

CROSSROADS

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A Newsletter of The Grail International Leadership Team

January 2009

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"The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are the most important moral and ethical expression of secular governments since the abolition of the slave trade or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They represent 189 nation states committing themselves to abolishing poverty. Whatever else you are doing, find a way to give greater commitment to the advocacy and delivery of these goals through faith-based institutions. We need to say to the secular world, "The MDGs are fantastic and we are with you 100%.""

Ian Linden

Address to the International Grail Work Meeting

October 31, 2008



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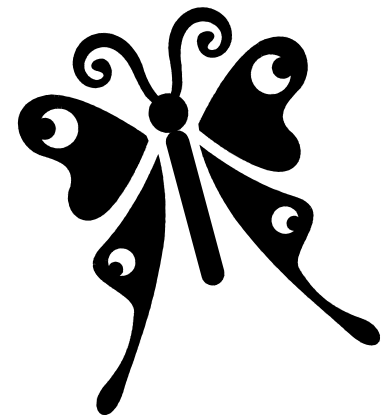
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Millennium Development Goals

By 2015 all 189 United Nations Member States have pledged to:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental stability
8. Develop a global partnership for development



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The International Leadership Team extends to you our best wishes for a New Year filled with blessings.

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Deadline for the next Crossroads - *May 15, 2009*.
Please send to Mary Gindhart at her address. Thank you.

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REPORT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM, December 2008

At the recent International Grail Work Meeting, October 29 - November 7, 2008, we had the opportunity to hear and learn about the life and work of the Grail women around the world which is truly inspiring. We missed Angelina Kyonda from Kenya as she did not get a visa, but we recently heard from her about 4 projects that are planned in Kenya.

In every part of the world, Grail women are challenged by global, national, regional, local, and family realities. We are working with others in many places and many venues in the areas the Millennium Development Goals address. On the international level, the Work Meeting made strong commitments to Grail efforts to advocate and deliver the Goals:

- Continuing together to deepen our Christian roots and nurture the new openness to the diversity of spiritual paths within the International Grail;
- Conducting formation programs at regional and international levels;
- Linking our networks and work groups to provide information and resources to the International Formation Team and Grail teams in countries, share research and best practices, and work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals;
- Upgrading our use of information technology;
- Developing an international database;
- Facilitating the exchange of Grail women between countries;
- Being attentive to impacts of the current financial downturn;
- Updating information on the Grail website;
- Creating blogs and investigating video conferencing.

We look forward to working with Grail members everywhere in 2009 on these ambitious plans.

Ruth Crowe, Cristina dos Anjos, and Mary Gindhart

2008/2009 ILT ELECTIONS

The IC/Network meeting, October 29 – November 7, 2008, affirmed the appointment of a Dutch Grail team Josette Kersters and Phily van Dijck, as the International Election Committee (IEC) for the International Leadership Team (ILT) election which has started.

Here is a summary of the election process:

Timeline	Process	Remarks
November 2008 (after IC/Networks Meeting)	IC members take home outline Election Process and contact NLT asking for: 1) a National Election Contact Person (NEP), 2) names and details of all national Grail members eligible to vote at International level	NEP should have email and possibilities for duplication.
December 15	Responses received from all countries with name and address of NEP and address list of Grail members.	
January 15, 2009	Communication sent by IEC to all NEP's asking for nominations.	
March 31	Countries return their nominations to IEC.	

Timeline	Process	Remarks
April	IEC contacts nominees, asking for confirmation and requests CV's.	
May 15	Nominees send in their CV and photo	
June	IEC draws up list of candidates	
July	Master copy of ballot paper and info. about nominees and voting procedures is sent to NEP's	NEP duplicates for voting members.
August 15	Countries return all ballot papers	
October 1	The ILT for 2010 is announced	

Next Step — Nomination of candidates, 15 January to 31 March 2009

QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE ILT (International Elections Procedures, International Council Manual, p.22.):

- a) commitment to the integrity of the basic elements of Grail vision and life;
- b) active participation in the Grail over at least the preceding five (5) years;
- c) experience of some substantial communal responsibility within the Grail;
- d) capacity for team work;
- e) international experience and perspective;
- f) sufficient availability and health for effective and reliable carrying of her responsibilities.

Note: 'Sufficient availability' requires flexibility of work schedule in order to be able to engage in the various meetings required, to visit Grail Groupings and to take up other ILT tasks. It may require being away from home base for up three (3) months per year. (Ref. *International Structures*, §6.6.)

The International Council brainstormed about the desirable characteristics for ILT members and ILT teams:

Communication: Sensitivity in communications, willing to deal with up-to-date communications forms, creative and able to listen, able to speak at least two or three languages and to use simple English.

Decision making: Able to be transparent in decision making and accountable to movement, to make hard decisions, to be fair and impartial in decision making, and to deal with finances.

Grail experience: Knows how to work the structures of the Grail, has deep commitment to the Grail mission and awareness of its history, International Grail experience, and is true to whatever the international Grail has decided, participates in dialogues about Grail spirituality.

