

C R O S S R O A D S

A Newsletter of The Grail International Leadership Team

January 2007

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The Grail in the 21st Century continues to work to transform the world into a global community committed to justice and peace and harmony with the earth.



As the Grail in the 21st century we:

Work for the transformation of the world by deepening as an international community, through focus on:

- Spirituality
- Solidarity
- Formation
- Culture and Language



Work for the transformation of the world by choosing actions for justice and continuing to challenge unjust structures, with focus on:

- Overcoming Poverty
- Living in Harmony with the Earth
- Justice for Women
- Peace



— *Mission Goals for the International Grail*
See IGA 2006 Report, p. 10 - 11



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Deadline for the next Crossroads - May 1, 2007.
Please send to Mary Gindhart at the address below. Thank you

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LETTER FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM (ILT)

Cristina dos Anjos Conceição, Ruth Crowe, Rosaurora Espinosa, and Mary Gindhart

After meeting face to face daily in August 2006 before, during and after the IGA, we have been keeping in contact by e-mail almost everyday and occasionally by telephone. We have been working on our areas of responsibility as listed in *Crossroads*, May 2006, p.3. Rosaurora left the team at the end of December. We will miss her joyful presence and careful reflections in which she has shared many thoughts and feelings with us. We are very happy she will continue to work on Grail Formation internationally.

✿ (See IGA 2006 Report, p.15).

The three of us will meet together from January 29 to February 9, 2007 at the Graalhuis in Utrecht, The Netherlands. We will have meetings with *Mieneke Hage*, International Finance Officer (IFO), and the International Assistance Fund (IAF) Team and the Dutch National Team. Ruth will meet with the Dutch Nucleus members. After the ILT meeting, Ruth and Mary will go to Germany where we will meet with the Mulheim and Munich Affinity Groups and visit *Magdalene Oberhoffer* at the Dachau Carmel. Ruth will meet with the German Nucleus members. We invite you to send your concerns, questions and suggestions and especially your prayers for these meetings.

We wish you many joys and blessings for 2007.

Love, Cristina, Ruth and Mary

FOLLOW UP TO THE IGA RECOMMENDATIONS

International Grail Spirituality Forum

The Spirituality Forum will be held at CASA de ORAÇÃO SANTA RAFAELA MARIA (Prayer House Santa Rafaela Maria), Palmela, Portugal. Participants are to arrive on July 31, 2007. The Forum will be August 1 to August 7. Departures will be on August 8.

The Invitation Letter to the Spirituality Forum will be sent to the International Grail in January 2007 by *Ticha Vasconcelos*. The letter will contain: goals; pre-program; who is to come (criteria); what is to be paid by each one; financial solidarity; programs after the Forum.

All Grail members have had the opportunity to share their concerns about spirituality through the Spirituality Papers circulated by the Spirituality and Theology Network Coordinators in January 2006. Many Grail groups and some individuals sent responses that brought rich insights. IGA delegates received copies of the group responses and the *Summation of Groups' Responses to the Questionnaire* which was prepared by the Spirituality and Theology Network in July 2006. Any Grail member who would like to see the responses and the *Summation* can get them from her IGA delegate.

✿ (See IGA 2006 Report, p. 2, 3 and 13.)



Solidarity through the International Assistance Fund (IAF)


The IAF gives support to those among us who have served the Grail and need subsidy in our "sunset" years. This subsidy could help in health care and related living expenses to enable a dignified life. The IAF also provides for emergency or contingency allowance in case a Grail team in a country suffers from drought, etc. The IAF Team (IAFT) is *Josette Kersters, Frances Broekhoven* (both of The Netherlands) and *Jeanette Loanzon* (The Philippines). They administer the IAF account, provide periodic reports to the ILT and examine the applications.

