

# C R O S S R O A D S

*A Newsletter of the Grail International Leadership Team*

*December 2012*

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**Deadline for the next Crossroads — 8<sup>th</sup> April 2013**  
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## LETTER FROM THE ILT NOVEMBER 2012

Dear Friends in the Grail all over the Globe,

Since we, the ILT, met in Boston in July 2012, many things have happened. The financial crisis is putting its mark on national Grail budgets and on the life of individuals and groups, droughts are limiting food security in East Africa, strikes and violence are shocking South Africa, the hurricane swept homes away in the USA and increased the work with Brothers and Sisters who lost their property and dear ones. A fire in Cornwall affected the community there. Grail women were reported sick, some have died and others have entered the movement. Be assured that our thoughts, prayers and good wishes accompanied you through that all - and yet ordinary life goes on every day anew.

The Grail generation 30/55 met in Portugal in August together with some LIEN plus members, and the ILT prepared a meeting with representatives of the European NLTs in Golega. From 28th of September till 3<sup>rd</sup> of October we discussed possibilities of Grail growth in Europe. Many suggestions came up and were reflected. Decisions were made, like having one reference person per country responsible for outreach and keeping an ongoing contact among the seven for exchange of experiences and plans. Mary Omedo will act as “European Information Officer/Secretary” – and with two others from the reference group a newsletter will be produced 4 x a year. Financial support was promised if staff is needed to approach young women through programmes. All countries were in favour of putting up the European Project “Women’s Faith in Action” – as planned by Robin Sclafani and her team - even so the application to the EU was turned down. LIEN, newly put reborn, shall continue and spread to all European countries. We wish every success for the plans and an evaluation after one year will show if the right way is followed.

Carol utilized her stay in Portugal in giving TforT programmes (in spite of a sprained ankle) and Christa witnessed a very touching nucleus meeting in Lisbon.

The TXINTXA Team of four: Maria Carlos, Anne Hope, Patricia Gemmel, and Lucy Kimaro together with Christa made plans during a Skype meeting – and they arranged to see each other in March 2013 in Kleinmond to reflect on the purpose and goals of the programme, to plan for the next steps and to find methods of working efficiently together.

The web-site of the International Grail is in the process of getting a new face through Lindia Trout, SA. We plan for it to be presented as draft to the participants of the IC. The 70/100 preparation team is working out an agenda for the days in the USA in May 2013 and the CSW group in New York has approved two interns – from PNG and South Africa – to do the preliminary work of the UN-Conference in March on “violence against women and girls”.

The International Council Meeting in January in Belo Horizonte and the needed reports and agenda with timetable and arrangements of speakers are presently almost “the daily bread” of the ILT and the group in Brazil! Early December the packet with the documents and papers will be send out to all Grail countries so that the representatives will come prepared to Belo Horizonte.

We are also very pleased that Carol Shields Siemering has taken agreed to compile and edit CROSSROADS. This is her first issue, and we thank you very much, Carol, for this work and we welcome you as the new editor.

An inspiring and blessed Advent season to you all – and many greetings and love

The ILT Team

Carol Webb

Christina dos Anjos

Christa Werner

## **WORDS FROM THE EDITOR** by Carol Siemering

From the editor: the International Leadership Team thought it would be inspiring to use themes for our future issues of Crossroads. We will be using our International Vision Statement as the source for these themes. This is a wonderful opportunity for countries to share how they are living out and manifesting different aspects of the statement. For this issue the ILT chose the call to social justice and peace.

This is the part of our vision statement that was the inspiration for this issue:

"We are called to create a sustainable world, **transforming our planet into a place of peace and justice.**"

The statement goes on to say: "**We acknowledge that we are part of the whole of creation, striving to live simply and to nurture a culture of care for all the earth.**" Our next issue will focus on our "call to create a sustainable world" and how we live out that call in our nurturing and caring for the earth.

We will continue to have Crossroads be a place for other sharing as well.

