

The US Grail Council
931 O'Bannonville Road
Loveland, OH 45140
(513)683-2340



Dear Danette, Laura, Lisa, Tiffany, Tina and Verónica,

Thank you once again for your commitment to the Young Women's Initiative in the Grail. It is so heartening to hear about your process, the theory that guides you, the earnestness, depth and breadth with which you engage your work.

The Council briefly considered your report and supports what you requested for publication. We did not get any further in our deliberations of your requests, but we do want to communicate what we can. For the moment we are hoping that you will remain out of the fray.

We see ourselves as US Grail on two parallel tracks. On one very difficult track the Grail in the US and in the West are at the end of an organizational life cycle. We are in a similar position with many men and women in religious orders, religious communities, congregations in churches, synagogues, meeting houses and retreat centers. Our work here is to shepherd us through this transition with all of the grace and dignity we can call on. The old models no longer work in the context of the West. We loved them and it is difficult to let them go.ⁱ

The second parallel track we are on in the US Grail is Rebirth/Midwifery. It is from this track that the Young Women's Initiative was born. We realize that the future does not belong to us. It belongs to you. While we do want to put our resources toward values that we feel are integral to the core of Grail as identified in the four mandates we put forth to you initially, how those mandates are manifested within a movement of women in the future can only be defined by you. All we know is that the old models do not fit today's reality.

While we hoped that you would come forward with a proposal at the end of two to three years, we realized that you might conclude that you could not. We are very happy that you can and will present a proposal. What will happen with the proposal is as follows: It will be given to the Council and it will be evaluated. We cannot say further what the next steps will be. Remember that this is a parallel track for a new future. The rest of us are on a different track. We have our own journey, our own work, our own grief and our own celebration. Our work is to bless your work into the future at the same time as we continue with our own work to the end of our lives.

If there are significant financial implications in your proposal, we will carefully consider them. Generally speaking we look for viability. We have very good guidelines regarding the creation of viable proposals. If we can help you in any way with your proposal in this regard, we are most happy to do so.

Though we are on parallel tracks, we are one movement with intergenerational wisdom that we all appreciate. Nevertheless, it is not up to us to tell you how to bring us into "your new." Nor is it up to us to tell you how you should fit into "our old." This is the issue with conversations with

others. While conversations can be very helpful, perhaps it would be better if they come later, after your ideas for a proposal are more gelled. We leave it to you that whatever conversations you have, you will keep our concerns in mind. When your proposal is more clear, we can work together to embody the concept of parallel tracks within one movement, conscious of both, with blessing and resource for both, until “our old” is gone and the new is seasoned and wizened.

Pamela Cobey and Lucy Jones
On Behalf of the US Council

ⁱ Centers belonged to an era when there were many within the Grail who dedicated their lives to the work of the Grail. These women and others equally dedicated, continue to support the Grail, as without their bequests upon their deaths, we would have been looking at the viability of holding property long ago.

Several years ago the Grail looked at the practice of paying subsistence salaries. We realized that it is a matter of justice to pay women a living wage and made the decision to go forward with just wages. We also put in place a Health and Welfare Fund to help all those women who lived on subsistence in the Grail meet their expenses in their post-career lives. Since that time we put into place a minimum wage of \$15.00 / hour for any of our paid workers. (The minimum wage in Ohio is \$8.55.)

The bottom line is that we can no longer sustain centers. It takes hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to cover the costs of managing and maintaining these very large properties. As well, we are no longer able to use them to the capacity that they once were and could be again—by others with the capacity to make their vision a reality.