

Heartbeats

The Company of St. Angela in the 21st Century

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During the last five months, our attention has been given to St. Angela's gift of **dialogue with the signs of her times** and to the invitations we, her followers, are hearing to live with that same openness and responsiveness. We are grateful to those of you who responded to our invitation to reflect and share on these two questions:

What are the signs of your time and place of which you are most aware?

How, like Angela, do you sense you are being invited to respond to them?

Chile, and especially the local church, is living a big crisis of lack of trust because of abuses. In this difficult situation we are called to be present (it is not time to leave) and to give our testimony of hope. We are called to trust and to empower lay people.

—Mateja Korsic, OSU,
Santiago, Chile

I think of young people all over the world. They will have to find new ways of life to take care of our planet and to take care of one another. Like Angela I keep hope and I have confidence in the new generation.

—Florence Marie Le Garrec,
OSU, Rome, Italy

For me it is trying to respond to the need right in front of me: working to eradicate homelessness for families where I live; responding to and feeding the students in school where I volunteer; listening to women who come to share their stories.

—Margaret Johnson, OSU,
Moscow, ID

As an ambassador of the New Story living in this time of great transition, like Angela, I hear the Invitation to embrace the future with evolutionary hope anchored in an ocean of pervasive Presence.

—Glenda Bourgeois, OSU,
Dallas, TX

The deepest concern on my heart for years and uppermost now is the defenseless child in her/his mother's womb. I am doing all I can as I offer my life for the end of legalized abortion.

—Joan Ann Springman, OSU,
Alton, IL

Angela would encourage all in the world to speak for equity, understanding and peace.

—Priscilla McNamara,
New Rochelle, NY

We must always look around us and be open to what God is calling our hearts to do. This might be welcoming the stranger, smiling at someone we don't know or helping others in need. This must also be taught within the family so that "the vine continues to be cultivated."

—*Nanette Rice, St. Louis, MO*

I'm on a silent retreat entitled "Spirituality of Aging." We are invited to SLOW Down and awaken to the mystery and wonder of God's presence in the burning bushes all around us. We have choices: to be a blessing and give blessings to others. Angela is my inspiration.

—*Karen Schwane, OSU, San Antonio, TX*

People yearn to be understood, to find encouragement and hope. I hear in my own life Angela's invitation to be a reverent presence in each moment, in each encounter, to "bless the space between us" (John O'Donohue).

—*Elizabeth Susan Hatzenbuehler, OSU, San Antonio, TX*

I am constantly awed by the power and beauty God shows us in nature. I try very hard to be respectful of this gift and to do my small part to preserve this gift for future generations. Recycle, limit plastic, pick up trash along a trail, carpool. It's a big issue but Angela says, "Do Something."

—*Ellette Gibson, DeSoto, MO*

From where I am, I feel most drawn by Angela's concern/commitment to those among whom she lived. For me, that would be my students at Maritime College (especially Newman Club members), my neighbors--faculty colleagues + staff, and residents + volunteers at the Jeanne Jugan Residence where I attend liturgy and help out as my time permits.

—*Maryellen Keefe, OSU, Bronx, NY*

In the nursing home where some of our Sisters reside, I'm invited to care for individuals and their unique needs. My attention is also given to the staff and to the other residents in the way that Angela asks us to be present to others.

—*Susan Kienzler, OSU, St. Louis, MO*

For me, it's listening to the Me-Maws and Pa-Paws who are trying to get their grandbabies in the summer art camp and helping them read and fill out the application; listening to and working with high school students helping with the program; and as of late, it is gathering food items and clothing for the Immigrants who arrive each evening at the bus station.

—*Regina Marie Fronmüller, OSU, New Orleans, LA*

I am aware of the 'New Cosmology' and reflect it in my circular canvases. To me it is an expanded awareness of God through the immensity and incomprehensibility of the Universe. These paintings I hope to share with the world.

—*Mary Frances Judge, OSU, St. Paul, MN*

The signs for me today are families that are overworked and stressed--working at minimum wage, mothers and single dads struggling to feed their children, provide homes and education, teenagers who need skills to handle crisis and stress, young people struggling with gender and sexual identity. I try to be a listening presence, to teach by example, and to tell stories of how to handle life.

—*Jeannie Humphries, OSU, Eastchester, NY*

I find the signs of the times in dialogue with the people I meet day by day... Responding to them like Angela is a "lifegiving/life-receiving opportunity."

—*Angela Krippendorf, OSU, Lewiston, ME*

There are two signs that I think are important. One is the lack of faith in God and that many families do not practice their faith. The second is the blatant disregard for life through greed, addictions, euthanasia, infanticide, and neglect of those who experience poverty.

—Betty McAdams, OSU,
Wilmington, DE

Once I was asked, “Do you believe that every prayer is heard?” My answer has been “Yes” ever since, and even though now I am in a retirement home and wheelchair bound, my prayer can travel our world for individuals in need, places wiped out by disasters, persons and nations harmed by unjust rulers, abused children, and those suffering from illness and poverty.

—Martha Gleason, OSU,
Hastings-on-Hudson, NY

One of the signs of our time in our parish neighborhood is the number of Black families that are being forced out of their rented homes by the neglect of their landlords. This causes homes to be condemned and turned into larger construction projects. Our small parish works with families one at a time to relocate into safer and better maintained homes.

—Chabanel Mathison, OSU,
St. Louis, MO

In our fragmented times, there are many issues and needs. I try to respond to needs that arise at the moment: listening to someone who is struggling, helping someone with a particular need or simply being present. Like Angela, I feel called to be aware, alert and willing to keep trying.

—Pat Schifini, OSU,
New Rochelle, NY

Being a Hospice volunteer is profound and special. It is what Angela would do.

—Loretta Kilby,
Wilmington, DE

Signs which reflect the concerns of Angela’s day for me are “family” and “religious formation.” In the parish where I serve, families show need of support, strength and healing, both in the school and in the RCIA . These are accurately called “parish outreach” programs.

—Rosemary Skelley, OSU,
Decatur, IL

A truly heartening sign of our time is the growing awareness among young people of the threats to the environment on both local and international levels and their willingness to act to bring change, to reclaim our call to stewardship.

—Mary Ann Dooling, OSU,
St. Louis, MO

Opportunities for evangelization: Waiting in the car park of a clinic, one of the technicians noticed my Ursuline Crucifix and asked if I believed in FORGIVENESS. Of course, I replied, that is one of the basic practices of being Christian. He asked how often can one forgive and be forgiven. I added that being human is to mess up often and big time and God forgives me, and keeps on loving me—proof is, I am still alive and happy. The person seemed at peace with the response and conversation.

—Barbara McClean, OSU,
Bridgetown, Barbados

I am aware that many daily personal interchanges are brief, impersonal, sometimes curt. I try to be PRESENT - positive, interested, and willing to listen.

—Theresa Davey, OSU,
Springfield, IL