## **GRAIL INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE**

The International Exchange Team of Jeanette Loanzon, The Philippines, Marian Schwab, United States, and Fran Warner, Australia met in Sydney from 22 – 28 September, 2012. Ruth Crowe joined the meeting and provided invaluable support in the hand over as she leaves the team and is replaced by Fran. Thanks to Ruth for her great leadership in this work and to her, and to others at the Sydney Grail House, Helen Gomez and Alison Healey, for the warm welcome and great hospitality. Thanks also to other Sydney Grail members who joined the team for a Welcome meal at the beginning of the meeting week.

The I E Team has developed a package of documents which have been sent to the ILT for further ideas, and which will be workshopped by the IC Members at their meeting in Brazil in January 2013. The Package includes

- International Exchange in the Grail – an outline of why it is important and how it can be encouraged by National Leadership teams, with help from the I E team – this includes the Vision offered by the I E Team and some models of International Exchange within the Grail, what Grail International Exchange includes and does not include, how the IE Team will work, and the assumptions underlying the work of the I E Team
- International Exchange Invitation form – to be completed by the NLT in a country offering invitations to Grail members to come from other countries, and passed onto the IE Team – Marian Schwab will receive the proposals in 2012-2013
- International Exchange Between Grail Countries – Expression of Interest – to be completed by one or more Grail members seeking an opportunity for an International Exchange experience
- Visa Application Guidelines useful for both sending and receiving countries

In particular the IE Team encourages and hopes to support the following proposals immediately and into 2013:

1. An interchange of one or two on social methodology with the Grail group in Morelos, Mexico – Fran will be the contact person
2. English language immersion experience in Canada, with priority availability to Brazilians – Marian will be the contact person
3. A secondary school teacher for St Teresa of Avila school – Fran will be the contact person
4. Use of space/accommodation offers in Utrecht (up to one year for a student writing a dissertation) and Mulheim (for work with students etc)- Jeanette will be the contact person
5. Small group trip from the Netherlands to Uganda, guided by Carla van Tiel - Marian will be the contact person

The I E team has contacted the NLT in all countries which submitted ideas/proposals for I E before the 2011 IGA advising of the next steps for each of those proposals. Many of these will also be encouraged and supported during 2012 - 2013. Some proposals have been referred to the International Solidarity Fund or to the International Formation Team.

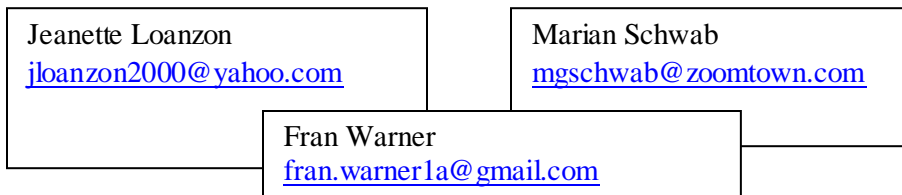
International Exchange has always been a wonderful and integral part of Grail life. – some recent successful initiatives have come from the Swedish Grail in the retreats/pilgrimages (ongoing), the UN CSW participation of young women from around the world (ongoing), and the annual program offered by the Portuguese Grail at Golega.

All Grail Members are encouraged to consider the following specific invitations which have already been made, and for which any interested member should directly contact the National Leadership Team in the relevant country:

- Visit Sweden and make contact with Grail members while there
- Visit Canada and make contact with Grail members while there
- Administration staff member at Avila, Sydney Grail Centre

The internationality of the Grail is one of our greatest strengths. International Exchange of Grail members, and those seriously exploring Grail membership, can be a powerful support as we look to invite others into the Grail and strengthen our Grail participation. Only by doing this can the Grail strive to achieve our Vision:

*We are called to create a sustainable world, transforming our planet into a place of peace and justice. ... Recognizing the global realities we confront, we are committed to growing together and learning from one another's wisdom, experience and spiritual search. (International Grail Vision Statement 2011)*



## **PEACE AND JUSTICE** by Mary Boyd

Pope Paul VI said that “Development is the new name for Peace.” This is a statement that makes all kinds of sense in a world crying out for peace and justice. So what is this development that leads to peace? Not everyone is on the same page when defining it. The definition of development that creates peace is justice, as defined by the Second Vatican Council. Justice calls for the transformation of the present unjust economic, political and social structures that govern the world. It is based on such principles as the Gospel Preferential Option for the Poor.