The IAFT gets information about the prevailing situation in a country and the needs of the Grail members from National IAF Teams or National Leadership Teams (NLTs). Through these teams, they are able to assess how the IAF can support members in their health care needs as they "grow older and wiser in the Grail". Likewise it is the National IAF Teams or NLTs who could best inform the IAFT if

times are so difficult that the nutrition and living standards of members/teams are impaired. They help all Grail members to be aware that there is possibility of assistance through the IAF. The IAF tries to give assistance as promptly as possible. The IAF also needs to know if needs have changed.

When the IAF sends money to an NLT, the NLT should tell the IAF as soon as the money arrives. The currency exchange rates and bank charges fluctuate in the financial markets in these times of global uncertainty. Therefore it is very important for the IAF to know whether the money has been received.

IAF funds should be allocated effectively and efficiently. The IAF would like the IAF to be an incentive for the NLTs to explore ways to move in the direction of greater self-reliance. They want to work on this goal with National IAF Teams and NLTs as an example of women who are transforming their societies through "help through self help."

 (See IGA 2006 Report, p.14-15.)

Grail Centers/Centros

Eight more Grail Centers have completed and returned Grail Center Information Sheets since information was shared on eleven Grail Centers in *Crossroads*, May 2006, page 16-17.

The Netherlands	Graalhuis, Nieuwegracht 51, 3512 LE Utrecht
Portugal	Centro do Gral da Golega, Rua do Saldanha, 1 /2150-163 Golega
	Terraco, Rua Luciano Cordeiro, 24-6A, 1150 - 215 Lisboa
South Africa	The Grail Centre, (15th Avenue) Box 80, Kleinmond 7195
Tanzania	The Grail Kisekibaha, P.O.Box 119 Mwanga, Kilimanjaro
	The Grail Dido, Same Diocese, P.O. Box 8 Same, Kilimanjaro
	The Grail, Hekima Social Centre P. O. Box 119, Mwanga, Kilimanjaro

United States Bronx Grail Center,
(470 E 138th St.)
P.O. Box 540082,
Bronx, NY 10454

Since the IGA 2006, construction was done at the Grail Centre in Wewak, Papua New Guinea. At the Darajambili Grail Center in Kenya a formation program for professional young Grail women has happened. In January 2007, *Cristina dos Anjos Conceição* from the ILT will visit Darajambili.

 (See IGA 2006 Report, p.17.)


Grail Global Networks

Human Trafficking Network Ton Brouwer

Combating trafficking was named at IGA 2006 as one of the ways the Grail internationally intends to work for justice for women. Trafficking of women and girls is a worldwide problem due to poverty and globalization.

The Grail as a women's movement will concentrate on combating trafficking of women, girls and boys, and forced prostitution. Grail members in the 17 countries represented at the IGA were named to start this research on trafficking of women and girls in their countries. I am now contacting these women to encourage them to start the research and look for organizations or co-workers against trafficking of women. The 17 countries are: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Mozambique, The Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, The Philippines, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda, and the USA.

Since the IGA, *Rosaurora Espinosa* sent me "A Study on Trafficked Women in Mexico City" by her colleague Dr Arun Kumar Acharya; *Marian Schwab* wrote a monthly column for the Catholic newspaper on "Trafficking on Mexican Border." In Australia, *Mary Robinson* is the Grail link with the Religious Working Group and with lawyer *Jennifer Burn*. This is just the beginning and I hope that we all will be alert to trafficking of women and forced prostitution and help to prevent it.

 (See IGA 2006 Report, p.18.)

Grail/UFER Linkage Group to the United Nations Sharon Joslyn

We attend the monthly meetings of both the NGO working group with Commission on the Status of

Women (CSW) and the Working Group on Girls (WGG), a committee of UNICEF which is dedicated to advancing the rights and status of girls worldwide. Grail members with yearly UN passes also meet once a month to consider our involvement as NGOs and how we can make a contribution within this complex organism.

The IGA 2006 approved the creation of a part-time paid position for a Grail representative to the UN attached to the Grail/UFER Linkage Group to the UN. See page 12 of this *Crossroads* for this job posting.

