

Inter – Ursuline



Special edition October 2026

THE GENERALATE HOUSE

VIA NONENTANA, 236
00162 ROMA

1932 - 2025

*Bulletin of the Ursulines
of the Roman Union*

Via Massaua, 3

00162 Roma

TEL 06-86-22-181

Website:

ursulines-roman-union.org

This is a special issue of the Inter-Ursuline bulletin, a gathering of memories sent to the Generalate before we moved on 12th December 2025

These memories, and others, are also in the form of videos accessible through these links:

Part 1 – 125 years of the Roman Union: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WnlccIQhJVg>

Part 2 – Sharing our memories of the Generalate house:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2SbN6stSHs>

Article written by Sr Brigitte Brunet osu (France/Belgium/Spain) recounting the nearly two years spent sorting before the Generalate's move.

A house, doors and windows, roofs and terraces, basements and hallways, stairs and elevators, rooms and offices, a garden with paths, trees and shrubs, flowers and fruits, a chapel and oratories, frescoes, icons and statues...

A house, a masterpiece of architecture, stones, bricks and wood, columns tall and short... A house, a history of 93 years engraved in stone.

A house for receiving the general council, sisters and meetings, friends and families, sisters in formation, employees and partners in mission; a place of life, prayer, work and planning, of discernment, decision-making, and implementation.

In this house, a general chapter (2019) entrusted the general council — newly elected at the time — with envisaging the future of the house and taking the right path, which might be welcomed or which may create some fear, a unknown path or a path inspiring planning for the future, a path well marked out or a hazardous one...

And here we are at the work site.

On the part of the general council, binoculars and telescopes come out for seeing the long-term view, also plans and a miscellany of legislation, to imagine and trace realistic possibilities. They ask questions, they listen, remain silent, ponder and wait, grow impatient, calculate and dream. They seek specialists in real estate and in various kinds of transactions. They meet with potential buyers. The visits multiply.

The decision of the chapter becomes a roadmap. At the heart of all this interior and exterior movement, we recognize a presence, a little light perfectly steady in its very littleness, a trace of the Spirit, something to build (and we know who is the architect), a sea to cross (and we know who is the “master of the ship and the waves”). We learn how to select and how to receive, how to want and how to let go.

We call on some work hands! A team of sisters and laypeople. The crossroads, the “trasna” (Raphael Consedine) becomes both a spring of water and a fire. We get going, we listen to the experience of other congregations, we listen to the stories of so many sisters who have lived in this house, we contemplate the treasures which came from the provinces, the tableware, the office and supply cabinets, the wealth of the archives, libraries, and sacristies.

“Let’s start”, “don’t be afraid”, this team very quickly observed and made decisions and then gradually outlined the course of action: you don’t empty 100 years of history in the blink of an eye, you choose what to keep, you choose what to let go, to sell if possible, or to give away and or to send for recycling. We experienced some grief at what had to be done! Tons, yes, two loads of 4 tons and 9 tons, of old

machines, remains of broken furniture, frames, books, and magazines to destroy or recycle. It was painful. Alessandro and his team didn't do these loadings with a light heart. But they worked well.

There were the cherished mementos from the provinces given to the generalate over the years, stones and shells from university collections, and treasures from the sacristy. The special chapter for the Constitutions (September 2024) gave the opportunity for an exchange of gifts between provinces, with tears and smiles. Then, a first gift from heaven, Cardinal Peter Turkson, currently in charge of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, was passionate about our stone and shell collections and gratefully accepted them for the students and researchers.

What can one say about the cupboards holding sheets and blankets, towels, clothing, plates for feast days and for ordinary days? The proposal to offer them to congregations and associations working with people in need, migrants and refugees, was clearly the answer – life-giving, a sharing in solidarity. It is difficult to name all of these groups, but for example: the Indian student Sisters, CMC and DS, the Missionaries of Charity, some Dominicans, Ursuline Franciscans, Ursulines FMI (Verona), Sisters of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Adorers of the Precious Blood, O.M.I., Passionists, etc...

