C R O S S R O A D S

A Newsletter of the Grail International Leadership Team

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Letter from Outgoing ILT

Dear Grail sisters around the world –

For the out-going International Leadership Team, this is our farewell letter to you. While we as a team set aside our leadership role, we not only say goodbye but send you off with our abiding hopes.

We hope that the planned study of *Laudato Sí* throughout the Grail world will give a new push to committed work to protect the integrity of the planetary home we share. We hope that a new focus on communications will result in better ways to relate to one another and to the rest of the world – ways that are effective for Grail members on every continent.

We hope that different approaches to formation, aimed not just at women joining us but on the on-going development of members, will bring life and joy throughout the movement. Among both new and old members, we hope for a deeper appreciation and strengthening of the gifts we bring to one another and to the world.

We hold some hopes especially close to our hearts, like the hope that we all have the courage to face the issues of faith that divide us and cause so much pain. Through a process of engagement in such dialogue with one another, we hope that bonds of trust will be reestablished in creative new ways.

As the Grail approaches its 100th birthday, we hope that the insight members share about their power to transform the world will inspire more women – like those of the emerging countries -- to commit their life's energy and join hands in sisterhood with the women of the Grail. The movement of refugees, the cries of starving children, human rights abuses, the exploitation of the earth for the benefit of the few -- all call out for a response from women who share a commitment to a loving God.

Those of us departing the ILT know we are not leaving our relationships with all of you whom we have come to treasure even more because of our experience. As Maria Carlos moves on to become part of a new ILT, and Zodwa and Marian leave our leadership role, we are glad for the team that will follow us. May there be a flowering of the Spirit in everything they undertake. We know you will love and support them through the years, as you have loved and supported us, while they generously give to the movement the unique gifts they bring.

With much love,

Zodwa and *Marian*

Letter from Incoming ILT

Dear Friends in the Grail all over the Globe,

This issue of Crossroads comes at the time when the new International Leadership Team (ILT) will be earnestly preparing for a hand-over meeting which will be taking place in March. As we actively prepare for this meeting and stepping into our new role, we begin by offering thanks to the outgoing ILT and to all those other Grail women who have been supporting us during this transition phase.

We thank the outgoing ILT: Zodwa, Marian, and also Maria Carlos who will be continuing with the new team. Thank you for your faithful and dedicated service during these past four years as you not only continued to bring the Grail Spirit to life, but also by your willingness to listen, consult, and be available tirelessly in so many ways. So as we officially say good-bye to Zodwa and Marian as you retire from this role, we welcome the experience Maria Carlos will bring as we begin our four-year journey together as ILT.

At the hand-over meeting, not only will we be learning about all aspects of this role, we will also be preparing a smooth transition and an action plan for our first year.

At this time, we also want to thank the ILT Administrative Assistant, Mary Omedo, for her commitment to keeping the Secretariat running smoothly; the International Finance Officer, Mary Farrell; in addition to the Finance Team, the International Council members and the members of all the other International Teams who have continued their good work without waiting for the new ILT to begin.

We would also like to thank the International Election Team of Ruth Crowe, Sheila Hawthorn and Anne Day for conducting an open and fair election process; the National Election Persons for making sure that all eligible Grail members participate in the process; Grail women around the globe who took their responsibility seriously and nominated candidates. It was heartening to see so many women willing to take responsibility for the Grail at the international level.

As we two, Dilma and Mary, join with Maria Carlos to form the new ILT, all three of us are touched by your confidence in us, and by the abundance of notes sent recently, promising prayers and support. As we take on the responsibility of serving the Movement at the International level for the next four years, we will let these expressions of hope echo in our hearts. We pray that we have the discernment and ability to serve the Grail according to the challenges of the present time.

Dilma, Mary and *María Carlos*

Note from the Editor

This Crossroads theme is "Generations". Here is what I said in the call for articles. "The Grail is rich in that it is a movement consisting of women of all different ages. In many counties the majority of members are wise and elder women. Unlike the way much of society views elders, The Grail values and encourages these women to be as full contributors to the movement as they can be. Many women have joined in their "middle age", now free from child rearing and more secure in their professions. There is everywhere a call to have more young women join us and bring their wisdom and energy. And yes, there are those among us who are old and can no longer contribute, who are frail in body and/or mind. How do we show our love and respect and gratitude to them? We can see that each generation has its own qualities and gifts to give." Included are responses to that call and articles on migrants. Thank you again to Judith Blackburn my proof reader and Mary Omedo who beautifully formats it and sends it out.

Carol Siemering

Generations Gerda Kaufmann Germany

The call for articles on the generations encourages us to consider the reality of Grail-Life in our countries. Germany has more saints in eternal life than current members in the International Movement. I have decided to respond personally as an old woman (b. 1930). My experience at home and internationally tells me that the Grail is rich as we are encouraged to grow and develop our talents. The variety becomes evident when we consider life-stories.

In 1960, when I began to be a Grail member in Munich, there was already an older generation of Grail members in Germany. Thirty years ago the International Grail had a few Grail centers in Berlin. Their work was stopped by the German Dictator, Adolf Hitler. In 1945, after World War II, a new beginning was started by Dr. Alberta Lücker (b. 1907) in Bonn. She offered Grail programs to interested women in her house and contacted Grail friends in the Netherlands, England and USA. The International Grail became a reality again in Germany.

The intergenerational experience happened mainly in the monthly local meetings or in national Grail meetings in central places in Germany. Very early I became an English-speaking delegate from our group at international Grail meetings. Different generations were present, but more exciting was learning the varieties of lifestyles of the women from foreign countries.

Since 1960 the number of German Grail members has increased. An important number of professional nurses, medical staff and educators spent four or eight or more years serving in "missionary situations." From the beginning they worked to encourage Christian women to act as lay people in the parishes.