The CSW-51 to be held at the UN Headquarters in New York City will focus on the theme: the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. The meetings will be held 26 February to 9 March of 2007. Most of the Grail/UFER Linkage Group involvement this year will be in preparation for and participation in this event. The Grail expects to have 40 people including 13 teenage girls from Canada, Honduras, Mexico, Mozambique, Portugal, South Africa, and the USA. Some of the girls will be sponsored by the Grail, some received scholarships, and others are raising funds. The girls who are under 18 years of age will be accompanied by an adult in most instances. The girls will be housed at the Grail Center in the Bronx. In addition to Grail members from the USA, especially the New York area, others coming to the CSW are: *Elly König* (The Netherlands) who is coming with two young Dutch women—Elly represents the Grail on the UFER Board; *Andjelka Rudic* (Croatia) who is involved with the LIEN Network; and *Marita Estor* (Germany) who is coming as part of the German government delegation.

The Working Group on Girls will give a special orientation to be held for the girls on Saturday 24 February on three areas: UN Etiquette, Media Relations, and Advocacy skills.

✿ (See IGA 2006 Report, p.19-20.)

Grail Earth Network
Sibongile Mtungwa and Marilyn Aitken,

We would like to know whether any groups have begun work on any of the three projects recommended by the IGA and to receive the names of members who would like to join the Network. Contact us at maitken@mail.ngo.za or by post at PO BOX 145, Underberg, 3257, South Africa. (See IGA 2006 Report, p. 20-21.)

Project 1. Our Footprint on the Earth.

Each IGA delegate received a copy of the Footprint tool created by *Ina Conradie* in South Africa for all of us to use and a list of website references where other material can be found.

An example of one of the ways to cut down on global warming: *Sibongile Mtungwa* and *Marilyn Aitken* have made a pact not to exceed 90 kms p.h./ 56 m.p.h. as far as possible, when they are driving on the open road because traveling at high speeds, even within the speed limit, uses a great deal of petrol/ gasoline. Besides cutting down on the emissions from your car, there are other advantages: you save money; your car engine lasts longer; you arrive at your destination more relaxed; you are less likely to have an accident; and, if you do have one, the impact will be reduced.

Project 2. Education about Genetic Engineering

Thoko Makhanya participated in the Biopolitics Spring School sponsored by the Heinrich Boell Foundation. The objectives were to build capacity for Southern Africa in a cross-section of interest groups; to empower role players already involved with biopolitical issues in a number of ways; to build support and cooperative links between civil society, government departments and scientists; to bring together food and medical biotechnology (green and red) in a common learning process; and to provide specific training for participants. The modules provided were quite intensive. She is working on some possible applications on the local scene. She would like suggestions from those engaged or wanting to engage in biopolitical issues at the international Grail level.

Thoko recently held a day's seminar and workshop on food security, farmer's role, and genetic engineering (G.E.), jointly with GRAIN International. The focus was on the challenge faced by Bt cotton farmers and the farmers of food crops in adjoining areas. The clear message they articulated was, 'being in a trap,' they want to come out, but there are no options any longer. Bt is a bacterium modified by genetic engineering for use as a biopesticide against insects.

Project 3. Education about Environmental Issues

The resources of the Grail and other organizations need to be studied and adapted according to our own realities. Please let us know of good resources.


Global Warming, Climate Change and Desertification — We developed a simplified questionnaire for young people relating to their everyday activities like modes of transport, sources of food and transportation, fuel sources, and waste to help them understand how they contribute to climate change.

Wangari Maathai has recently suggested that those who travel by air locally should plant a tree after every flight and that those who make transcontinental flights should increase the number of trees they plant.

Sibongile and *Marilyn* have developed a donga rehabilitation project that will encourage the planting of grass and trees and good farming practices in a highly eroded place near us. The process is going to create dialogue and develop knowledge within communities to deal with soil erosion.