Development and Peace, the official international development agency of the Canadian Catholic Bishops is one example of an organization that several Canadian Grail members support through donations and active involvement. The organization presents a unique way to work for justice and peace because of its practice of solidarity and partnership. Its vision statement is clear that it stands for change and its mission statement explains that it: “Supports partners in the Global South who promote alternatives to unjust social, political and economic structures.” Furthermore it educates the Canadian public about “the causes of poverty and mobilizes Canadians toward actions for change. In the struggle for human dignity the organization forms alliances with northern and southern groups working for social change. It also supports women in their search for social and economic justice.”

Every fall the organization launches a massive education program with Canadians, especially in parishes, trade unions, primary producer organizations and a variety of community groups. There is always an action, usually a post card and on-line campaign with a strong message to the Prime Minister and whatever ministry is responsible for the issue at hand. The post card is accompanied by background material designed to help people understand the problem in depth.

So what is unique about these campaigns? They are not chosen by Canadians alone. They are chosen in dialogue with our partners in the Global South. These partners identify issues that are keeping their people in poverty and oppression, that stand in the way of true development and overcoming poverty. They choose an issue that has connections with Canadian

policy that needs to be changed and together in dialogue we develop an education/action process aimed to transform the situation. This feature of the organization has made it both respected and effective.

In the past years we have tackled issues such as the need to place constraints on Canadian mining companies in the Global South; the patenting of seeds; small farmers needing to protect themselves from GE and biofuels; water; militarization; sustainable development and ecological justice. Archbishop Oscar Romero was a partner as were five Nobel peace prize winners. We have met with some great successes, some failures and now a threat of retaliation from the present Canadian government which has cut matching funds for our programs in the Global South by 65 percent. The rest of the money for this work is donated in parishes and by year-round donors.

I have been involved with Development and Peace for many years, during which I served on the National Council as a member of the Executive and have held the offices of National Vice president, Secretary, Treasurer, Chair of the Solidarity Committee and Chair of the Africa Programs Department for Africa and the Middle East. At the moment I am Chair of the Diocesan Council and have the joy of working with a great group of grass roots activists who are close to ordinary people. Following the principle of the Gospel Preferential Option for the poor is a way to keep us on track and always mindful of who we are working with. We are mindful of the one percent (or one-tenth of one percent) who control so much of the world's wealth. We are in solidarity with the many that have so little by way of food, water, land and are prevented by the same structures that increase the wealth of the wealthy from the means of overcoming their situation. As a practicing Catholic I am strengthened by Christ's Gospel message of justice, by the many illustrations Christ gives, and by the body of church social teaching that calls us to participation: "It is not enough to denounce social ills and talk about a new order. Social justice is the goal. Political action is a means to obtain that goal. We are called to participate in actions to change the practices of governments, corporations, and other institutions that cause human suffering. People must come together to act for fundamental social change. This is our political responsibility as Christians and citizens in a democratic society." (*From Words to Action, A Pastoral message on the social and political responsibilities of Christians, CCCB, Ottawa*)

## **ACTIVITIES OF GRAIL MÉXICO REGIÓN MORELOS** **VALLEY OF MÉXICO FOR THE PROMOTION OF PEACE AND JUSTICE**

In 1987, our Grail work began for the promotion of peace and justice as part of the activities of SERPAJ (Service of Peace and Justice) in México. Several members of the Grail have been active participants in SERPAJ in recognition and support of its creation by Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, winner of Nobel Peace Prize, from our sister country of Argentina, whose concern led him to establish SERPAJ as a Latinamerican organism for the promotion of active non violence and popular movements in the struggle for justice.

In communities of various countries in the region, SERPAJ has carried out workshops and published educational materials on non violence. We as Grail in México have participated in these activities of promotion of non violence as an important path in the struggles against violence.

