

Inter – Ursuline



May – August 2025

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Generalate

125 YEARS OF THE ROMAN UNION OF URSULINES

On the Generalate website you can find this article: <https://ursulines-roman-union.org/en/news/676/125-years-of-the-roman-union-of-ursulines> in which

- Sr. Susan Flood reminds us of the importance of this year,
- you will find the calendar of events for the year 2025, updates to your contributions are always welcome,
- a video that takes us back in time...

“28th November, 2024 marks the beginning of the **125th year since the formation of the Roman Union in 1900**. The founders of the Roman Union, the prioresses of many autonomous monasteries, faced many challenges and struggles, yet they recognized that they could support each other better together than they could if they remained apart. They had a strong hope for the future that such a union would offer, a future in which we now live. We have much to be grateful for as we reflect on the richness of the Roman Union today.

In this 125th year of the Roman Union of Ursulines, let us together, sisters, colleagues and friends, commit ourselves to live with gratitude and hope, as, in the spirit of St Angela Merici, we witness to the Gospel in our times.”

Sr. Susan Flood osu, Prioress General

Thailand, Community of Vietnam

FINAL PROFESSION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE BETANIA COMMUNITY, DONG NAI, VIETNAM, AS PART OF THE PROVINCE OF THAILAND

Sr. Somchitr Krongboonsri, osu, shared her experience on these special days.



On 23rd July 2024, Srs Maria Lang and Maria Minh Trang made their final Profession during the Eucharistic Celebration presided over by the Bishop of the diocese of Xuan Loc (Mgr. Jean Do Van Ngan).

There were many people attending the Mass, including their families, friends, the parishioners, the priests, religious and

the Ursuline Sisters from Australia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Taiwan, France and Thailand. The Mass was followed by a meal and some performances by the children and the parishioners. The atmosphere was friendly and full of joy.





On 24th July, during the morning Eucharistic Celebration, after Holy Communion, there was a Thai ritual (Bai Sri Su Khwan) of welcoming the Betania community, Dong Nai, Vietnam, as part of the Province of Thailand. The ritual included Srs Pensri and Somchitr tying the wrists of each sister as a symbol of

welcome to the Province and as the bond of unity. Then we went to the Kindergarten to watch the video recording the messages of Sister Susan Flood (General Prioress) and the General Councillors who expressed joy and hope in their messages for this event.



Thailand

REGINA COELI SCHOOL IN THE CAMPAIGN TOPIC FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2024 "TO BE AGENTS OF CHANGE WITH AVAILABILITY AND CREATIVITY"

This article was written by Teacher Kanchana Promma.

Between September and October of the 2024 academic year, Regina Coeli School experienced two major flooding events. The floodwaters reached a height of nearly 2 meters with torrents of water and inches of sticky mud. A school filled with smiles and laughter had become a place of sadness and fear. Severe damage and uncertainty forced everyone to face vulnerability because of the loss of valuable things and of the peace in life. There was fear that this area would not be able to be restored to its original state.



But when everything seemed helpless, the sisters who are the school's leadership had stepped up with dedication and courage to lead everyone through the crisis. The sisters didn't see themselves as problem solvers but as leaders who were ready to stand beside, take care of, and inspire everyone. The rapidly changing situation forced the sisters and management team to make quick decisions by meeting and planning together systematically, to assess risks and

address problems in order to restore the area as quickly as possible. Coordination with external agencies to procure various machinery and equipment made the difficult work full of encouragement and strength. The sisters also encouraged everyone and did not hesitate to work side by side with the team whether to wade through the mud, move things or face difficult tasks.



In working together, the sisters also created an open atmosphere for everyone to participate in brainstorming. Every voice, every suggestion, no matter how small, was heard and taken into account in solving a problem, whether it involved creative classroom rehabilitation, important assets storage plans or the application of new technology and innovations, thus helping the recovery process to proceed efficiently. The team's cooperation under the leadership of the sisters had been the driving force in making the school ready to resume educating the students.



At the same time, the teachers, parents, former student associations, Parent-Teacher and Student Associations showed true dedication and love for the school. Many teachers waded through the remaining water to move school supplies, mop the floor and clean the classroom with smiles and encouragement from co-workers. Laughter and mutual support made everyone feel warmth. It was as if the school was not just a place to work, but it was another house filled with love and care.