Destruction of native species/ take over by exotics — We ask Grail members to promote biodiversity by eating unprocessed grain that grows in your area. Sorghum and maize has become breakfast for *Sibongile*, and millet and sorghum is used for dinner. After quite a search, *Marilyn* found sorghum seeds to plant in her garden for consumption, but also as a way of propagating sorghum seeds. You can do the same in your gardens. Plant drought resistant seeds and indigenous flowers and herbs.

We look forward to hearing from you.

 (See IGA 2006 Report, p.20-22.)

Women of the Americas Network **Samia Saad**

The Women of the Americas Network seeks to empower women and communities through strengthening women's leadership and creative potential in areas of: spirituality, education, cultural diversity, the environment, health, gender, and economic literacy.

We work together with women from South, Central and North America to:

- **Build a shared awareness** of the social, political, environmental, and cultural forces, which shape the North/South reality.
- **Examine and critically analyze** the dynamics of globalization and how it currently impacts the lives of women and their families.
- **Develop concrete strategies and actions of solidarity.**

- **Encourage partnerships** with other organizations and movements that share a similar vision.
- **Sponsor leadership training, workshops, and conferences** to share concrete skills and strategies for work in the community.
- **Outreach** to young women and women engaged in grassroots community work.

We organize a variety of projects and activities in different countries (Mexico, Brazil, United States, Canada, and Honduras) that unite women and strengthen their skills. Right now we are working on a youth leadership program that focuses on enhancing and forming young women's leadership.

This project started two years ago and it is divided into three phases. The first one consisted of doing an assessment (diagnostic) of the needs of young women in each country (Mexico, Brazil, United States, Canada and Honduras). The second phase was national meetings and ongoing trainings where the outcomes of the assessment were discussed and where young women were given skills on peer leadership training.

We are now working on the third phase of this program. The women involved in this project will meet in Honduras from July 16 to 21, 2007 to discuss the outcomes of the assessments. We will use the methodology of popular education as a tool to build awareness of global problems, and to impart tools and strategies in order for women to be active participants for change in their own communities once they get back home.

LIEN Network **Sara Jona Laisse**

Two LIEN Network members, *Abida Jamal* from Mozambique and *Andjelka Rudic* from Croatia, will be present at CSW conference in New York in 2007. *Abida* will be participating and taking *Denise*, the 14 year old girl that *Graal-Mozambique* recommended. *Andjelka* will represent the LIEN network.

The LIEN Network is an open space for young women, a place for reflection on life, study, work and spirituality, a place to express and share personal experiences, questions, and fears. By doing so, they can develop their own leadership and spirituality.



THANK YOU FROM ROSAURORA ESPINOSA

Letter from Rosaurora

Dear sisters around the world,

My participation in the International Presidential Team (now ILT) of the Grail has been the most important experience in my life in many ways. I want to share that I learned THE SPIRIT WORKING EVERYWHERE, EVERYTIME, SUPPORTING US IN EVERY DIFFICULTY.

When we met at Grailville last August for the IGA, people came to me asking if I was sad at the end of my IPT term. My answer was that I was happy for more people to experience international leadership in such a team. Then, yes, I am going to miss seeing ILT sisters yearly and visiting you in “your own homes”, working together and learning about your particular situations and realities.

I know that standing at the time when not many Grail members were available, (remember that we were not elected!) I did my best because of the openness of my dear sisters. I had support from *Mary Kay Louchart*, *Ruth Crowe*, *Teresa Wilson*, and recently from *Mary Gindhart* and *Cristina dos Anjos Conceição* — long time friends, partners in many activities, and Grail work buddies. I LEARNED THE REAL MEANING OF SUBSIDIARITY IN THE GRAIL as we shared roles during meetings and my young daughter could be nearby. What a way of sharing motherhood!! AND OF COURSE, I have to recognize *Mieneke Hage* “another great support” with finances!

a) I am grateful that almost every time we had our IPT meetings in the Bronx during the winter holidays of my university in Mexico. Mary Kay Louchart and Sharon Joslyn were our hostesses, and Ruth Crowe made the long trip from Sydney to New York.

b) In countries I had the privilege to visit, I enjoyed your warm welcomes, your efforts to make good, pleasant working times and the touring you made possible! Every time I wrote something for sharing, but there is so much to reflect about!!