For more than a decade, members of the Grail in the region of Morelos/ Valley of México, assumed the responsibility for the women's program of SERPAJ in México, in focus primarily on the formation of women community leaders»

In Morelos, cultural events are being promoted in the main plazas in populations where there are more cases of violence against women»

Recently workshops are being planned and held to reduce the effects of violence on children through the substitution of war toys and the stimulation of non violent solutions to conflicts, in coordination with the parish of Ampliation in Los Reyes, State of México.

## **TWO PIECES** by *Chris de Leeuw*

### **All Souls' Day**

We stand at the quay of the Amstel with around hundred people in the midst of Amsterdam in remembrance of the people who, in an attempt to reach "Paradise Europe", died along the borders of our continent. Each year between 1000 and 1500 men and women drown as they try to cross the Mediterranean Sea in ramshackle boats.

We listen, pray and sing. Each one of us throws a white flower in the water as the choir sings: 'the sea shall give up her dead, to those who went down, justice will be done'. I am deeply impressed, realising how unwilling we are to share our richness with the have-nots, feeling responsible.

Inside a professor of the Amsterdam university tells us about his research. He is trying to find out how many people actually died at the borders since in 1993. One institution gave fluctuating figures for every year, giving an overall of 17,000 dead. With the help of locals in countries such as Greece and Italy, he searches municipal archives and local newspapers for all these years as well. He is also researching whether the regulations Europe made during the past years resulted in more deaths.

One African boy told us how his boat which was leaving Libya with 72 people, got into trouble. He told how a helicopter saw them, brought water, took a picture of the boat and promised to get help. For a fortnight nobody came to the rescue, not even the ships that sailed past. The wind drove them back to Libya. Sixty three people died on that boat. There were only 9 survivors. In Libya he was taken to prison but afterwards he crossed the sea again. Now he is safe in the Netherlands, having a refugee status to stay here.

*Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine*

### **Justice**

On a busy street in Amsterdam we stand with a large banner: 'stop arms trade'. Some people don't see us, others look away, or look with a pitiful glance, or look interested and take one of the flyers. We spend 150.000.000.000 euros each year on armament while millions of people go hungry... Making people conscious about this is important, but is this an efficient way? Should I invest in a new mobile, with twitter, Facebook and other communication means to reach more people? Is standing there, or signing on the internet the many requests to world leaders to do something about disarmament, or talking about it on occasion enough?

Where the Dutch once were known for their tolerance, the last years have seen a terrible change: many refugees without proper papers are being imprisoned, for many months up till over a year. A few of them might get permission to stay, some of them are being sent to their home country - if their embassies will accept them and give them papers. The larger part are being put out onto the street without enough money to spend a night at a house for homeless people. In my own city Zaandam we have two prison boats (officially called 'detention pontoons') where 550 men were imprisoned whose only 'crime' was not to have the right papers to be in our country. We volunteers often feel powerless, the only things we can do are: being present during the Sunday services and pouring out cups of soft drinks, giving them a nice afternoon once a fortnight: talking with them, playing games and giving them sweets, drinks, etc., or standing vigil at the prison once a month with a group of people, just to let them know they are not forgotten, that there are people who do not agree with the way they are being treated. The mere fact that someone from outside takes the trouble to come seems to be important to them, gives them courage to bear with being imprisoned. Last month the boats are closed and the men are sent to other prisons. The only thing we can still do is signing requests and protests on the internet and writing papers to political parties.

*(In 2011 there was an International Grail Publication on Migrant Matters, in which I wrote a larger article about this.)*