Now, in 2017, we are 19 Grail members. I am the second oldest, the youngest was born in 1967. We just enjoyed the visit of a South-African twenty-seven-year-young Grail member. She works in the rural country Kwa-Zulu-Natal with indigenous women who are participants of the Grail's "Woman's Leadership Training Program." By reading Grail Newsletters and other Grail publications I realize that in other

continents Grail members, as teen-agers or young professionals, are taking responsibility and are acting to change circumstances, contributing to the wellbeing of communities.

Personally I experience Intergenerationality in a big family. I have six nieces and three nephews and their children: eight girls and twelve boys. When I retired in 1962, I moved to Mülheim and lived with three Grail women more or less my age under the same roof, next to our small Grail center in private suites.

Seven years ago, in 2010, my niece Pia (b.1967) and her husband (b.1961) with Valerie (b.2002), Carl-Leopold (b. 2004), and Lois-Philippe (b. 2007) moved into our five-room suite. Their second daughter Anne-Sophie was born in 2011 in Mülheim. It is the first time in my life that I am so close to their family life. It is wonderful to interact and to be loved.

A Community Witness Spanning the Generations Maureen Tate USA

Through a variety of experiences in the Grail, I have opportunities to interact with women of all generations. I am inspired and energized by the young women I meet each year at the CSW and I always learn something new when I have the chance to listen to their hopes and challenges and view the world from their perspective. I have deep and long-lasting friendships with members of all generations, from participation on numerous program and leadership teams. The opportunity to work and learn together has been a great source of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth for me personally, but is also fundamental to the Grail. I have gratitude and deep affection for so many older members who mentored me and continue to guide my growing into Grail community.

However, this issue of Crossroads provides an opportunity for reflection on the interaction between generations that I have encountered in my work with our U.S. Elder Care Work Group. Ten years ago, we began to consider with greater focus the question of how the Grail could effectively anticipate and plan for the needs of an increasing number of aging members. Years before, members established a Health and Welfare Fund to provide financial support for those who had worked on subsistence for the Grail for ten or more years. This proved a successful strategy that has served our Grail elders well for many years. Nevertheless, over time it became evident that older members would need more than financial security as they began to face ever more complex challenges of growing older. Our Elder Care Work Group then formed to provide support and assistance, (emotional, psychological, financial, spiritual, housing) to individuals with increasing needs for care during the latter phases of life.

Our small Work Group team has worked since to gather information from individual members and to understand how best to martial Grail resources to meet growing needs. What has sparked this reflection however, is a deepening appreciation of how many Grail members, of every generation, are serving as support persons for one or more Grail elders. They assist with visitation, transportation to Grail meetings as well as doctor visits, serve as financial managers and health advocates, help members pack and move to new residences, organize Grail birthday gatherings, shop, and generally keep the rest of us updated regarding someone's situation and well-being. But beyond support functions, what is most evident are the genuine bonds of friendship and sisterly affection that undergird these relationships between the

generations.

Over the years, different Grail processes have tried to define who we are and our levels of commitment. From the vantage point of my experience with the Elder Care Work Group, I have observed and concluded that such interaction and expression of care is evidence of genuine community. This is not something I expect to find in other organizations or movements. It is this community of intimate connection that continues to hold my heart and shape my commitment within the Grail. Through our Elder Care Work Group I have an opportunity to regularly witness the love and care our members have for one another across all ages. It is a profound expression of community in which all involved continue to give and receive.

Celebrando a "diferença" Intergeracional Por: Denise Milice, Marta Sales, Fuva Muiambo e Ida Alvarinho Graal Mozambique

É habitual adolescentes e jovens entrarem em contacto com o Graal à convite de uma mulher "mais velha", com esta mulher que convida, a convidada pode ter laços familiares ou vínculos de outras vivências. De facto, algumas chegaram ao Graal porque a professora convidou, porque receberam o convite de uma amiga, colega da escola ou do trabalho, irmã da Igreja ou simplesmente uma conhecida.

O que acontece quando se chega ao Graal pela primeira vez, é esta inclinação para as formalidades, própria do que se nos acostumou no dia-a-dia; a tendência para um relacionamento intergeracional vertical, onde se tem um grupo de superiores inalcançáveis a quem se tem por obrigação de prestar vénia e com o qual a comunicação é cheia de barreiras "burocráticas".

Mas basta deixar-se estar 5 minutos no Graal, para se sentir o quão somos mulheres informais, mulheres livres e felizes a costurar um mundo de justiça e paz e a construir juntas a cultura do "cuidado"!

Basta se deixar contagiar pela energia agradável que emana destas mulheres do Graal, que dão as mãos e juntas sonham e celebram, para perceber que as formalidades, as hierarquias de contacto vertical que chegam a pesar o viver do dia-a-dia são quebradas!

Todas as mulheres mais experientes, "mais velhas", mais antigas no Graal transmitem às "mais novas" tudo o que são e a essência de pra onde nos movemos e como nos movemos sem se sentir haver um contacto intergeracional que distancia as mulheres.

No Graal aprendemos a celebrar as "diferenças"!

O contacto, a comunicação entre as membros é de quem cativa e se deixa cativar, num ambiente assim criado pelas "mais velhas" que dão espaço às "mais novas" através da incumbência de funções e partilha de responsabilidades.

Asssim nos despimos todas da distância das formalidades, reconhecendo olhando na face da outra a minha irmã, deixamo-nos envolver por este vínculo que nos aproxima cada vez mais uma da outra chamado irmandade.

Nas nossas veias de diferentes gerações, flui a nossa comum seiva feminina, cimentando naturalmente a nossa coesão e abrindo-nos facilmente umas às outras. Enquanto me deixo contagiar plenamente pela energia e disponibilidade constante para "fazer coisas" por parte das "mais novas", vou-me focando mais em garantir que estes ingredientes se mantenham fiéis às raízes e princípios que alimentam a grande árvore do Graal, num terreno que é regado permanentemente pela abertura, atenção e humildade mútuas que permitem, naturalmente, em ambos os sentidos, escutar e ser escutada, valorizar e ser valorizada, aconchegar e ser aconchegada, corrigir e ser corrigida, fortalecer e ser fortalecida, criando uma envolvência amiga, colaborativa, simples e sã, onde "me movo, me sinto e me sou", com facilidade.