FROM MY HEART

I have also to mention how frequently your faces, your works, your voices, your stories, your cultural expressions (including beautiful music) and your struggles past or present, come to my mind as a continuity of learning through memories of talks, rituals, songs and prayers together when I visited you or when we participated together in meetings, sharing celebration of life in the Grail. This time I just want to say THANK YOU, GRACIAS, OBRIGADA, GRAZIE, DANKE...

Your lovely support, your energy, your spirit, your trust, your companionship, and your solidarity have been part of my life during the last years. Now my feeling is that I am in debt and want you to know that when we are part of such an experience we never stop working for the Grail in one or another way. I WISH YOU ALL BLESSINGS. I HOPE TO MEET YOU, now from the International Formation corner. MOUNTAINS, OCEANS, CLOUDS OF LOVE, AND BIG WARM ABRAZOS TO YOU ALL.

Rosaurora



THANK YOU TO ROSAURORA ESPINOSA

Querida Rosaurora

Gracias por your dedication,
Gracias por your sense of humour
Gracias por your good questions and bright mind
Gracias por being you.
Abrazo grande



Your Olandese friend, Mieneke Hage (Netherlands)

Dear Rosaurora,

Can you believe the time is over? I can't! Thank you for leaping into the task. It gives us all strength and hope when someone is willing to serve in a leadership capacity of such magnitude. You are our "Woman of the Americas"!

Sharon Joslyn (USA)

Querida Rosaurora,

Como dizer do quanto foi importante a sua participação no IPT/ILT? De maneira voce nos fez perceber que é possível ,mesmo estando 100% em um trabalho, fazer parte de uma coordenação internacional. Com certeza a sua coragem me encorajou a também esse desafio!!
Muito obrigada por isto e também por sua disponibilidade,carinho e cuidado com todas as mulheres do Graal. Devo dizer também que foi muito bom trabalharmos,mesmo por pouco tempo, com voce no ILT.Vou sentir sua falta!!!!

Abraços e no coração, Cristina dos Anjos(tinoca) (Brazil)

Dear Rosaurora:

I want to thank you for your wonderful leadership on the IPT. I especially appreciate your mischievous twinkle in the eye, your passion for justice, your willingness to stir up trouble, and your commitment to involving young women in our movement. Thanks for what you did to encourage young Mexican women to get involved in AWID, in Cancun (FTAA) and in the World Social Forum. Thanks for the wonderful work you and the IPT did to help to orient a new International Council in Golega, Portugal several years back. I had the incredible privilege of working as part of a team with you and Samkele to plan that orientation with such a dynamic group of women. You were committed to a process that involved everyone from the start and helped the IC to wrestle with critical questions about who we are, who we want to become, how we relate to each other, North/South dynamics, and how we respond to the realities of the world around us. It has been such a privilege to work with you, and I hope we continue to find ways to do so.

Un abrazo, Carol Barton (USA)

There is a time for everything — on earth and in life
opposing each other sometimes; often conflict and strife

Children and family always so tenderly cared
while women neglected are attended — time shared

A demanding job professionally filled in true solidarity
While Grail sisters concern taken seriously in Mexico and globally

Roots in own culture — strong and shaping
Yet traditions in multitude need constant relating

Formation for young-ones present sleepless nights
While partners and realities ask age-care in might

Near, human and friendly, easy approached
An ITL for four years — a task efficiently coached.

The secret enabling a creative combine
Was love in its fullness, drawn from the Divine

In gratitude to Rosaurora for going and showing the way
A blessing for the future, expertise talents as council shall stay.