Groups of parents and former students gathered together with cleaning tools, brooms, a water buckets, or various items of equipment. They helped each other work diligently, both sweeping water, moving damaged materials and mopping the floor so that students could return to school in a condition that was ready for learning again.

Current students who were full of volunteer spirit joined in restoring the school with enthusiasm. Some students organized fundraising activities, such as Miss Trong Rattanadamrongaksorn, a grade 11 student who has great love and care for the school, with a heart full of determination to support the school. This student initiated the activity called “Contemporary Dance Workshop” to indirectly raise funds to help the school, held at Nortlab 20 Studio on 20th October 2024. This activity not only developed the dance skills of the participants but it was also a creative way to join forces and unity among friends and interested parties. Students collected donations from the activity amounting to 5,500 baht and gave it to the school for rehabilitation after the flood.



What was of value above all else was that the sisters and Regina Coeli School had shown deep understanding and care for teachers and other personnel alike who faced the same fate. A house that was once filled with smiles had become a source of suffering from the flood. But the sisters never ignored these pains. Every time someone was affected, sisters and staff came to offer encouragement and listen intently to stories of suffering along

with providing assistance in every way necessary whether it was support for resources that were lacking, financial assistance or providing necessary items. Every action was driven by true love.

This support and compassion have created a new atmosphere at Regina Coeli School. The school that was once filled with sadness and despair has become a home of happiness and warmth once again. The Sisters and staff make everyone feel like this school is more than just a place to work but it is a house filled with good wishes. Heartfelt support breeds confidence and inspiration in the team. Everyone feels the true power of caring for one another, which makes the atmosphere of Regina Coeli School bright again in becoming a refuge of heart that is always ready to be beside everyone no matter what obstacles one faces.

This event is not just about revitalizing Regina Coeli School but it is also a profound lesson in sacrifice and the generosity of God's love. God gives His concern through the leaders like the sisters and administrators. The dedication of teachers, parents, alumnae associations and hearts filled with love for the students, all reflect sacrifice, with a readiness to listen and support that made the school come back strong. Regina Coeli School is not just a place to teach academically but a place filled with warmth and deep love from everyone.



This love goes on to inspire everyone to feel the importance of dedication and solidarity for the community, making this school come back to life, ready to move forward steadily. All of this is possible from the love that everyone has for the school and from God's love that fills us to be a part of creating change by being ready to be available and creative.

Thailand

MISSION AT MARY OF THE INCARNATION HOUSE (KOBIKIE HOUSE)

Sr Narumon Charoenkul and Sr Puangpaka Prapassen, osu, shared their experiences in this area.

I would like to share my work and experiences at Mary of the Incarnation branch house (Kobikie House) of Sop Moei District. Sop Moei District is in Mae Hong Son Province. The area is made up of steep hills, mostly belonging to various tribes such as Mueang people -- Paka Kayo (Sakor Karen) - (Karen) Phueng - Lawa - Long Neck Karen - Shan and many other tribes.



Sr Puangphaka and I worked with the priests of the Chiang Mai Diocese in the Sop Moei area. St Laurentio Ruiz Church, Ban Mae Haad, has two priests, two sisters, and four catechists. There are some areas where we do pastoral work next to the Thai-Burma border. The various works we have undertaken are teaching catechism to children and youth in various villages, visiting the elderly, visiting the sick in villages and hospitals, and visiting mothers with new-borns and

pregnant women. (Giving special health care advice) We meet with young men and women studying in the city (Sop Moei, Mae Suad District) at the Sister's House to share life experiences with one another, learn catechism and do activities together. We practice liturgical songs and attend Mass together, then have lunch together.

We teach local language to butlers, housewives and youth, we meet and talk with groups of housewives to give advice and listen to their opinions and needs, pray the Rosary to Our Lady in each house during the month of Our Lady, lead prayers and songs in the liturgy and go to pray from house to house at any time when they ask for blessings from God.



On special occasions, like helping at Christmas and helping with summer catechetical camps every year, many attend. For example, there are approximately 120-130 children attending the summer catechetical camp in Sop Moei District. There are still many children who cannot attend due to the distance and lack of transport to the places where we organize the camp.