O principal desafio das diferentes gerações é aceitar e se adaptar às mudanças, uma característica essencial neste mundo em constante transformação. Porém nós como GRAAL, tentamos ultrapassar essas diferenças porque nos contruimos mais do que um movimento, nos construimos família que comunga dos mesmos ideais, onde cada membro desta família, independente da geração em que se encontra, se revê na missão e visão que norteia a família.

A construção do Graal em todo o mundo deve continuar a basear-se numa abordagem intergeracional onde as “mais velhas” passam os valores e o caminho para as “mais novas”. E esta é uma prática na maioria dos países do Graal. Especificamente em Moçambique, as “mais novas” são sempre integradas em todas as atividades de forma activa, sendo que a partilha de responsabilidades é uma ferramenta útil, que permite criar oportunidades para o aprendizado e a vivência espiritual conjunta.

Celebrating the Intergenerational “Differences” *English*

By Denise Milice, 25 years old, Martinha Sales, 48 years old, Fuva Muiambo, 26 years old, Ida Alvarinho, 60 - The Grail Mozambique.

It is usual for teenagers and young people to get in contact with the Grail through an invitation of an “older” woman, with whom the guest may have family bonds or other types of bonds. In fact, some got to the Grail because their professor invited them, because a friend invited them, a classmate or co-worker, a Church sister or simply an acquaintance.

What happens once you are at the Grail for the first time is to trend to formalities common to our day-to-day; a tendency for a vertical intergenerational relationship, where there is a group of unreachable superiors, to whom one assumes there is an obligation to revere and where communication is full of “bureaucratic” boundaries.

But all it takes is 5min at the Grail to feel how we are all women with no need to be formal, free and happy women sewing a world of justice and peace and building together a culture of “care”!

Just let yourself be exhilarated by the pleasant energy that comes from these Grail women who hold hands and together, dream and celebrate, to understand that the formalities, the hierarchies of the vertical contact that burden our day-to-day life are broken here!

All the more experience women, “older”, with more time in the Grail share with the “younger ones” everything about who they are and the essence of where we are heading and how we are heading there without the feeling of an intergenerational interaction that distances women.

At the Grail we learn to celebrate the “differences”!

The contact, the communication between the members is of those who tame and let themselves be tamed, in a space created by the "elders" who give space to the "youth" through the incubation of function and sharing responsibilities.

This way, we all strip off the distancing of formalities. Recognizing, facing each sister, we let ourselves be involved by this bond that brings us closer and closer to each other called *Sisterhood*.

Through our veins of different generations, flows our common female sap, naturally bonding our cohesion and easily opening-up to each other. While I let myself be fully exhilarated by the energy and constant availability to "do things" from the "younger ones", I focus more in ensuring that these ingredients remain loyal to its roots and principles that feed the big tree of the Grail, in a soil that is permanently watered by the mutual openness, attention and humbleness, that naturally allow, in both ways, listening and being heard, valuing and being valued, embracing and being embraced, correcting and being corrected, strengthening and being strengthened, creating a friendly, collaborative, simple and healthy involvement, where "I move, I feel and I am" easily.

The main challenge of the different generations is accepting and adapting to change, an essential aspect of this world in constant transformation. However, we the Grail, try to overcome such differences because we built more than a movement, we built a family that shares the same ideals, where each member of this family, regardless of their generation, finds herself and sees herself in the mission and vision that guides the family.

The continuation of the Grail worldwide must be based in an intergenerational approach where the "elders" pass the values and the path to the "younger ones". And this is already a practice in most of the Grail countries. In Mozambique specifically, the "younger ones" are within the Grail group and are part of all the activities and also share responsibilities in order to learn and live the Grail spirituality in their lives.

Convívio de Gerações Invicta Tivane Mozambique

Por: Invicta Tivane, 57 anos

Filho meu, se aceitares as minhas palavras, e esconderes contigo os meus mandamentos, para fazeres o teu ouvido atento à sabedoria, e inclinares o teu coração ao entendimento. **(Provérbios 2:1-2).**

Educa a criança no caminho em que deve andar e até quando envelhecer não se desviará dele **(Provérbios 22:6)**

Estes versículos servem para reflexão entre duas gerações diferentes que se abraçam, que se acarinham, que se aconchegam e procuram fazer do Graal um grande ninho de esperanças, para que a nossa sociedade e o mundo sejam melhor.

Pretende-se com estas palavras transmitir às mais novas desta organização que devem saber escutar, analisar e agir com segurança, nos diversos lugares onde partilham momentos de suas vidas (na família, na rua, na escola, na igreja, na socidade). Sem dúvidas que estas mais novas a quem dirigimos estas palavras têm espaço para colocar suas sugestões e até criticar quaisquer atitudes que achem incorrectas nas mais velhas. Devemos ter esta abertura para que as ansiedades de todas sejam satisfeitas.

Neste momento o mundo é dominado pelas novas e grandes tecnologias que trazem consigo novas formas de ver o próprio mundo e diferentes pontos de vistas que acabam gerando conflitos entre gerações e não só.

Entretanto, com um pouco de calma, paciência, diálogo e compreensão pode ser encontrada a solução e harmonização do clima.

No Graal, pretende-se que todas mantenham um ambiente de paz e tranquilidade para que seja possível a transmissão de valores morais/cívicos, culturais/ambientais aos cidadãos, para que a nossa sociedade apesar de todas as adversidades se transforme.

Uma geração vai, e outra geração vem, mas a terra permanece para sempre (**Eclesiastes 1:4)** O Homem tem deveres, não poucos mas importa salientar aqui que as gerações sucedem-se mas a obrigação de cada geração é fazer com que a terra permaneça. Deve ser compromisso humano, reconstrir a terra para as gerações futuras vivam num mundo melhor.