Personal qualities: Lots of energy, generous and passionate, sense of humor, good health, open and progressive, has multicultural understanding, willing to work overtime, perseverance, have support around them, respected nationally and internationally.

The IC also brainstormed about the desirable characteristics for the 3-person ILT:

Team characteristics: Not all English speakers, not all Spanish speakers, not all Portuguese speakers, multi-cultural understanding; understanding what makes a good team; collaborative spirit; ability to consult with those who will be affected by decisions; ability to inspire confidence in dialogue; ability to think strategically; ability to deal with finances; ability to make hard decisions; mediation skills in conflict situations; intergenerational; has members from global north and global south.

Special Request For Help!

TANZANIA

St. Teresa of Avila Secondary School for Girls — US \$30,000 needed now

The Grail in Tanzania is opening St. Teresa of Avila Secondary School in Tanzania in January 2009. Maria Goretti Semvua and Margarita Shirima told the Grail members gathered at the International Council meeting about the need for \$30,000 to finish construction, painting, and furnishing of a simply built, beautiful school facility. We who heard their story ask you to contribute what you can and to encourage others among your family and friends to make a contribution at this time. Contact your International Council representative or your National Leadership Team to learn how to send contributions.

In its first year, St. Teresa School will offer classes in history, geography, Swahili, English, math, and biology or chemistry to 120 Form One girls. Each year, the school will add one more class of students until it will have a full complement from Form 1 through Form 6 in 2014. With an emphasis on technical and science subjects, the school aims to prepare young women to understand and engage the advanced technology necessary to succeed personally and to bring greater development to their communities. St. Teresa School will prepare students for advanced training in technical fields or for university studies.

Please send a contribution yourself and encourage your friends to help too. You are welcome to adapt the letter below to your context.

Dear Friend,

As Christmas approaches, we prepare to celebrate the presence of Emmanuel, "God among us." Too often, this deeper meaning is lost amidst the consumerism and busy pace of our holiday preparations.

As Grail women belonging to a faith-based movement, we ask, is there a way we can celebrate Christmas more meaningfully, and is there a way we can share this with others? We have found one opportunity through our international dimension.

The Grail in Tanzania, East Africa, is on the verge of opening a school in Mwangi Kilimanjaro. Grail members around the world are excited about this secondary school for girls which is being undertaken by our young, thriving Tanzania Grail team. The Tanzanian Grail is especially known for the ecologically sustainable practices of its community centers. This seems to us such a wonderful way to birth new life, by nurturing the education and

development of African children on the world's most forgotten continent.

Only US \$30,000 is needed to finish construction, painting and furnishing of a simply built, beautiful school facility which in January will open its doors to students.

Would you consider joining me in making a contribution to an "alternative Christmas?"

- *US \$15 would buy a year's worth of pencils for an entire class*
- *US \$30 would pay for a teacher's desk*
- *US \$50 would help in planting trees to reforest the land around the school*
- *US \$150 would buy textbooks, which because of cost, are scarce in Tanzania.*

Donations of any amount can be made payable to the Grail and mailed to your Grail national treasurer. They will be sent by the International Grail so as to ensure transparency and the timely arrival of our gifts for the beginning of the Tanzanian school year.

The International Grail thanks you for the generosity of your prayers and support for the school in Mwangi. For Christians, it is a chance to receive Christ, born again in our midst.

*Wishing you and your loved ones a very blessed Christmas,
For the International Grail*

Spirituality

THE WAY FORWARD FOR THE GRAIL WORK ON SPIRITUALITY

Txintxa, pronounced Chin Cha, a word from one of the indigenous languages of Mozambique which means "let's go together" is the name we are going to call the way forward for the Grail work on spirituality. Everyone in the Grail is invited to join the work of deepening our Christian roots and nurturing the new openness to the diversity of spiritual paths.



The way forward was designed by the Workgroup members: Deirdre Cornell and Marina Sangalli (Theological Resource Working Group), Maria Carlos Ramos (IC member and Vision Group), Mary Gene Devlin (Vision Group), Teopista Nakibuule (former Spirituality & Theology Network Coordinator), Ruth Crowe (ILT).

- An invitation to all of us to join in something that we build together: 'Deepening our Christian roots and nurturing the new openness to the diversity of spiritual paths'
- The areas we will explore together are those identified by countries to be carried forward internationally and around which we need 'common knowledge'.

'Let's build a new house on solid foundations'

The recently formed Theological Resources Working Group: Deirdre Cornell, Cay Charles and Marian Ronan (USA), Anita Saisi and Marina Sangalli (Italy), and Maria Carlos Ramos (Portugal) will gather materials around themes for distribution to all Grail members around the world.

Objectives:

1. Establish common knowledge together.
2. Identify resource persons and materials in the areas of:
 - Deepening Christian roots
 - Understanding Culture and Spiritual challenges
 - Ecumenism and Inter-religious dialogue
3. Oversee the preparation and presentation of materials which are accessible and relevant to Grail members.
4. Foster a potential for contextual theological reflection.