## **WEEKLY PEACE VIGIL**

*Claremont, California by Mary E. Gindhart*

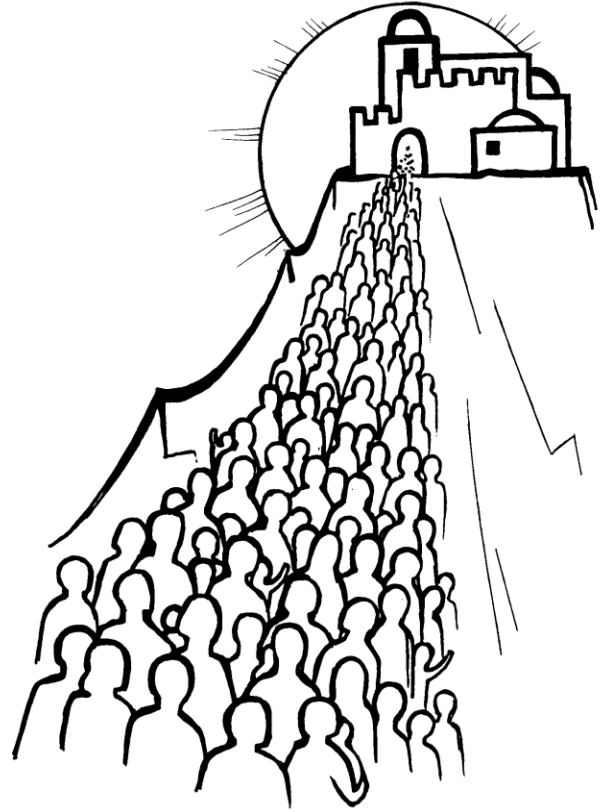
Grail members Eva Fleischner, Teresa Wilson, Peg Linnehan and Mary Gindhart join the Pilgrim Place Peace Vigil every Friday afternoon at a busy intersection in Claremont, California. Every Friday means regardless of temperature, holidays or holy days.

Under the leadership of Jim and Joann Lamb (one of our Grail members who died recently), and other members of the Pilgrim Place community, this witness for Peace was started when the United States went to war with Afghanistan in 2001 and subsequently invaded Iraq. As we all know, the war in Afghanistan continues into the present. While U.S. troops left Iraqi territory December 2011, units of Special Forces have been quietly assigned elsewhere. Meanwhile Drone warfare adds another violent dimension.

We peace vigilers, 15 to 20 of us regularly, stand quietly, smiling, waving to all who drive by. Our bright yellow signs declare: *End the Wars Now, This War is a Bloody Mistake, Jobs, not war, World War II veteran for peace, Grandmother for peace, Teachers, not wars, Blessed are the peace makers, Think peace.*

Drivers increasingly honk their horns in agreement, smile, give peace signs with their hands or wave. It gets scary when occasionally someone takes both hands off of the steering wheel to applaud! In the earlier years we were given many nasty hand gestures, often abused verbally, and occasionally physically threatened. Today few drivers register disagreement. In fact the children in the cars often wave and give peace signs. Sometimes even their dogs look at us and seem to catch the spirit by wagging their tails!

Best of all perhaps, a Friday community is being created among we vigilers on the Four Corners corner, many pedestrians, and the folks driving by. People sometimes stop... a worried mother to say her son has just been sent to Afghanistan, an angry teenager to say his brother was killed in Afghanistan or Iraq. Some say, "thank you for being here." Others say, "God bless you."



## **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

### ***IT IS TIME TO FOCUS ON HEALING OUR WOUNDS AND CREATING MORE PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES*** by Maureen Laflin

Twenty-seven Grail women from throughout the Americas gathered in Mexico City from July 8-16, 2012 to learn from each other, to build relationships, and to determine how we can best collaborate and support each other in our work. We selected two main themes upon which we would collectively work over the next four years – (1) Restorative Justice and (2) Food Sovereignty/ Food Safety. This article will address restorative justice.

Restorative justice is a philosophy which calls forth a shift in our understanding of justice. It is a theory of justice which emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behavior. The objective is to restore correct and harmonious relationships between the victim, the offender, and the community. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes which restore the human dimension on the personal and on the social level by addressing the needs of all involved and by changing the way we think and communicate with offenders, crime victims, and the community as a whole.

Restorative justice is a community's response to crime that focuses on the harm the actions have caused the victims and the community and asks the offender to be accountable for his or her actions. This approach also addresses the underlying causes of the offense. Restorative approaches provide an opportunity for the victims of crimes to have their needs addressed and for the offenders to be re-integrated into the community as positive, contributing citizens. This is not a new concept. Many scholars believe that it has existed since humans first began forming communities and that it has been the dominant theory of criminal justice throughout the world.