With gratitude and love, Christa Werner (Germany)



Dear Rosaurora,

You brought to the IPT/ILT - a passion for the mission of the Grail, for women's concerns and rights, especially through your commitment to the Women of the Americas Network, for raising issues around 'culture' and insight around Solidarity, for Grail formation of younger women as they grow into the Grail, and a deep concern to work with young women in Mexico and the Americas. As an anthropologist you brought the fruits of your professional study and field work into the Grail sharing rich insights and challenges for us all to consider about the loss of culture and livelihoods of people in rural areas in Mexico and elsewhere in countries of the global south. You have generously agreed to continue to be involved with Grail formation at an international level.

Rosaurora, YOU are a good friend, wisely encouraging us to keep our lives in balance. You always brought a great sense of fun to our meetings as well as the TEQUILA for those much enjoyed times, shared around the kitchen table at the Bronx after a long day's work!!

Ruth Crowe (Australia)

Thank you Rosaurora for your great devotion to and love of the Grail.

Thank you for serving on the International Presidency Team and the International Leadership Team. Thank you for your sparkling eyes, wonderful smile, joie de vivre, your energy and creativity. Thank you for your great commitment to justice, to women, to the Women of the Americas. Thank you for being a woman of warmth, compassion and care. Thank you for sharing your deep spirituality with all of us. Thank you for being **you!** It has been a privilege to work with you over the years. **Gracias, gracias, gracias!**

Con mucho cariño. Claire Richard (Canada)

Dear Rosaurora,

Thank you for your willingness to contribute to the international Grail by serving on the ILT when you already were living a busy life with family and professional obligations as well as working locally involving young women in the Grail and on the Women of Americas Team. You, along with the others on the ILT, have done a great work especially with, I hear, the wonderful IGA this summer. May you now have time to enjoy some leisure.

With much love, Ann Burke (USA)

Dear Rosaroura,

WOMEN IN A WORLD OF CHANGE...a program in Mexico in the late 60s. That is where we first met and became sisters. I'm never clear who is the 'big' sister and who the 'little' sister. Does it depend on size? Age? Length of time in the Grail? Or is it who is the inspiration to the other at the moment! I think that's it...and... these past few years you have certainly been the 'Big Sister' at many points in our journey together.

It wasn't easy for you to step on to the IPT with Ruth and myself—two life-long English speakers! What a challenge, eh? Balancing motherhood and doctoral thesis and local Grail and international Grail and with all that finding the energy to bring to every meeting not only your wisdom and concerns and loving care, hugs, and kisses, but delicious 'glorias', incredible tequila, and lovely little gifts! All things a Big Sister would do.

I appreciate how you have stretched yourself to understand the realities of each of our countries while also focusing on Women of the Americas. You are passionate about involving youth in our movement whenever possible and you will be continuing with that passion as you help us work with international formation in the Grail.

I could go on but there are others who also want space to speak.

So, til the next face to face, much love my Little-Big Sister, Mary Kay Louchart (USA)

Querida Rosaurora gracias por todo su trabajo con el Grial internacional. For me you are a woman of Mexico with all its beauty and richness of culture, music, art, generosity of hospitality, commitment to the people especially the young women and the people of the rural areas. I am so happy that we had you and Alexandra with-us here in Canada and you had a chance to visit Ottawa ,and Montreal as well as Toronto. I am sure every Grail group you have visited during your tenure in the ILT has benefited and were blessed with your joie de vivre, your wisdom, and your love for the Grail. You have championed the Women of the Americas from the very beginning with Licha and the Grail in Mexico and nurtured the Young Women of the Americas. I think you have fulfilled some of your dreams and there are more to come.

con cariño Olguita. Olga Kolisnyk (Canada)

Dear Rosaurora,

I feel that we have grown up together in the International Grail since 1971 when you first came to Grailville and I started to learn from you about the culture, politics, economics, religions, people, history and Grail of Mexico and about your family, your professional life and your deep commitment to justice for the poor. I have been in awe of your willingness to communicate in English all these years. I remember being with you at the IGA in 1988 and at IC meetings in Germany and the Philippines in the 90s. I saw you freeze during a blizzard in New York at an IPT meeting in the winter of 2003 and roast in a very hot dormitory in Williamsburg, Virginia after you gave a paper at an anthropology conference. Thank you for staying on the ILT in 2006 and helping me to learn through seeing you in action what it is to serve the Grail in this capacity.