Mas, acontece que o Homem projecta destruir a terra, emitindo gases que causam o efeto de estufa, a destruição da natureza, provocando chuvas e queimadas, a escassez da água potável que poderá criar disputas e mortes, são assuntos que no Graal são debatidos entre estas gerações para que sejam transmitidos aos outros de modo a fazer permanece a terra.

Intergenerational Interaction Invicta Tivane *English*

57 years old, Mozambique

My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding, then you will understand righteousness and justice, equity and every good path. **(Proverbs 2: 1-2, 9)**.
Train a child in the way that the child should go and even when the child is old, the child will not depart from it. **(Proverbs 22: 6)**
These verses serve for reflection between the two different generations that hug each other, that cherish each other, that embrace each other and strive to make the Grail a big nest of hope for a better society and a better world.
With these words, it is intended to share with the “younger ones” that they should know how to listen, analyze and act with certainty in the different spaces where they share moments of their lives (in the family, the streets, school, church, society). Undoubtingly, these “younger ones” to whom we say these words, have space to make suggestions and even criticize any attitude they consider wrong from the “older ones.” We must have this openness so that none feel anxious.
At this moment, the world is dominated by the new and big technologies that bring new ways of seeing the world itself and different points of view that end up creating conflicts between generations.
However, with a little bit of calm, patience, dialog and understanding, it is possible to find the solution and harmonization of the sphere.

At the Grail we aim to keep a space of peace and tranquility so that it is possible to share moral/civic, cultural values with the citizens and contribute to the transformation of our society despite all adversities. *A generation goes, and a generation comes, but the Earth remains forever* **(Ecclesiastes 1: 4)**.
Mankind has duties, and it is important to emphasize that generations succeed one another, but it is each generation's duty to make sure the Earth remains. It shall be each human being's commitment to rebuild the Earth so that the future generations live in a better world. But what is happening is that Mankind is destroying the Earth, emitting gases that cause the greenhouse effect, the destruction of Nature leading to floods and wildfires, drinking water shortage that will eventually create conflicts and deaths. At the Grail we discuss such topics between our different generations so that we can all share these teachings with others and make sure that the Earth remains!

A Minha Experiência Intergeracional no Graal Timeika Mucambe Mozambique

Por Timeika Mucambe 25 anos

Quando entrei para o Graal há 10 anos (tinha na altura 15 anos) tive logo o primeiro contacto intergeracional, sendo que o grupo de jovens para o qual integrei era liderado por três senhoras adultas e uma adolescente.

Foi interessante já desde essa altura perceber que os nossos pensamentos e acções podiam perfeitamente funcionar em conjunto, pelo facto de sempre se procurar escutar e compreender as opiniões de cada um, sem julgar e sim, procurando entender o contexto e motivação.

Expressões como "eu penso", "eu sinto", "se calhar", foram cultivadas nas nossas partilhas de modo a nunca magoar, diminuir ou mensurar a opinião de uma e de outra…. As hermanas mais velhas não consideravam as nossas opiniões erradas, ainda que pelas suas experiências e vivências soubessem que não eram correctas ou não nos iriam ajudar o muito, o que se diziam era, que tal se ao invés de pensarmos ou agirmos desta forma, fizéssemos de outra, e ao se expor essa outra forma, tomavam o cuidado de explicar e mostrar a positividade disso.

Passados alguns anos, quando entrei para a fase da juventude, integrei ao grupo das Mulheres do Graal, a que chamamos grupo sénior, deixando apenas de fazer parte do grupo juvenil onde integravam na sua maioria adolescentes (rapazes e raparigas).

Nesse momento a ideia de acomodação intergeracional ficou ainda mais visível. Aos poucos a ideia de interagir com mulheres com 10 ou mais anos de diferença em relação a mim, começou a ser mais leve…havia obviamente sempre o factor respeito pelas faixas etárias mas a comunicação era de "tu para tu".

Os programas e temas eram de total abrangência, ou seja, não havia encontros em que só umas poderiam participar em virtude da faixa etária…para os assuntos que fossem um pouco sensíveis ou de difícil perceção, havia sempre o cuidado de criar uma linguagem elucidativa.

Até hoje é assim, todas podemos participar e opinar livremente, tendo a certeza que sempre seremos escutadas e respeitadas.

Fora de Moçambique a forma de estar não se difere.

A minha primeira experiência internacional foi em 2014, em Portugal (Golegã), num encontro sobre a Espiritualidade e vivência em comunidade.

Era a mais nova do grupo e construi amizade com mulheres com idade da minha irmã mais velha, da minha mãe a até avo (risos). Isso para mim é fantástico!

Em um mês de convivência tivemos partilhas muito profundas de cada uma de nós, o que nos tornou mais próximas e confidentes.

Eu que sempre fui uma pessoa fechada e educada a não falar de mim para "estranhos", senti uma abertura incrível para poder me expressar os meus sentimentos…senti como se já nos conhecêssemos todas, e como era a mais nova, ainda teve um encanto especial, pois, tinha muita atenção de todas (risos).
Passados dois anos, em 2016, fui desafiada a mais uma experiencia que considero intergeracional, o estagio para o CSW, em Nova Iorque.

Mais uma vez tive uma experiência inesquecível, ganhei mais duas mães…duas mulheres incríveis e com muitas vivencias especiais.

Os três meses que la estive ajudaram-me a crescer bastante e a construir uma visão melhorada sobre o mundo e as pessoas.

As mulheres do Graal que vou tendo a oportunidade de conhecer ao longo desta jornada, têm inspirado e feito crescer bastante… posso seguramente afirmar que exemplos a seguir, não preciso ir procurar fora… no seio da nossa comunidade graal, quer nacional e internacional, podemos encontrar toda a inspiração necessária para viver.

As Mulheres do Graal fazem parte de mim, da minha Vida!!!