Some view restorative justice practices as an alternative to incarceration and revenge, enabling all parties to communicate, attempt to understand what has happened to the community, and then proceed to healing and restoration. These tasks can be accomplished through various means, from traditional talking circles to formal victim/offender mediation and conferences. This is a difficult process and requires thoughtfulness, awareness, and inner strength. Restorative justice practices help to unify communities affected by crime and to transform community members divided by the criminal justice system.



Three principles form the foundation for restorative justice: (1) Justice requires that we work to restore those who have been injured; (2) those most directly involved and affected by crime or injustice should have the opportunity to participate fully in the response if they wish; and (3) government's role is to preserve a just public order, and the community's is to build and maintain a just peace.

For example, in the United States, we predominately use a retributive form of justice which focuses on deterring, incapacitating, rehabilitating, and inflicting retribution on individual defendants. The problem is that punishment alone does not address the full impact of crime. Crime harms the victim, the community, and the offender. Restorative justice focuses on accountability and repairing harm, not creating more. It looks at what the survivors need to move forward. For the victims, it asks what they need to recover from the crime. For the offender, this may entail prison time. But that is not enough. Most inmates are ultimately released and returned to the communities they left. Offenders may need assistance in changing their behavior. They need to understand/confront their story -- what caused them to choose crime? What will cause them to make a different choice in the future? Can we help them break the chain of crime and violence? Restorative Justice practices expect that offenders can become contributing members of society, victims can become thriving survivors, and we can reduce the struggle people face in the aftermath of crime.

### **Different Models of Restorative Justice Projects:**

One of the best known examples of restorative justice is South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). In sharp contrast to the approach taken in the Nuremberg Trials after World War II, the TRC emphasized reconciliation. In lieu of protracted legal proceedings, the TRC provided victims an opportunity to be heard and to tell their stories and the perpetrators to provide an accounting of their actions in exchange for amnesty.

In the USA, the two most common restorative justice programs are: victim-offender mediation (VOM); and family-group or group conferencing (GC). VOM is a process in which a victim confronts the offender (with or without family members present) to discuss the crime and its impact. GC is a process in which a caring community (which often includes family members) meets with the victim and offender to review what happened during the crime, its impact on the parties involved, and how to prevent it from recurring in the future. Restorative justice programs in the United States, while growing in number, still tend to be somewhat removed from most criminal justice systems. Jurisdictions that utilize these programs generally limit their use to minor offenses, specific victims, or juvenile offenders.

Another approach focuses on effecting healing through a more in-depth exploration of the impact of violence and conflict in our lives. Monica Maher, a USA Grail member living in Ecuador, co-facilitates Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops in Ecuador and Honduras. The AVP Project is an international network of volunteers who facilitate workshops "empowering people to lead nonviolent lives, based on respecting and caring for ourselves and others." The workshops focus on communication, interpersonal conflict resolution skills, trauma healing, and understanding causes of violence both in ourselves and in the world. AVP volunteers conduct workshops in the community and in prisons. The Center for Religious Tolerance is supporting Dream Weavers to expand their work with youth, indigenous women and trauma healing in 2013. Monica's plans going forward in Ecuador are to collaborate with Dreamweavers (see below) and bring AVP workshops to indigenous communities near Quito, Ecuador as well as to expand the work being done at the Colombian-Ecuador border, rife with violent conflict. In Honduras, plans for 2013 are to increase AVP work with young women and with indigenous communities. For more information about AVP see [www.avpusa.org](http://www.avpusa.org).