And the furniture? Small desks and armchairs, large desks and floor lamps, bedside tables and wardrobes, chairs and tables, shelves of all sizes, countless! Then the Scout leaders of the parish of Saint Angela came; and Nic Abelli and Natale Genovesi, antique dealers from northern Italy; the lady in charge of the parish's annual market; and Massimo from the second-hand market in Conca d'Oro; another Massimo from the Focolari; friends from Sant'Egidio and the Centro Astalli; Don Aleardo of the Order of Malta; not to mention Jason ("J" to close friends) and Vinicio. Also very effective were our connections with the embassies to the Holy See of Indonesia and Senegal; Pape Dembar; the Neocatechumenate communities of Setteville and St. Louis de Gonzaga; and the Redemptoris Mater College. In the Golden Book, we can read how many of these beneficiaries expressed both their gratitude and their desire to give a second life to everything they received.

But what about the collections of magazines, the books in the second basement, and those in the library on the first floor, art books, organ music scores? Here again, we were amazed at all this history, an important lesson in history, in theological, biblical, spiritual, and philosophical formation... Student sisters, seminarians, and student priests came to the house, universities (Gregorian, Urbaniana, Angelicum) and seminaries (the French seminary in Rome, seminaries in Guinea Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, in Indonesia, St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome), the Casa Balthasar, Ursuline sisters from every continent. They were passionate at what they saw and packed crates of some excellent books. Artists also gladly took art books and the collections of organ sheet music. Of course, a selection was made for the future generalate: books of the Order, theses of Ursuline sisters, books on theology and spirituality, the history of Rome and Italian towns, centres of pilgrimage and art. Selections have also been made for the novitiate and the tertianship, as well as some provinces that expressed interest.

At the end of July and the beginning of August 2025, the Roman Union got going practically with "helpers" – sisters from various provinces and communities of Europe. Two groups of sisters came to help on different weeks and each added two days for the jubilee celebrations in Rome. They were very efficient working in a friendly, joyful and creative atmosphere. For them, as well as for the sisters of the general council and the community, the void which was created and increased was a surprise; but there was also gratitude for these 93 years during which diversity and unity, difference and dialogue paved the way for the new life that St. Angela has prepared with us. The lay personnel of the generalate have also had a tough journey to make. But we did it together.

What Sr. Sue wrote in Circular 311 is exactly what was experienced in the heart of each and every one of us, as well as in the communal celebrations: the house is truly a dwelling not of bricks and stones, but of our Ursuline identity, which the Lord has been shaping day by day since 1535. Accepting, letting go, surrendering, being detached, creating a space for new life: it is in this experience that the decisions made today find the soil for sowing. Yes, the grain dies when it accepts letting go, but it is already sprouting in humble and joyful peace and gratitude.

This step took place during the years in which the Church celebrated two synodal sessions on synodality; Pope Francis' completed his life's mission and Pope Leo was elected; and we celebrated the Jubilee of Hope. This step ended at the same time as the Jubilee ended and the Holy Doors were closed. But we know well that the pilgrimage continues day by day. **"Hope does not disappoint!"** (Rm 5,5)

Memories shared by Ursuline sisters of the Institute throughout the world.

When looking back on our time at the Generalate in Rome, we cannot fail to mention the tireless work carried out between **1970 and 1995** by Sister Luciana Mariani, Elisa Tarolli, Sister Marie Seynaeve and their assistants and translators, Sister Ignatius Stone and Sister Marie Bénédicte Rio, to help us discover the true character of our foundress, Angela Merici. How much research was done in the archives of Desenzano, Salò, Brescia, Milan, the Vatican, the archives of the Generalate, the Companies of Saint Ursula, and in various libraries to find books written about Angela or her time. So many nights spent, long vigils to find a particular document, to understand it, analyse it, compare it, until that priceless day in 1985 when the 'Trivulziana' rule was found, such a precious treasure for all the daughters of Saint Angela. This copy, close to the original, gave a new dimension to the rule through its simplicity and spiritual depth, which was closer to the truth.

A second milestone was reached with the publication of *Angela Merici, Contribution towards a Biography* in various languages. An inexhaustible source for anyone who wants to know Saint Angela and appreciate her true value.

As her discoveries progressed, Sister Luciana gave numerous conferences, courses, sessions and retreats to various audiences: tertianships, Italian religious women, academics. How many hours were spent writing, translating, searching for the meaning of this or that word in ancient Italian, translating it into modern Italian, French, English...

We will never be grateful enough to this team for their relentless search for the truth beneath the clouds of hagiography.

Sr Marie Andrée Jégou osu (France/Belgium/Spain)

My Tertianship (1961) in via Nomentana was a major transformation moment in my life. Memories abound. I arrived late the first night after a long journey. With true Via Nomentana hospitality I was offered a cup of tea: my response 'What I need is a POT of tea' caused great amusement and I immediately felt at home!