All that has been said here is pastoral work we are involved in for villagers in our Sop Moei area. It makes me thank God in every circumstance. The villagers cooperate well. They go to pray and attend Mass. Children and youth cooperate well when participating in activities. The weather is good and cool. In the village there are also a forest and trees. I have seen the simplicity of the villagers. Their living conditions are very different from the city. They eat natural food, eating simply, and finding vegetables to eat according to the season. Sisters do gardening and grow some plants and vegetables. The villagers' occupation is rice cultivation in shifting cultivation fields and some vegetables. This makes it easier for me to adjust and understand the spirit of the Gospel as taught by Jesus. The villagers themselves are happy and have more encouragement since the sisters have been living among them. We learn from each other. They are very happy that their children are learning catechism, various songs and prayers from the sisters. I thank God that I have the opportunity to do pastoral work in this Sop Moei area.

In Sop Moei District, most of the population are members of the Karen tribe who live on the mountain in various places. They practice Christianity, and there are some families who are also followers of traditional religions (spirits). They work in rice farming and chili cultivation by relying on rain alone so they will have income or get the product only once a year. With an area where making a living is difficult, also roads and remote transportation, most of the population is poor.



In this District, there are 24 Catholic villages, 2 diocesan priests responsible for this area and there are two Ursuline Sisters who have come to help with pastoral work and teaching catechism. There are four catechists who help the priests. Pastoral work is divided into 2 main areas: Mae Ngao District and Salween River District. Our Catholic villages are not close to each other, most of them are far away from each other and the road is still difficult so when

visiting them we have to stay overnight. We Ursulines have two houses: Mary of the Incarnation House is located on the mountain; another house is Baan Atcharamai, located in the city of Sop Moei District.

Living with the villagers here, I saw that the villagers are happy and feel warm to have Sisters among them. The faithful here show high respect, honour and trust in the priests and Sisters. When there are any problems, whether mental, physical, or with children, family matters or others they would come to the priests and sisters. Sometimes we could not help but just listen and give advice, and they feel at ease. When the priests and sisters ask for help, they would cooperate very well. The villagers believe in God. Religion is very important for them. The centre of their faith is the church.

When it's time to renovate and decorate the church they will raise funds among themselves first even if they don't have a lot of income but they do what they can and the priests are responsible for another part. We priests and sisters are the advisers, provide equipment, support, food or provide other necessary things in that work. Even though they don't have Mass every week,



they do not neglect to pray together. Therefore, working here is not difficult for me to adapt. The villagers live simply, there are vegetables or any products they receive and they will think always of their priests and sisters. When visiting them each time, I receive many different souvenirs.

They live on a high mountain and far from the prosperity of the city; some live in the park area thus leaving them without electricity. There are only solar cells. Communication is quite difficult with no phone signal, but some villages are more fortunate with this. Two months ago, there was a project to install Wi-Fi in the village. Now it's a little easier to communicate.

For me, I am grateful to the Thai Ursulines for giving me the opportunity to work in this Sop Moei area. Thanks be to God for guiding me through other activities and people. Thank you.



Australia

EDMUND RICE INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME NOVEMBER 2024

Sr Sue Cochrane participated in this programme and shares her experience:



Twelve participants from seven countries gathered in Gaillard, France, for two weeks to gain a greater understanding about the workings of the United Nations Human Rights Council, as well as other international bodies that support the advancement of human rights for all. We learnt more about a Rights Based approach to advocacy and the Social Justice focus of our Catholic faith. Participants came from Zambia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, India, the Philippines, the United States and Australia and

shared generously about their ministries and experiences.

We had the opportunity to travel into Geneva on several days and became familiar with the walk over the border into Switzerland to access the excellent tram and bus services. We visited the ERI Office, located with Franciscans International, and had a variety of external speakers share their knowledge. Attending sessions at the United Nations was a great experience and gave me a better understanding of the breadth of the work that happens there and how I may be able to have input to the processes. We also visited the International Labour Organization and the Red Cross Museum and managed time for a ferry ride on Lake Geneva.

I hope to be able to join the team early next year, so long as I can get a Visa! It was good to meet with the other team members and experience something of their community life. There will be much to learn, and also to share from our Ursuline perspective. I am grateful for the chance to pursue this opportunity for ministry and am excited about the possibilities it may bring.



To know more about it: <http://www.edmundriceinternational.org/staff/>

Sainte Angèle d'Afrique, Cameroon

COMMUNITY NGAOUNDERE

The local community of Ngaoundere shared an example of collaboration at the service of the environment.