My Intergenerational Experience Timeika Mucambe *English*

Timeika Mucambe, 25 years old, The Grail Mozambique

I was 15 when joined the Grail 10 years ago. I immediately experienced intergenerational contact, as the youth group I had joined was led by three adult women and a teenager.

It was interesting at that time for me to realize that our thoughts and actions could perfectly work together, because of always trying to listen and understand each and everyone's opinions, without judging and yes, seeking to understand the context and motivation.

Expression like "I think", "I feel", "maybe", were encouraged in our sharings to avoid hurting, diminishing or measuring the opinions of each one… The older "sisters" did not consider our opinions wrong, even if by their experiences and living, they knew our opinions were not right or wouldn't be that helpful. They

would say "What if, instead of thinking or acting this way, we tried a different way," and as they exposed us to different alternatives, they would carefully explain and show its positive side.

A few years later, when I became a young woman, I joined the group of the Women of the Grail which we called the senior group, and I was no longer just a member of the youth group composed of girls and boys.

At that time, the idea of intergenerational interaction became even more visible. Slowly, the idea of interacting with women 10 or more years older than me became easier. Obviously, there was always the factor of respect between the different age groups but the communication was always informal.

The programs and themes were of full inclusion in that there were no meetings where only a particular group could attend in virtue of their age group. For topics that were sensitive or difficult to understand, care was always taken to use explanatory language. Up to this day, that is how things are, we can all participate and give our opinions freely, knowing that we will always be heard and respected.

Outside of Mozambique my experience isn't different. My first international experience was in 2014 in Portugal (Golegã), in a meeting about Spirituality and living in community. I was the youngest of the group and I became friends with women as old as my oldest sister, my mom and even my grandma (lol). And that is amazing for me!

In a month of living together we shared very deep things about us, which brought us closer to each other and made us more confident. I was always a very introverted person and I was raised to not talk about myself with "strangers", so I felt an incredible openness to be able to express my feelings… I felt as if we had already known each other, and since I was the youngest, there was also the special delight of having a lot of attention from everyone (lol).

Two years later, in 2016, I was challenged to another experience I consider intergenerational; the internship at CSW in New York. Again, I had an unforgettable experience and got two new moms… two amazing women with very special life experiences. The three months I was there for helped me grow a lot and build a better vision of the world and people.

The Grail women I have had the opportunity to meet during this journey, have been inspiring to me and help me grow a lot… I can surely say that examples to follow, I don't need to look for outside… amongst our Grail community, whether it being national or international, we can find all the inspiration needed in life.

Grail women are part of me, part of my life!

The Gifts of the Interaction among the different generations in the Grail Verónica Guaján-Sánchez Ecuador

The Grail for me has been the best representation of a tree from which roots are released to settle in the deepest part of the earth. They reach even the center of the world; Ecuador, where their seeds were germinated and are bearing fruit in the heart of each of the women gathering in those places where friendship, affection, fraternity, solidarity and spirituality hug all women who seek to share, transform and generate change in each of the countries where there are many voices that demand social justice and gender equality.

Ecuador has been a place where a woman with great spirit, humility and faith has cultivated its seeds in different women of different generations and ethnic - cultural groups. As an indigenous woman, I have had the great opportunity to meet and learn from several women with extensive knowledge and experience. Their wisdom and spirituality have allowed consolidating a process that summons for Sisterhood, rooted in Spirituality.

Veronica

The women of the Grail in Ecuador have been the sturdy logs where several women hold us and we renew our energies to irrigate and/or cultivate seeds in the different places where we are walking. The networks/links that have been established around the world have made it possible to build new bridges, to know and learn from young women, adults and old women from different countries, to make visible the diversity of existing women, each one loaded with/ accompanied by different stories, projects, and knowledge coming from different contexts.

The interaction between adolescent, young and old women turns out to be an essential element to transfer/share strategies to end all types of violence against women and girls, as well as to share proposals to eradicate discrimination by gender, race, age, nationality, among other alternatives. This with the purpose to improve the situation of girls, young and old women.

L-R: Simonetta, Veronica and Lucy

Cornwall and the Bronx were the beginning of a new journey, another step, a new place where a group of women of the United States Grail summons / connects women to each other, women from different countries, women with great challenges and opportunities. A place where diverse women interact with each other and with Mother Earth. A place where it is possible to find numerous possibilities of being and acting not only among them but with mother nature. Convening

women from different places, countries, and ages, makes it possible *for our roots to strengthen and cling to the earth*. Watching the women of the Grail transmit/share their knowledge to different generations provokes new sensations, shapes new paths, traces, new dreams and life projects.

The union and/or association of diverse women is what allows us to survive the crossroads. As an indigenous woman, I can say that, indeed, the women of the Grail Ecuador and the Grail women in the United States have allowed us to survive the crossroads from Ecuador to Washington DC, from Washington to Boston, from Boston to Maine. My transit through different parts of the United States was sustained because in my walk I met with allies, sisters who opened their doors to me, their hearts. They were the cornerstone to avoid cultural clashes.

Another essential element in my walk were the old people. They are the wise women, who because of their experiences and stories, carry strong, firmer and more solid roots. Of this type of women, I found in the Grail and out of it, all the women who crossed my path were a light of hope that makes it possible to mold my being, my soul and my spirituality. These are the same ones that do not act separately but in union with Mother Earth.

Good energy – group photo

So it remains to say that the places that welcome the women of the Grail are essential places to recharge energies, and thus to tear down walls and build bridges—bridges to link women closely from all corners of the world. The Grail is that place where you can observe the different possibilities of being and acting, where diverse women with a lot of professional and spiritual experience make their voices heard and can be visualized as they are, an inspiration for the world, a place where every woman gives us back the hope and faith that this world can be changed and can be better for everyone.