One of my key inspiration moments came as I sat among the vines in the garden. I received deep insight into the meaning of Jesus and the vine and the branches which has supported me ever since.



On another occasion as I sat among the stations of the cross during retreat, I experienced a deep unburdening and was able to 'throw away' things I was carrying.

A lasting friendship through the decades since tertian year with Kath O'Shea in Australia continues recently by Zoom!!



Sr Sarah McHugh osu (Ireland/Wales)

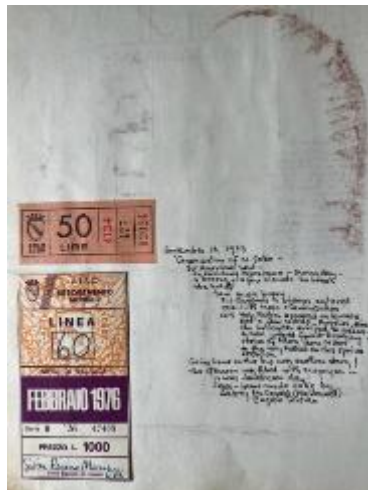
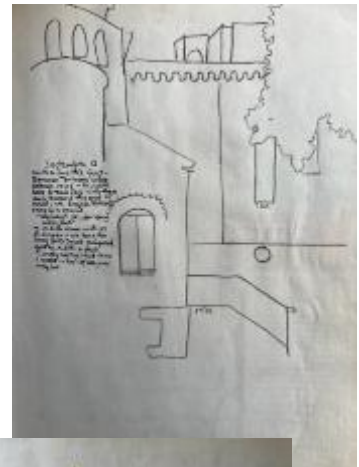
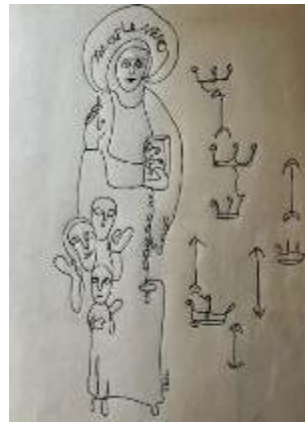
I loved my Tertianship days in Via Nomentana. I loved being immersed in the internationality of the residents there – our tertian group, the community members and the other tertian group (French) along with the Leadership team.

I loved the sense of being at the centre of Ursuline life. I loved walking in the neighbouring streets and absorbing something of Italian culture. I loved watching the lights at night from the roof and the sky in its various moods. I loved the garden. I used to walk in the garden as I remember.

It was a place of grace for me – a space where I could continue exploring the mystery of my unique relationship with God. We had excellent lecturers in the **tertianship of '74-'75**. Great gratitude from me.

Sr Therese Brennan osu (Australia)

Drawings of the Generalate by Sr Regina Marie Fronmüller osu
(USA Central), made during tertianship 1975-76.



The Tertian group - English Speaking, 1977-78



In the Generalate garden with M. Judith Mietzelfeld (Prioress General)



Sr. Kathleen Dwyer osu (Australia)

What does the Tertianship of **1979-1980** evoke in me?

A few things stand out for me, the spaciousness of the house; cool terrazzo bedroom floors; the gathering of all the sisters in the large chapel for liturgy as well as the intimacy of the Tertianship chapel; and the diversity of the Tertianship group, sisters from Indonesia, USA, Australia, Mexico, England and Ireland.

But for me the gift of Tertianship was the friendships forged over the nine months, friendships that lasted a lifetime between an Australian Frances Boston, an American Peggy Busby and myself. The bond was broken by Peggy's death a few years ago. Over the years we three managed to sustain, nourish, enhance each other's lives through writing, phone calls and we even managed to visit each other in Botswana, USA and Ireland. That for me was the precious gift of Tertianship made possible in Via Nomentana.



Sr Moya Hegarty OSU (Ireland/Wales)

Here are some Highlights of Beautiful memories at the Roman Union Generalate:

These events offered so many opportunities for enrichment at many places and events connected with our Ursuline history and the life of St. Angela, as well as, involvement with sisters from many countries around the world. I deeply appreciated all of them.

1. Tertianship **1982-1983**

I did not have any good photos but did scan two water colours that I did during the 30-day retreat.