Dreamweavers is a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy working for justice and environmental sustainability and empowerment of women in Honduras. Dreamweavers offers workshops and retreats in conflict resolution, trauma healing, feminine spirituality, and classes in useful skills. They are associated with a credit union and cooperative store in their working-class neighborhood and campaign for women's health programs, protection from domestic violence and targeted murders of women and girls. They have worked with people who come out of conflict zones. Similar to Monica Maher's work in Honduras and Ecuador, the Dreamweavers must confront their own internal violence in order to work for nonviolence in the world. As Nelly Del Cid, Director of Dreamweavers of the Sisters of Mercy in Honduras, as well as the Coordinator for the Quaker Alternatives to Violence Program in Honduras, stated recently in New York, "The whole justice system in the country is a shambles, so we don't expect anything from it. But we want our mobilizing to be a model for the rest of the population. We stimulate the dream that we want to see for the country; we discuss what we dream about."

Similarly in the United States, Quantita Munday, USA Grail member in Ohio, conducts workshops which are grounded in restorative processes. Her work focuses on spiritual healing, empowerment of women, remembering the injury (“Until we take the time to empty out that which no longer serves us, we will not have room for that which does”). Her current workshops include – African American Spirit Healing, Global Day of Grieving for Descendants of Slaves, and Feminine Wisdom Retreats.

Restorative Justice is a call for something else, a justice response that sees the humanity in each person and provides a pathway for restoration. The principles and practices of restorative justice are very much aligned with the Grail movement, thus making it a logical theme for the GWIA. For more information on restorative justice and specific information about restorative justice efforts in your countries, see Restorative Justice Online, [www.restorativejustice.org](http://www.restorativejustice.org). See also [www.iirp.edu/iirpWebsites/web/uploads/article\\_pdfs/96218\\_RP\\_LatinAmerica\\_Pt\\_2.pdf](http://www.iirp.edu/iirpWebsites/web/uploads/article_pdfs/96218_RP_LatinAmerica_Pt_2.pdf) for a discussion of restorative practices in Latin America.

## OBITUARIES

### *Margot Harrison and AnnWoodruff, Australian Grail members*

We have lost two of our long time members, both remarkable women who left a lasting legacy of good deeds among their families, friends, work colleagues and the institutions in which they were employed. Margot Harrison decided at the age of 17 that she would dedicate her life in The Grail and remained a faithful member of the Grail Nucleus for 66 years till she died on July 27, 2012. Ann Woodruff first connected with The Grail during the Adult Education Programs at ‘Tay Creggan’ in the 1960s and became a committed member in the early 1970s. Both were nurses trained at St. Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne. Margot lived and worked in several locations in Australia and overseas. Both died after a prolonged period of physical decline and their going, while it brings sadness, also leaves us feeling proud of their lives well lived and peaceful at heart knowing that, to paraphrase Dickens, it is a far, far better place they go to.

*Melbourne Grail group*

### *Eileen Marie Schaeffler June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1927—August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

Eileen Schaeffler, the former president of the Grail in the United States and the International Grail, died August 4 in New York City. Eileen was born June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1927 in New York. She attended diocesan high school on a scholarship and graduated *cum laude* with a B.A. degree in Social Sciences in 1948 from St. John’s University as Class Valedictorian.

Eileen joined the Grail movement in 1946 through University contacts, and worked at the Grail Center, Monica House, in Brooklyn from 1946-1949. After spending six months at Grailville in 1949 she returned to Monica House and to professional work in the field of child study for an adoption agency in New York until 1952.

She moved to Detroit to help initiate the Gateway Grail Center and lived there from 1952 to 1955 where she was involved in cultural, social, economic and liturgical efforts to develop a sense of community in an inter-racial neighborhood. While she was studying courses at Wayne University, she was awarded the government Fulbright Scholarship grant for 15 months to study efforts at developing community in Europe with a special emphasis on social planning in the Netherlands, programs of international development in Paris, and international social work in Rome. During this period Eileen participated in the Grail training program at the Tiltenberg, where she made her dedication as a Nucleus member on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1956.

When she returned to the U.S. she joined the staff of the Grail international student center in New York. In 1957 Lydwine von Kersbergen appointed Eileen national vice-president of the Grail in the U.S., with primary concern for geographical expansion and development of fields of action.—this involved continuous travelling in the U.S. and Canada.

In 1962 she was named President of the Grail in North America for a five-year term and in 1964 became a member of the International Advisory Board and the following year was named to the International Board.