Geraçãoes Isabel Varandas Grupo de Pertença do Graal no Porto Portugal

Como se interrelacionam as gerações de mulheres no Graal em Portugal? Pensando na nossa experiência tão plural e diversa, é de afirmar que se há algo que nos marca a todas é, sem dúvida, a partilha e a passagem de testemunho intergeracional no Graal, com a presença e participação sempre activa e inspiradora da geração das mulheres mais velhas, muitas delas testemunhas dos primórdios do Graal em Portugal. Esta partilha reflecte um pouco o ambiente social em que cada vez mais as pessoas já com longo caminho andado são em maior número e continuam com uma vida activa.

Assim, na vida dos grupos do Graal é marcante a partilha e a passagem de testemunho entre as mulheres mais velhas e as mais novas – sem esquecer as gerações "intermédias"! – mantendo a abertura para novas gerações entrarem e desafiarem as certezas estabelecidas. Existe, de facto, um trabalho activo de ligação das gerações e de empoderamento das mulheres nas diversas fases da vida, como sejam, por um lado, o trabalho com os mais jovens, em projectos e iniciativas como, a título meramente exemplificativo, o projecto "Girl Effet" ou o projecto "NAMORArte", por outro lado, intervenções como no projecto "Banco de Tempo" em Portugal, e iniciativas como a recente sessão "Mulheres e envelhecimento ativo" (com Irene Cavalieri e João Malva), em Coimbra, do programa "Agora é que são elas", organização da Casa da Esquina e do Graal Portugal, isto entre muitas outras actividades intergeracionais.

Um pequeno exemplo de oportunidade de interrelação entre gerações dentro do Graal surgiu há algum tempo, com a ideia do grupo do Porto de convidar uma mulher do Graal com percurso de vida já "longo e sábio" para vir ao encontro de um outro grupo e aí narrar oralmente a sua história de vida, gravando-se essa narrativa, que depois se transcreve para um formato escrito, que seja um registo na primeira pessoa e memória da vida dessa mulher do Graal. E surgem coisas bonitas e surpreendentes!…E as relações entre gerações e suas pegadas indeléveis vão permanecendo…

Generations Isabel Varandas *English*

How do women of different generations interrelate in the Grail in Portugal? Thinking about our very plural and diverse experience, we must say that if there is something that marks all of us, it is no doubt the sharing and the passing of intergenerational witness in the Grail with the active and inspiring presence and participation of the generation of older women, most of them witnesses of the early days of the Grail in Portugal. This sharing reflects also the social environment in which more and more people who have already lived a long time are in increasing number and go on living an active life.

Thus, in the Grail groups, sharing and witnessing among older and younger women are remarkable – without forgetting the "middle" generations! - keeping the openness for new generations to come in and challenge the established certainties.

This is, indeed, an active work: keeping the link between generations and the empowering women in different stages of life. The work with young people in some projects such as "NAMORArte" and "Girl Effect" is a good example. On the other hand, different interventions such as the project "Bank of Time" in Portugal, and initiatives such as the recent session "Women and active aging" in Coimbra, are also examples of other intergenerational activities. Another small example of intergenerational relationship within the Grail came up some time ago with the idea in the Oporto Grail group to invite a Grail woman of another Grail group with a "long and wise" journey to come and narrate orally her life story. This narrative was recorded, and then transcribed into a written format, becoming a record in the first person and memory of this Grail woman's life.

And beautiful and amazing things happen! ... And the relationships among generations and their indelible footprints remain...

Does the Migratory Crisis of the Second Millennium Create Conflicts? Gemma Di Marino Italy

Spurred on by all the talk about the migration crisis (opinions, discourses, interviews, polls, etc), I re-read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and because of the issues the material raises or can unleash, in the spirit of sharing, I suggest you all read it as well.

It is a declaration that was produced by representatives from all regions of the world and included all the legal mores. Formally adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948, it is the most universal document on human rights that exists. It describes the fundamental rights that form the basis of a democratic society, recognizes the dignity of every human being and is the basis of liberty, justice and peace in the world.

The Assembly asked all member states to share the Declaration – in order that it be diffused, posted, read and explained in the schools and other educational institutions, without discrimination, and is the basis of political positions in countries and regions.

The Declaration is a concrete document, accepted throughout the world as a contract between governments and its people.

I cite some articles:

Article 1, no. 1 reads: **All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards others with a spirit of brotherhood**.

Articles 14 e 15 in no. 1 state: **each individual has the right to seek refuge from persecution in other countries. Every single person has the right to citizenship**

Article 16, no. 1 states: ***Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to move and found a family.***

The underlying question that I ask myself is: if we think and insist that we all have the right to move freely, to cross borders and to choose where to live, regardless of birthplace, economic or political conditions, or color of the skin, why do we define this movement as a problem or crisis? Migration is one of the major signs of our times, a movement, an event of global import and connection that is particularly noteworthy in the Mediterranean region, on the border between Mexico and the United States, in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, in Southeast Asia and in Eastern Europe.

The geopolitical borders and equilibrium changes but we cannot remain indifferent looking at some of the following numbers:

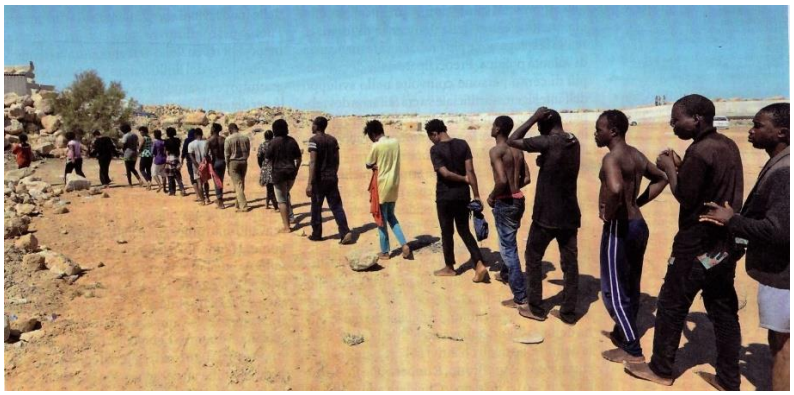
- 47 Countries involved in conflicts in the world,
- 4,733 Refugees who drowned in the Mediterranean Sea in 2016,
- 748 million people in the world without access to food and water,

- 2,5 billion people in the world without sanitary facilities, due to war and natural disasters. - 40 years – life expectancy of one third of the population in the poorest countries, due to the absence of basic services, such as potable water and medical care.
- 3 out of every 4 individuals in the world do not turn 50 years of age.
- 1 out of 14,000 women in Sweden at risk of a maternal death, while in Chad (Central Africa, it is 1 out of 15.
- 122 million young people between the ages of 5 and 15 are illiterate.
- 40% of the Earth's surface is threatened by desertification – a phenomenon that transforms 12 million hectares of fertile land into desert every year.