2. June 13-29, **1990** with my brother – Rev. Robert Schwane, CM.

My brother, who had many frequent flyer miles, invited me to go to Rome. We received hospitality from Mother Bernadette Josèphe. Bob was grateful for the comfortable priest's room.

We did have a wonderful time. One of Bob's Vincentian



priests drove us to Assisi and a couple of other places. The rest of travels were in the city bus.



3. The Angela Session June 29 July, **1999**.

For the Angela Session there is a list of participants, a group photo, and one of me

ANGELA SESSION	July 1999	
Marija	Toplisniak	Croatia
Mihaela	Dumbovic	Croatia
Andrea	Ondrova	Czecho-Moravia
Pavla	Bukova	Czecho-Moravia
Mary Veronica	Gissing	England
Mary Richard	Thompson	England
Alexis	Soedibbo	Indonesia
Lioba	Mangoensoediro	Indonesia
Olga	da Silva	Indonesia
Anne Harte	Barry	Ireland
Eiko	Takanohashi	Japan
Chiyo	Kohari	Japan
Imelda	Dahill	Mexico
Nada	Furlan	Slovenia
Diane	Granger	Southern Africa
Maria	Howe-Watson	Southern Africa
Churi	Kirakittivad	Thailand
Watana	Satissarat	Thailan
Sumtra	Phongoathorn	Bangkok
Karen	Schwane	US Central
Muriel Rose	Boyle	US Central
Lilian	Repak	US West



Sr Karen Schwane, osu (USA Central)

My Tertianship:

From late **1984** to the following Spring, I had the privilege of being a tertian in Via Nomentana – a growthful, enriching and profound experience.

It was life-changing and there was support at all levels – warm hospitality, a gifted directress, friendships that were quickly forged, infinite patience with my struggles with the French language! and much to enable spiritual growth and development.....

I shall always treasure the many brief Ursuline exchanges I was privileged to have had with Luciana Mariani R.I.P. and Marie-Bénédicte Rio. The few months were an immersion into Angeline spirituality.

Sr Breda O'Shea osu (Ireland/Wales)

I did Tertianship in Rome in **1985 to 1986**. It was an enriching experience for me which I've never regretted. It's almost 40 years ago, so my memory of details is a bit hazy.

Sr. Gemma Lawlor was in charge of us. A lovely lady and the soul of kindness. Towards the end of my time there I was looking a bit 'peaky' due to missing my Irish spuds! Gemma purchased a bag of said vegetable with all permissions granted to cook them for myself. May she rest in peace.

My happiest memory is of the sisters of so many nationalities that I met in Rome. They were a great bunch and came from so many cultures. Up to that time, I had only encountered Irish Catholicism and the Irish way of doing things. I was thrilled with the imaginative liturgies created by Australians or Americans or other nationalities. Talk about a breath of fresh air!



I remember Via Nomentana as being enormous but homely and welcoming which was due to the nice spirit there. To me, buildings are just the background to the ups and downs of life, so I cannot say I



remember details about the house with one exception, namely, our coffee and tea room where we gathered to sip tea and chat. It was a lifeline when one was a little homesick. It was noticeable that some nationalities congregated there while others didn't feel the need. Drinking tea and sharing stories didn't form part of everyone's culture. The English, the Aussies and the sole Irish lady, me, savoured our brew.

I didn't fancy the idea of a 30-day retreat but had to do it as part of the package. I actually survived it quite well, directed by an American Ursuline, Sr Elizabeth O'Brien who was the soul of patience, God rest her. We had the privilege of doing the said retreat in Villa Cavaletti in the countryside.

Visits to sites of historical interest in the Eternal City were of great interest. We travelled to Assisi and Subiaco also. To tell you the truth, we were totally spoilt that year. I was lucky to spend those few months with a remarkable group of Ursulines who helped me to appreciate my calling and mission in life.



Sr. Barbara Burke osu (Ireland/Wales)

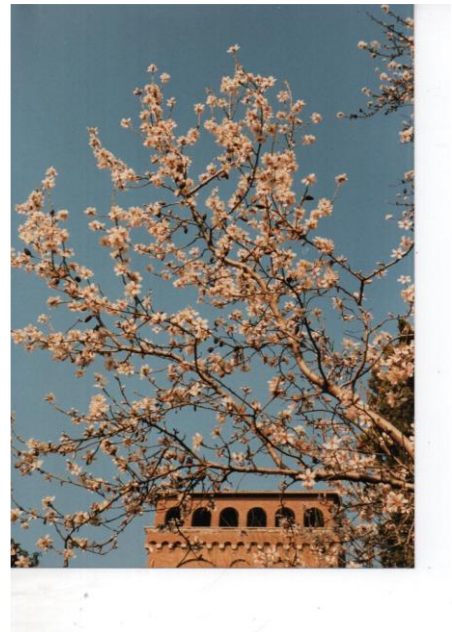
Tertianship 1987/88

A large group of 24



Five were Indonesian and loved the chance to cook for us

Spring in Rome was beautiful and very welcome after a cold winter



We had a private audience with the Pope John Paul II ... now canonized!...

