizing with others, and demonstrating humility in acknowledging mistakes.

Moreover, educators can also help Generation Z develop their discernment skills through education. This can be done by providing relevant materials for daily life and emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and analysis of the information obtained. In addition, educators can also guide Generation Z in developing independent thinking skills and making the right decisions.

I think St. Angela’s call to always improve ourselves and become role models in guiding Generation Z is very strong. Many families also experience difficulties in their relationships, so our children have difficulty finding role models in developing life skills and values for living together. The Ursuline school should be a second home for children, where they can grow into the person that God wills.

—Vero Andayani, OSU
Solo, Indonesia