These are some of the reasons behind why millions of people migrate in search of a better life or merely survival. The difficulties of migrants are even graver for women and children, and often take the form of abuse by handlers along the migration routes and being taken advantage of and enslaved or trafficked en route by criminals.

A truly inhuman picture emerges from a report of the support mission to the United Nations in Libya, published in 2016, which denounces the extremely precarious conditions of the migrants, held up in various detention centers, and subjected to extortion, forced labor, abuse, torture, and to whom are distributed very little, horrible food and no medical/nursing care. Women are victims of domestic violence, and the employees of the state and local administrators participate in contraband and human trafficking.

We know that the international community has mobilized to address some of these issues: of all of them, probably one of the most urgent questions in the history of the world today, where there are so many conflicts. It all calls on the entire society and the Church to act and take a clear and definitive stance, based on conscience.



Migrants led into the detention center in Garabulli, Libya – July 8, 2017

Whoever is reading this will certainly ask: But what can I do or say? It doesn't depend on me. Maybe it is true, but we Christians have lots of ways of responding, questioning ourselves, and putting ourselves in crisis, if need be.

Pope Francis has been one such person who, from the beginning, was not afraid to address this conflict. From the beginning of his pontificate, Pope Francis has said explicitly in the *Gaudium Evangelii*, no. 226: "Conflict cannot be ignored or wished away. It should be accepted. But if we become trapped by it, we lose perspective, horizons become limited and the very reality becomes distorted."

What does it mean for us to confront this conflict, or better, this contrast of ideas about that which we are and that which we want to be. Do we ignore it or confront it and try to resolve it?

Between that which we see and that which we wish to see. We can not only think about emotional responses or gestures of solidarity towards some of the victims of the worst injustices. In my opinion, one should make a choice that is rooted in the way of understanding all evangelizing action of the Church.

During the International Forum "Migration and Peace", held in February 2017, Pope Francis Bergoglio synthesized the dimensions of this choice through four words: accept, protect, promote, and integrate, inviting us to live these verbs concretely as individuals and as communities, adding: "I believe linking these four verbs, in first person singular and plural, today represents a duty, an obligation with respect to our sisters and brothers, that for various reasons, are forced to leave their place of origin, an obligation of justice, civility, and solidarity.

Strong words were also used by Pope Francis during his last trip to Colombia – words that moved the entire world, and it is a warning: "Reconcile and open a door to all who have experienced the dramatic reality of conflict. Some need to have the courage to take the first step in this direction, without waiting for the others to do it. Not every one of us can be this person. It does not mean we ignore or dissimulate with the differences in conflicts. Like Mary, say yes to the whole story, not just to a part, like Christ, taking this weight on. Embrace this story, because we are all in it together."

"Sustain a turning of the wheel; those fleeing from the abuse of the powers that be. Abandon neutrality of those who choose nothing but to remain alone among themselves. Work for the dignity of all our brothers and sisters, especially the poor, the marginalized, the abandoned, for immigrants, for those that suffered violence and trafficking. They all have human dignity because they are the living images of God."

Reflexión - Invitación Deirdre Cornell y Rosaurora Espinosa USA Mexico

UNA RED EN EL GRIAL DE INTERCAMBIO DE SABERES Y EXPERIENCIAS RELACIONADAS CON LA MIGRACIÓN. Deirdre Cornell y Rosaurora Espinosa

La temática de la migración no es una preocupación nueva en el Grial.

El trabajo desde la base con cualquier sector y temática, de la mayoría de las integrantes del Grial en nuestros países, nos confronta frecuentemente con la migración entre países y en el interior de cada país; como realidad y como problemática, como asunto que desafía nuestra reflexión y nuestra acción; pero

también nos presenta la necesidad de intercambiar los análisis recientes que se producen en diversos países y regiones.

Hay también en algunos casos la acción o el trabajo directo, con propósitos claros, con sectores de la población migrante por parte de nuestras hermanas dentro del propio Grial. También estamos alertas y conocemos profundamente diversas experiencias sumamente valiosas, tanto para profundizar el análisis con un enfoque moral, relacionado con las formas de crueldad en contra de seres humanos catalogados por las autoridades políticas y judiciales como delincuentes. A veces apoyamos esfuerzos de organizaciones que luchan por la defensa de los derechos de la población migrante, y ahí conocemos realidades de los lugares desde donde han sido expulsados

Poseemos en el Grial una riqueza enorme, ya que desde nuestros enfoques sociales y culturales hemos tratado de realizar acciones y trabajos, así como difusión de esas otras organizaciones hermanas en nuestros países, que puedan aliviar la triste situación de individuos y familias que se desplazan en busca de mejorar condiciones a veces terribles de su vida

En el 2011, hubo un esfuerzo colectivo importante de sistematización de nuestras ideas, reflexiones y experiencias. Nuestras compañeras de la Red de Justicia Global coordinaron la invitación a todas a escribir artículos que se publicaron en MIGRATION MATTERS, con participación de 17 mujeres del Grial y dos analistas externos. Posteriormente se envió un cuestionario para ser respondido por quienes hubieran leído todo o parte de los materiales. Por diversas razones no hubo respuestas o continuidades….