Sr Mary Talty osu (Australia)

I am Elizabeth Susan Hatzenbuehler, currently in San Antonio, Texas. I was able to make tertianship in Rome in **1988-1989** AND celebrate my Silver Jubilee with all at the Generalate. Sr. Kathleen O'Shea was tertianship mistress. Every moment of the year was most, most graced and special.



Tertianship 1988-89



my Silver Jubilee



Sr Elizabeth Susan Hatzenbuehler osu (USA Central)

Tertianship 1990-1991

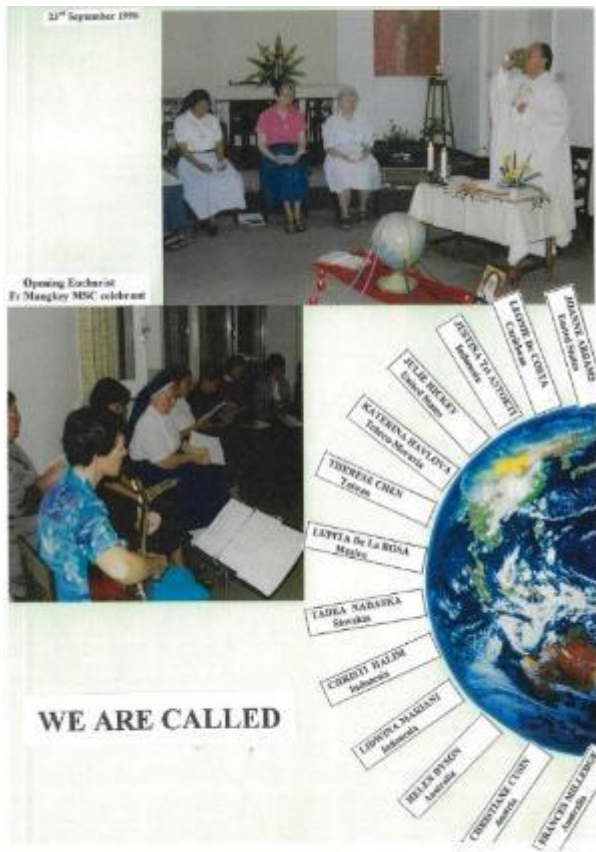
I arrived in Via Nomentana for tertianship late and in a very vulnerable state coming from the funeral of my father. I found it a very healing place with the welcome I experienced making me feel very much at home. After years in the African desert the comforts of Via Nomentana are especially memorable. Our leader, Jane Finnerty, was very supportive. An enduring challenge for me is Fr. Fullenbach's vision of the Kingdom of God where he stressed the call to be witnesses of justice, peace and joy. It grounded me then and still is a fundamental part of my spirituality today.

Sr Clare Ursula Tobin osu (Ireland/Wales)

Photos of my life at the General Council from **1995 to 2001**. I'm not sure of the date of the last photo. In any case, it was before Sr Virginia Cirone arrived at the Council as General Treasurer. Michelina Tenace (member of the Centre Aletti community) gave a good talk on the theme of Micah 6:8 at the beginning of the 2001 General Chapter. The last photo was taken during the group sharing during that chapter.

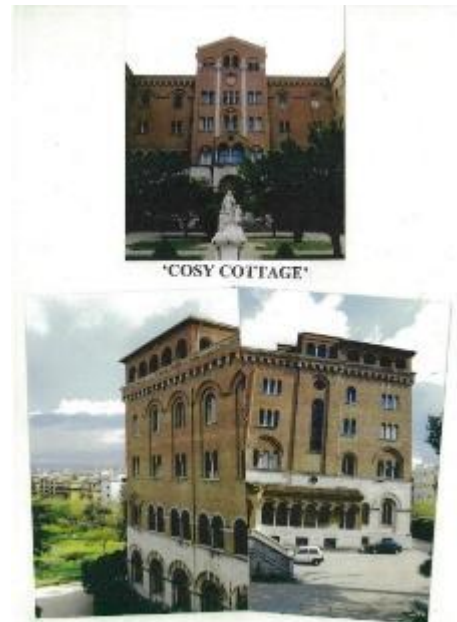


Sr Mihaela Bizjak osu (Slovenia)



I have these two photos from mine and Helen's tertianship time (**1998-1999**) at the Generalate which might be of use for the memories of the "cosy cottage».