Eileen was elected International President of the Grail in 1967, with Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo as Vice-President, and made the International Secretariat in Paris, France, her headquarters during her term in office from 1967 until 1971. Her travels and responsibilities took her around the world to wherever Grail teams were established.

In 1975, she was appointed Director of the Women’s Bureau in Region V, of the U.S. Department of Labor in Chicago. Returning to New York after retiring from the Women’s Bureau, Eileen developed her relationships with the United

Nations Non-Governmental Organizations where she was the Vice President for Social Development Projects for UFER (Union Fraternelle entre les Races et les Peuples). Raymond Martineau, Secretary General of UFER, notes, “As UFER representative, she was very active in the 1970s in the struggle against apartheid and in supporting the efforts of the liberation movements of Angola and Mozambique together with Grail members in Portugal and South Africa. In the 80s, she worked for the Division for Palestinian Rights of the United Nations. She was assigned to the section dealing with relations with civil society organizations. She used to come to Geneva for an annual meeting of the NGOs on the question of Palestine.”

She greatly enjoyed her participation in The Labor Chorus. In 1998 she wrote that “the Chorus is booked up for performances all over the map—especially because of the Paul Robeson centenary (culminating at Carnegie Hall!) In addition I am one of several chorus members who will be recording with Peter Paul and Mary a CD for children to pass on the flame.”

In preparation for U.S. General Assembly in 1975 she wrote the following self-description: “I am the daughter of a labor union organizer and of a political activist (I guess my mother was liberated rather early on). When I graduated from college I wanted to be a politician—theologian—psychologist. Since there was no way to do that I joined the Grail instead, to have a little bit of everything!”

### ***SongKang (Victoria)***

SongKang (Victoria) Huang died May 31, 2012 in Brussels . SongKang came to know about the Christian faith during a literature course on the New Testament. The literature touched her heart and she asked for baptism. She left China when the Communist Party took over in 1949 and went first to the US. When I came to the Tiltenberg International Centre in Holland 1954, Victoria had made already her dedication and was a member of the Nucleus. She studied in Leiden and received a PhD. She managed to return to China to see her parents , however with the consequence that the US-Embassy refused her an entrance visa to the US to pursue an academic career.

Joan Overboss accompanied her in her struggle to really integrate her Chinese cultural background with a deep faith in Jesus Christ. Already then an East-West Group existed in the Grail that studied together the cultural implications of the Christian faith, also for the Grail. Victoria was released from her oath of dedication by Magdelene Oberhoffer, who was the International President of the Grail, before she returned to live in China. In Beijing 1963 Victoria was offered a research post in the Academy of Social Science, focussing on the early contacts of China with the West But soon afterwards Victoria was caught up in the Cultural Revolution, no contact was possible any more and some news came that she was dead.

Twenty years later a sign of life arrived in the Netherlands. In the eighties Victoria managed to come to Louvain for further research about China leaving her child behind which ensured the Chinese that she would return there. Magdelena and I visited her there and it was a moving reunion. The only thing Victoria mentioned about the time of the cultural revolution, when she had been in a camp of the Red Guards, was that the baby had saved her life. My sister, who had visited Victoria in Beijing while Mao was still in power also met her husband – who appeared “like an empty box” due to torture.

Later when things had changed in China, Victoria was able to go back and forth, and bring her son to Brussels too. She kept the dream alive that one day the Grail would become a living reality in China. Victoria was very clear about this: “As long as the Grail is not rooted in China, you cannot call yourself international.” Now she is one of us laid to rest in the soil of her ancestors and taken up into the fullness of life.

*Marita Estor*

## **A THANK YOU NOTE TO MARY GINDHART**

The ILT and the International Secretariat would like to recognize the work Mary Gindhart has been doing all these years on the crossroads. She has been seeing to it that the articles to be published are received in time and editing crossroads until this year, March 2012 when she requested if someone else could take over the work from her and thanks to Carol Siemering who offered to be carrying on with this.

A very big thank you to Mary G.!