CREATION AND SUPPORT OF THE ENVIRONMENT CLUB AT SAINTE ANGÈLE MERICI PRIMARY SCHOOL

As part of an environmental awareness campaign, the Association Jeunesse Entrepreneuriale ran a workshop on composting at Sainte Angèle Merici primary school. Thanks to an illustrative PowerPoint presentation and discussions with the 'Friends of Nature' club, the pupils were able to understand the various stages involved in making compost, the materials needed and the benefits of this practice for nature. The AJE also presented t-shirts and badges to the young participants to congratulate them on their commitment.



This activity represents the first step in the collaboration between the 'Jeunesse Entrepreneuriale' association and the 'Les amis de la nature' environmental club, which together want to take action to protect the environment. Seeing these young people take up such a cause is a message of hope for humanity.

USA, Central

A DAY TO REMEMBER

In the January 2025 issue of "The Vine", the Central Province's Office of Mission and Identity shared the many ways members of the school communities are continuing to "cultivate the vine" entrusted to us! This is one of the articles.

Since July 1, 2024, three Central Province schools have transferred sponsorship to the Ursuline Education Foundation. To celebrate this historic and momentous occasion, a member of the Provincial Council officially transfers sponsorship to the Canonical Stewards of UEF in a ceremony. The first school to participate in the ceremony was Ursuline Academy Dedham. Roisin Kelley-Heafitz, a member of the class of 2026 and an intern in the UA Marketing Department, reflected on the occasion.

“The Transfer of Sponsorship at Ursuline Academy was a powerful ceremony that marked a momentous occasion for our school. Starting with the lighting of candles, signifying the “passing of the torch” from the Ursuline sisters to laity leadership, to the return of the ciborium belonging to the original school in Boston, this Mass was full of symbolic reminders of what it means to be an Ursuline student here in Dedham, Massachusetts.

As an Ursuline community, we believe in persevering through challenges by relying on collaboration, passion, and of course, our faith. This was perfectly exemplified through the Transfer of Sponsorship; the Ursuline sisters recognized an issue and worked toward a solution that culminated in our community coming together in prayer to take on this new role.

As a member of the choir, I believe our communion hymn, I Will Be the Vine, summarizes the ceremony perfectly. The lyrics “I will be the vine and you will be the branches” beautifully describes the relationship between the “branches” of our school, the sisters, and the “vines,” the laity who took on the sponsorship, as well as the Ursuline students. The branches of a tree provide a strong support for the vines coming off them while allowing them to grow and thrive as their own entity. As a school, we are grateful for the firm foundation and continued support of the sisters. As a student, I am excited to see how Ursuline continues to grow and thrive with the new sponsorship and I am excited for this new chapter of UA.”



Brazil

AN EXPERIENCE OF FAITH AND GRATITUDE

The Santa Angela Community in Pedro II, Brazil shares its experience of the novena to Saint Angela.

In this jubilee year, we share with you an experience of what has been happening for twenty years at the Ursuline community of Pedro II/Piaui. It concerns the novena in honor of Saint Angela Merici. It was an inspiration of the Ursuline Sister Celina Santos Paraiso (RIP), who along with a group of families began to spread this devotion. Initially, the framed picture of Saint Angela was taken to a rural community, and during the day, the novena was celebrated in the homes of several families and neighbours. Actually, each year we choose a theme related to a topic proposed by the Brazilian Church, and each day the novena is celebrated at the



home of one of the families of the students, teachers, neighbors, employees or devotees of Saint Angela. The chosen family gathers others families to participate in the meeting. This year we chose this theme: "Saint Angela, woman of hope in caring for life." Through this theme, we reflected deeply on the aspect of Angela's spiritual motherhood and the care of the mother, who thinks of and cares for each one of her daughters, encouraging them to be joyful and full of optimism.

This fills our hearts with gratitude because to this day Angela continues to inspire lay people who feel touched by her testimony. Saint Angela is admired for her strong trait of spiritual motherhood towards her daughters, for her forward-looking vision, for her humility, and for her audacity to act with faith and hope.

In this year of the jubilee of hope, we remember the anniversary of the 500 years since the pilgrimage of Saint Angela to Rome. Being pilgrims with Angela leads us to go out of ourselves in order to be sensitive to human suffering and to our responsibility for integral ecology through the perspective of Laudato Si.



uring the novenas, we shared some miracles through the intercession of Saint Angela. First, a mother told us about her experience when was pregnant. The doctor warned her about the high-risk and that the birth might not be normal. The mother was very anxious. She thought about Saint Angela's life and asked the saint for a miracle.