Sr Frances Milledge osu (Australia)



* * * * *

Photos taken during the Enlarged General Council (EGC) in February **2012**. It was a particularly cold winter and snowed. It was the first time the sisters from India had seen snow.



Sr Anne Cougle osu (Australia)



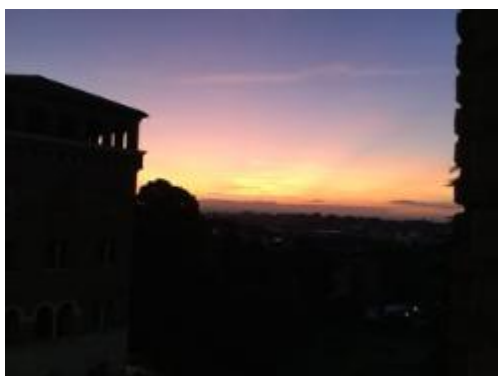
* * * * *

Photos, taken in February 2012 at the EGC at the Generalate



Sr. Ruth Durick osu (Australia)

Different views of the Generalate building itself.



Photos of the **2013** Chapter's focus in the Chapel



The group photos are from the **2013** General Chapter I attended and include

A) sisters from my Tertianship group who also were at the Chapter - 7 of us (standing)

B) sisters of the Asia Pacific who were also at this Chapter. (kneeling)



Sr. Lee Veriga osu (Australia)

Sr. Patty Andrew's niece, Angela Walsh, married Michael Handley in Rome in the Chapel of "Domus Australia" in **2014**. Shortly before the wedding, at the end of December 2013, all of us had a visit to the Generalate. The welcome and hospitality were truly Ursuline! All the sisters living there at the time made us feel so welcome, giving us a tour of the Generalate from the ground floor to the top. All enjoyed their view of Rome from the heights! We had a moment of contemplation in the Chapel and felt blessed. Many of the sisters who were living there at that time walked with us and shared stories. As you will see in the photo



there is Armida Veglio, Marie Thérèse le Goc, and Mary Alice Duggan. Cecilia Wang was our Prioress General at the time, and she gave us a very warm welcome.

The Generalate tour included the beautiful garden. Here we are in front of the statue of St. Angela. This is a small reminder to us of the expansion of St. Angela's Ursuline family, down through the centuries. As St. Angela promised us "You will see wonders." That is how it was for us during this special visit.



The fact that Angela Walsh (the bride to be) was an ex-student from St. Ursulas' College, Kingsgrove, added another meaningful connection to the whole Ursuline experience.

*Sr. Patty Andrew osu
Sr. Venera Nicolos osu
(Australia)*

June 2015

In the Generalate: Mary Mc Hugh, Anne-Marie Dixon, June Fennelly, Anne Harte Barry, Marianne O'Connor.

After several years of wondering about a future life in the Roman Union and as we prepared for Chapter 2016, our General Leadership Team travelled to Via Nomentana to discern with the Roman Union Central Leadership Team.



We had pages of questions, and they had pages of answers. However, the most significant thing was how, by first coffee break, we had sense that we were daughters of Angela seeking together. The rest is history!!!