Love, Mary Gindhart (USA)



NEWS

From the Grail in South Africa Newsletter, November 2006

A new **National Committee** is taking over for the next two year period: *Zodwa Mabaso, Priscilla Erasmus, Marilyn Aitken, Samkele Mhanga, Agatha Modise or Anne Hope, Ann Moore, and Loek Goemans.*

For the **Grail National Meeting** in August 2006, *Zodwa Mabaso* and *Samkele Mhanga* worked out ways to help the members experience some of the work of the IGA. *Josephine Maluleke* and *Idah Khoma*, both from Gauteng, made their Grail commitment at a special celebration.

Kwazulu Natal Region: Work on environmental issues and genetic engineering is going on in local, national and international areas, for example: *Sibongile Mtungwa* and *Marilyn Aitken* have facilitated a number of Environmental Training of Trainers' workshops. *Siblongile* is now working in her home area of Sibizane, Centocow, trying to understand why the area is so degraded and infertile. *Jane Ngobese* has been involved in the poverty alleviation programme in her parish and the community in KwaMashu. *Thoko Makhanya*, as part of the SA Freeze Alliance Genetic Engineering, has been involved in local awareness raising and developing resources in Zulu. In March 2006, *Thoko* travelled to New Zealand to take part in a campaign organised by Greenpeace to stop the NZ government from endorsing Terminator Seeds.

The Cape Region: The launch of new Village Centre will be on Saturday 4 March 2007, when the 100-voice multiracial "Libertas Choir" will be performing in the Amphitheatre. The Cape Town Grail recently spent 2 days on a retreat including 8 people from Kleinmond itself and 9 people from Cape Town. The retreat dealt with the difference between spirituality and religion, styles of leadership and primal religions. In July 2006, 14 people took part in a two-day life planning workshop led by *Sally Timmel*.

Gauteng Region: Members write of the University of the Third Age, a non-profit international organisation formed to provide intellectually stimulating programmes of learning and to provide social contacts for mature people in partial or complete retirement. From time to time *Nokuthula Nzimande* has been working with a team responsible for the HIV/AIDS prevention programme and care of orphans and vulnerable children in 20 projects in Witbank diocese.

From The Grail in Italy

The Grail in Italy meets on Saturday afternoons and all day Sunday once a month. In 2005-2006 they had formation meetings for new Grail participants, an open meeting on Feminist spirituality, participated in the European Feminist Theology meeting in Rome in March 2006, made contacts and participated in meetings organized by other groups and communities, led spirituality research meetings, and translated *The Grail in the 21st Century* into Italian.

The Grail in Italy wants to continue: to carry on the activities which they are already doing; to develop new relationships with young women and immigrant women; to organize public meetings on topics of feminist theology and spirituality; to promote meetings with other Grail groups in Europe; and to create an Italian Grail association, in order to be recognized as a public society.

World Social Forum

The World Social Forum (WSF) will take place in Nairobi, Kenya from January 20 to 25, 2007. The forum will address topics such as war and militarization, security and peace and globalization. Feminist dialogues will be held before the Forum begins.

 (See IGA 2006 Report, p.19-20.)

Grail Delegation WSF 2007:

- Cristina Dos Santos – Brazil
- Silvani Valentim – Brazil
- Ursula Amuke – Kenya
- Angelina Kyonda – Kenya
- Grace Kinyanjui – Kenya
- Catherine Maingi – Kenya
- Mary Omedo – Kenya
- Sapiencia Obiero – Kenya
- Priscilla Erasmus – South Africa
- Sophia Kahumba – Tanzania
- Ephetha Mcha – Tanzania
- Immaculate Kasendwa – Uganda
- Yiga Iam – Uganda

Grail members with other delegations:

- Carol Barton (US) – United Methodist Church
 - Pauline Makwaka (Kenya) – Action Aids
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Report on the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Women **by Jenna Messier**