When the time came for the child to be born, everything was prepared for a caesarean childbirth, but to everyone's surprise, the child was born normally. The doctors were left without an explanation, but the mother knew it was a miracle. The family, very happy with the successful outcome, decided to name the new-born Angela in honor of Saint Angela. Now, Angela is our student in elementary school.

Second miracle: a lady told us that her husband had been a slave to alcohol for a long time. No advice or recommendations from friends could stop his addiction. The lady, very convinced, always attended the novena of Saint Angela. On January 27, 2024, she was feeling desperate and not knowing what to do, she prayed to Saint Angela. She said that since that day of the promise her husband has never drunk alcohol again. This year, the third celebration of the novena was in her home. She gathered neighbors and friends and shared with us the miracle. She was full of gratitude and made a donation of materials to the Saint Angela Foundation.



For all, we give thanks to God. Saint Angela has been attracting young people and adults to draw from the well of her spirituality in the city and in the countryside of the Pedro II region.

Integral Ecology Programme

URSULINE LAUDATO SI' SUMMARY 2020-2025

As a Global Community of Religious Women, desiring to move together into a new life, aware of the Calls of our most recent General Chapter (2019), and of the urgency of the cries we hear from the earth and from the poor, we commit ourselves to intentional and active participation in the **Laudato Si' Action Platform** 7-year Journey towards Integral Ecology.

We recognize four particular areas on which we need to focus:

- The need for personal and communal conversion,
- The need for an ongoing deepening of our understanding of the spirituality and theology underpinning Integral Ecology,
- The need for education and ongoing formation
- The need for networking and collaboration

Through our commitment to the Laudato Si Action Platform we will develop these areas and also continue to encourage and support action on behalf of justice and ecological sustainability in our communities and ministries across the world.

(Sr. Susan Flood - March 28, 2022)

Phase 1

A Core group of Integral Ecology Animators (Anastasia Ratnawati, osu; Agatha Linda Chandra, osu; Dianne Baumunk, osu; Elisabeth-Marie Ansart, osu; Mairead O'Regan, osu; Neusimar Marques da Silva, osu; Pam Paton-Mills; Rafael Bianchi; and Teresia Muhuhu, osu) was developed with 2 facilitators (Jacqui Remond, LISTEN; Megan Seneque, LISTEN). This core group is the backbone of on-going work with Ursuline Sisters and collaborators in response to the 2019 Chapter Call to care for our common home.



Phase 2

In-Person Integral Ecology experience with Ursuline leaders at the 2023 EGC focusing leaders on their **own story of ecological conversion** as well as learning **together to become kin with one another and with all of creation**.

Phase 3

On-line in-depth series of learning modules (October 2023-March 2024) for sisters and lay collaborators from each province/group: a **pilgrimage of ecological transformation** focusing on all seven goals of the Laudato Si Action Platform.

- Transformation of our heads, hearts and hands, **moving from judgment to curiosity; criticism to compassion; fear to courage, opening to new relationships with others and all of creation.**
- **“The world will change if we do something together.”** (*The Letter film*)
- Through experience, contemplation and dialogue, Pilgrims traveled a journey of ecological conversion made visible in a culminating visual in each time zone.

Phase 4

Integral Ecological Pilgrims are now Animators in their Province/Group activating a network of support and encouragement through:

- Global Network directory for ease of communication and interconnectedness
- Twice yearly zoom gatherings to grow the global Ursuline Integral Ecology Network
- LISTEN platform for connecting, sharing and learning
- Dialogue Circles called Fire Circles meet online

All aspects of this network are guided by the principle that **the future is created one room at a time, one gathering at a time. The goal is for each gathering to become an example of the future we want to create.**

Phase 5

Plans are underway for another series of learning modules in 2025 for School Administrators. A fuller description of these phases of our Ursuline integral ecological journey is available in our detailed Laudato Si' Action Plan:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wp4fLzTSPbykZK8atZ9DNAIw83vFheA3/view?usp=drive_link

*“We must shine with hope,
stained glass windows that shine light into icons,
glow like lanterns borne before a procession.
Who can bear back hope into the world but us...”
Marge Percy*

NEXT INTER-URSULINE BULLETIN

As usual, the next issue of the Inter-Ursuline bulletin will welcome all your experiences to be shared around the world. Please send short articles, with or without photos, to the general secretary by **1st August 2025**. With thanks!

For more news, do not hesitate to visit the Website!