Ireland Wales leadership team

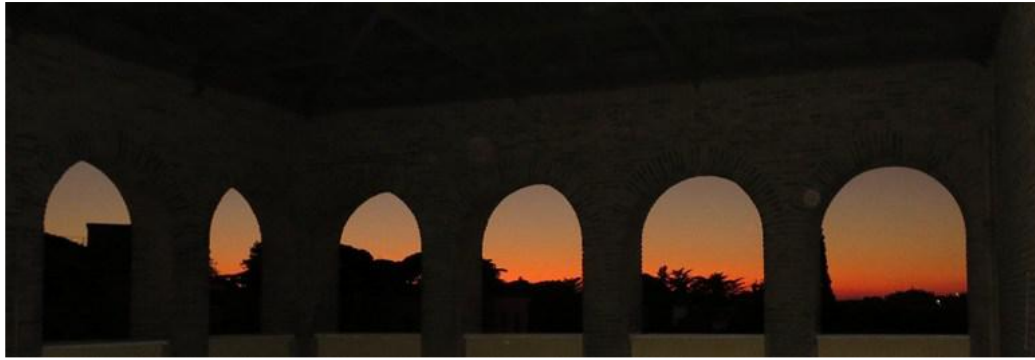
My Time at the Generalate

In 2017, I had the privilege of attending the meeting for young Ursulines at the Generalate in Rome. It was a time filled with excitement – meeting sisters from different countries and cultures, and discovering the beauty of Rome for the first time. Every encounter, every shared moment, felt like a celebration of our shared vocation.



One place in particular became deeply meaningful to me: the Chapter room. It was here that we gathered, prayed, reflected, and shared as young Ursulines. In that space, I felt a deep sense of unity and purpose. The Chapter room carried a quiet but powerful reminder – a call to become experts in the spiritual life, and to live with simplicity and quality in our community life. These two calls have stayed with me, continuing to shape my journey long after the meeting ended.

Sr. Susan Wanjiru osu (Kenya)



Some of my favourite memories of Via Nomentana are the different cloud formations and skylines that I have observed from the terrace. The arches created a beautiful frame through which to capture the colours and shapes.



One other strong memory is the planting of the fig tree at the end of the first international Ursuline pilgrimage – “Daughters of Angela” in 2022. We gathered with the community and the General Council, prayed and sang and planted the tree. It was a wonderful symbol of the union that exists in the Roman Union among Sisters and colleagues.



I have had the privilege of visiting Via Nomentana a number of times over the years and have been deeply touched by the welcome and generous hospitality of the Generalate community. Their attention to detail and their warmth is greatly appreciated. Thank you to all the Ursulines I have met and shared life with over the years in Via Nomentana.



Sr Helen Dyson osu (Australia)

My first and only time I ever spent in Via Nomentana was in October **2022** when I was a participant in the “Daughters of Angela” programme, and I have very fond memories of the place. I was surprised that the house was so vast, but glad that it could accommodate so many.

What a wonderful experience to meet people from all over the world — all associated with our Ursuline family and so in tune with Angela’s charism.

I loved the garden and a lovely memory I have is that of our group planting a fig tree there.



It was a beautiful ritual....each member when coming to Rome was asked to bring some soil from their own land. This was mixed together in a large pot and then used to plant the tree...each person involved in the process of planting. What a wonderful atmosphere we experienced that beautiful day in the sunshine as we and many other members of the household gathered for the ritual.

I like the idea that a little bit of my garden from Waterford Ireland is part of the garden of Via Nomentana along with soil from many other parts of the world... so symbolic.



Sr. Maureen Boland osu (Ireland/Wales)

3-word vignettes.

My first time arriving at Via Nomentana in the dark, January **2011**, to talk about the Ireland Ursuline Union (IUU) joining the Roman Union. I was so heartened to find Sr Cecilia Wang and Sr Armida Veglio sitting outside waiting for me...

Later, in **2021** onwards, being welcomed to Via Nomentana and shown around by “our” Kenyan Sisters Kevina Ekal, Pamela Kiraithe, Eunice Ndana, Francisca Mulatya, Susan

Around **2024**, after a hard day at a Finance Commission Meeting sitting at supper, relaxing with a glass of wine, chatting with Mery Malisan, Angela Poggi, Ruth Durick and Sr. Sue Flood...

Sr Kitty Kelly osu (Ireland/Wales)

Thank you to each one who has contributed to this issue of the Inter-Ursuline bulletin and all that has been shared beyond! We conclude it with this poem written for the 125th anniversary of the Roman Union of Ursulines - July 2025 by *the Juniors of the Group Sainte Angèle d'Afrique*

SOLI DEO GLORIA

One hundred and twenty-five years in the Pilgrimage of Hope
The story unfolded
Under the Signs of Hope
The Ursulines follow in the footsteps of La Madre

From Angela to the present day
Strong faith in God and unity guides their journey
In the Roman Union
United for the education of the human person

From Brescia, to the ends of the earth
Their fruitful mission
Souls, hearts, minds,
In the courage, perseverance and clarity they have grasped

The Ursulines sing together
For INSIEME's 125th anniversary
Against the tide,
Let us embrace the future with hope