On October 9, 2006 the *In-Depth Study on all Forms of Violence against Women* was released by the Office of the Secretary-General. This report can be accessed online at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw>. The 140-page study asserts two strong conclusions: "the conditions which enable this violence against women are socially produced and therefore the processes by which they are produced can be altered" (372) and "violence against women is a violation of human rights." (364)

Three main ways in which Grail women as part of an international NGO can help by: pushing their governments to ratify human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; "ensuring that women know their rights and are empowered to demand and exercise them" (378); contributing to the collection of data on promising practices; and evaluating policies which are effective in preventing and addressing such violence. The Grail/UFER Linkage Group to the UN urges Grail members everywhere to work against violence toward women.

From the "One World Discussion Group"

The "One World Discussion Group" of Grail members from Germany and the Netherlands shared their concerns as they prepared a weekend with German Grail members on the theme "Living in Solidarity with our world." They made a **SWOT** analysis of the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats** as Grail. *Carla van Thiel* sent the analysis in a letter to the NLTs and local teams in Uganda and Kenya, to NLTs in Germany and the Netherlands and to the ILT. Carla asked for feedback for the next meeting of the discussion group on January 5-7, 2007.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mailings

Mieneke Hage says the following materials have been sent:

1. The IGA 2006 Report to all IGA participants and communication persons.

2. The international address list January 2007 to communication persons.
3. The financial report 2005 to treasurers and IC members.
4. The Networks financial report 2005 to network coordinators

If you want copies or information, please check out the appropriate person in your country.

Job Posting — Grail Representative to the United Nations

Grail/UFER Linkage Group to the UN will be the reference group for the Grail Representative. At monthly meetings she will report on her work and share her insights. Linkage Group members will share what they have been doing. Plans will be made on agendas to follow, meetings to attend, inputs to make, International Grail connections to be promoted. She will work 25 hours/month. For details, contact *Mary Gindhart* (mgindhart@juno.com).

✿ (See IGA 2006 Report, p.19-20.)

Visioning the International Grail in the 21st Century

Early in 2006, the ILT distributed a Questionnaire entitled 'Visioning the International Grail in the 21st Century' with the aim of involving as many Grail members as possible in the preparation phase of the 2006 IGA. Responses were received from Grail women, both individuals and Grail groups, in 16 of the 17 countries that currently participate in the decision-making processes of the international Grail as well as the Grail/UFER Linkage Group to the UN and the Earth, Ecology and Biodiversity Network. The responses gave rich insights and ideas. Thanks to all who contributed. The Mission Goals and Recommendations from the IGA reflect a number of these insights and challenges.

✿ (See IGA 2006 Report, p. 10-11.)

Contact *Ruth* (ruthcrowe@ozemail.com.au) if you would like a copy of the summary of responses on Highpoint Experiences, Meaningful Grail Values, Macro Trends and our Grail Calling. The comments about changes Grail women would like considered to the International Grail Vision and Mission Statements are also available from Ruth.

Correction

Crossroads, May 2006

In the article, *EFFATA meeting in Germany*, the third from the last sentence should have said: "We realised that the Muslim world has also many groupings within it and that there are many different ways to look at women in the Koran."

INTERNATIONAL GRAIL CALENDAR 2007

- **January 20 to 25** – World Social Forum, Nairobi, Kenya

 - **January 29 to February 9** – International Leadership Team meeting, Utrecht, Netherlands. Before the ILT meeting Ruth will visit Uganda and Cristina will visit the Grail in Kenya before she goes to the World Social Forum.

 - **February 26 to March 9** – Commission on the Status of Women meeting on the Girl Child, United Nations, New York

 - **July 16 to 21** – Young Women of the Americas meeting in Honduras

 - **August 1 to August 7** – The Spirituality Forum, CASA de ORAÇÃO SANTA RAFAELA MARIA (Prayer House Santa Rafaela Maria), Palmela, Portugal.
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