A 7 años de aquella publicación nuestras motivaciones pueden haber cambiado, la situación se hizo más compleja, injusta y hasta cruel. Varias de nosotras pensamos que es un buen momento para reactivar el intercambio y generar cambios en nuestra visión y compromiso con los migrantes.

Fue por ello que enviamos la propuesta a través de nuestras representantes a la IGA que se realizó en Portugal el año pasado.

QUIENES NOS SINTAMOS MOTIVADAS POR CONTRIBUIR DE DIFERENTES MANERAS, podemos comenzar con autopropuestas para coordinar el esfuerzo de compilación de inquietudes en los países en que haya personas interesadas en participar.

Entendemos que todas estamos generalmente sobrecargadas de trabajos y responsabilidades, con poco tiempo para escribir. Pero ya contamos con un artículo muy importante que escribió Gemma di Marino, de Italia. Deirdre Cornell tiene un libro muy importante del cual están derivando iniciativas pedagógicas en el área de su parroquia y de los grupos ecuménicos, acerca de lo cual puede escribir algunos párrafos. Tenemos trabajos ya elaborados en forma de artículos, que solamente necesitan resumirse, para conjuntarlos y que todas en el Grial Internacional, tengamos un sabor de lo que acontece, en el marco de la justicia y la paz (o ausencia de la justicia y la paz?)

PODEMOS HACER UN TRABAJO MUY CREATIVO EN LA RED, que no nos envuelva en una larga espera de artículos. Podemos incluso tomar ventaja de la tecnología actual, por ejemplo, grabar pequeños audios

en teléfono móvil, los archivos pequeños de 2 o 3 minutos se pueden enviar fácilmente por WhatsApp Ahí podemos mencionar algún tipo de testimonio que queramos compartir, alguien en cada país puede acercarse a compañeras para motivarlas a compartir de esa manera. Tenemos compañeras jóvenes que se interesan siempre en el uso de las tecnologías, verdad?

Lo mejor que puede pasar es que las ideas y experiencias que vayamos concentrando, SEAN UNA FUENTE DE COMPASIÓN, DE SABERNOS INVITADAS A SUMARNOS A CUALQUIER ESFUERZO AUTÉNTICO PARA ALIVIAR EL DOLOR DE NUESTROS HERMANOS MIGRANTES.

ES UNA PARTE IMPORTANTE DE NUESTRA MISIÓN COMO GRIAL EN UN MUNDO DE MIGRANTES.

Invitation – Reflection Deirdre Cornell and Rosaurora Espinosa *English*

TO A NETWORK IN THE GRAIL FOR SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES RELATED TO MIGRATION.

The theme of migration is not a new concern in the Grail.

For most members in the Grail in our respective countries, grassroots work, in whatever sector and on any topic, confronts us frequently with the reality of migration between countries and within countries; as a reality and as a cause for concern, as an issue that challenges us to reflect and to act; but it also presents us with the necessity of exchanging up-to-date analysis about situations taking place in our different countries and regions.

There are also cases of action and direct service carried out, with clear goals, for sectors of the migrant population by our Grail sisters and within the Grail. We are aware of vastly different experiences, all of them extremely valuable for the purpose of deepening a moral focus in regard to the cruel ways that human beings are being labeled by political and judicial authorities as delinquents. When we support the efforts of organizations that defend the rights of the migrant population, we learn about the realities of the places they have been forced out of or away from.

In the Grail we possess an enormous wealth, since from our own social and cultural nexus we have tried to carry out actions and projects, such as the networking with these organizations in our own countries, so as to alleviate the sorrow of individuals and families who are displaced in search of better conditions—in some cases, truly terrible situations.

In 2011, there was an important collective effort to systematize our ideas, reflections and experiences. Our sisters in the Global Justice Network coordinated an invitation, inviting all of us to write articles to be published in MIGRATION MATTERS, with the participation of 17 Grail women and two professional analysts. Afterward, a questionnaire was sent to be responded to by those who had read all or part of these materials. For various reasons there was a lack of response, losing continuity….

Seven years after the publication, our motivation may have changed, and the situation of migration is more complex, more unjust and even more cruel. Several of us think that it is a good moment to reactivate an exchange, to create changes in our vision and commitment to migrants.

For this reason, we sent the proposal through representatives to the IGA which took place in Portugal last year.

THOSE OF US WHO FEEL MOVED TO CONTRIBUTE IN DIFFERENT WAYS can start with proposals to coordinate the effort of compiling our concerns in the countries where people have expressed an interest in participating.

Sincerely,
Deirdre Cornell y Rosaurora Espinosa

More from Rosa: We understand that we usually have tons of work and responsibilities, and we do not have too much time to write. But we also know that there's a very important article, which was written by Gemma di Marino from Italy. Deirdre Cornell also wrote a very important book (*Jesus was a Migrant*) in which she shares several pedagogical initiatives she has developed with people of the parish where she has worked and also with the ecumenical groups (about which I allowed myself to write some paragraphs). We have also elaborated several articles, which only need to be summarized in order to combine them so all of us in the International Grail have a taste of what happens within the framework of justice and peace (or maybe we should say the lack of justice and peace).

WE CAN DO A VERY CREATIVE WORK IN OUR NETWORK that does not imply a long wait in the production of articles. We can even make the most out of some technological tools such as WhatsApp, with which we can share our testimonies in voice messages (no longer than 2 minutes and 50 seconds), especially considering that we have young colleagues who are always interested in helping us with the use of technologies, am I right?

One of the best scenarios we can imagine with this idea is the possibility of finding A SOURCE OF COMPASSION THAT ALSO INVITES US TO JOIN ANY EFFORT THAT ALLEVIATES THE PAIN OF OUR MIGRANT BROTHERS and SISTERS.

IT IS actually AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR MISSION AS A GRAIL IN A WORLD OF MIGRANTS.