Steps in the process:

Countries will receive 2 pieces of writing/articles on each of the following themes over a two year period

2009 Goals:

- Understanding more deeply early Christian roots and why it is important to go back to the 'roots'.
- Understanding Culture and spiritual challenges

2010 themes

- Ecumenism and Inter-religious dialogue

The Theological Resource Team will arrange for these papers to be written and they will be distributed through the International Secretariat. Papers will be written with an eye to how these themes connect with the Grail today and questions for reflection will also be prepared.

Countries/Grail groups are asked to do their own contextual reflections. It is hoped that reflection on indigenous spiritualities will also be facilitated through this process.

Responses: Responses from countries or Grail groups will be sent to the **ILT**, who will plan how to take these forward and make the responses available to all Grail members. The Spirituality Forum website could be used: www.grailspiritualityforum.org.

Suggestion: Each Grail grouping is encouraged to identify someone to be the reference person to receive and distribute the papers and country/Grail group responses.

Christa Anbeek (Grail member, The Netherlands) made some helpful points about handling spiritual diversity. She noted that there is a tension about the phrase "Deepening our Christian roots and nurturing the new openness to the diversity of spiritual paths" because there are women in the Grail who are not Christian or are not only Christian. She quoted from the Grail 1988 Faith Message:

We are a faith community of women. Just as a crystal reflects light in a multitude of radiant colors, our belief reflects the different experiences and expressions of faith among us. We see the richness of our diversity even as we struggle to understand it better.

Christa asked the question: "Should we only deepen our Christian roots or also deepen the roots of other pathways?" Christa gave an example of the characteristics of the "new" spirituality that has developed in the western countries, which is not tied to religious certainties, church structures, the bible or other holy books, or the stories of indigenous religions. It has beliefs that are considered reasonable, grounded in contemporary science, see humankind in relation to the rest of creation, and give a coherent response to ecological, social, and cultural changes of our time.



Grail Network/Work Group Reports

HUMAN TRAFFICKING NETWORK

Ton Brouwer and Mieke Borgdorff, Coordinators

Ton and Mieke work in collaboration with the Dutch Foundation of Religious Against Trafficking (SRTV), bringing with them a network of 17 Grail countries. Since the IGA in 2006, there has been at least one contact person in each Grail country who was asked to find out if trafficking of women and girls is taking place in her country and if her country is one where victims come from, a country of destination, or a country of destination and/or transit like the

Netherlands. Eleven of the countries have been active since then, sending their findings to Ton who published them in the monthly GJOP Bulletin and in Crossroads to inform the whole Grail.

There is a growing awareness within the Grail that trafficking of women is taking place all over the world. Prevention is very important. There are leaflets available in 49 different languages and one with pictures for the non-literate. There is additional material available from Ton for whoever wants more information. Materials can also be downloaded from internet: www.srtv.info.

Mieke has been asked by the Dutch Foundation to illustrate a booklet on the way of the Cross using her paintings of a victim of women trafficking. More materials and methodology on how to use them are being prepared. These materials can be then distributed to Grail countries.

Objectives:

1. Continue Human Trafficking Network
2. Grow awareness of human trafficking and prevention
3. Interact with contact persons in different Grail countries
4. *Future:* We hope to help victims of women trafficking to repatriate to their home countries through mediation of the Grail

BRUSSELS WORK GROUP

Robin Sclafani, Patricia Camisao, Carol Prod'homme came to talk with the International Council about their developing Grail group. Robin and Patricia are Grail members from the USA and Portugal respectively who live and work in Brussels. They were accompanied by Didine Petit, long time Grail member from Belgium.

This group started to form in 2000 at a Lien gathering. All the members are involved in transnational organizations and live in Brussels and can offer opportunities for the Grail to be partners in projects and in lobbying. In Brussels it is easy to have social contacts for projects, getting information, getting input on projects and finances which can be helpful in the wider Grail.

The IC agreed to the following:

- to recognize the developing Brussels Grail group as a Grail work group that could offer important resources to the wider Grail.
- that the group should receive all international communications, through their contact person: Patricia Camisao, brusselsgrail@gmail.com.

Formation:

Didine Petit, who lives in Antwerp, has been asked to be the coordinator of Grail formation for new people coming into the Brussels group. Anita Saisi from Italy has offered to help with this work as well as Elly König from the Netherlands.

European Grail meeting in 2010 will be organized by Brussels group:

At the 2008 European Grail meeting 4 areas of work were chosen; the 2010 meeting will grow from interaction about those areas.

Gifts the Brussels Work Group can offer the Grail:

- Introduce possible partnerships
- Assist with project development and funding
- Associate membership in CEJI (A Jewish Contribution to an Inclusive Europe), A Jewish NGO based in Brussels, Belgium.

Country Reports

MOZAMBIQUE: ON INTERNATIONAL FORMATION PROGRAMME – BRAZIL 2008

English version:

From July 6 to 26, 2008 there was an International Grail Formation Programme at the Grail Centre in Belo Horizonte (Brazil).

Twenty trainees took part in this programme. The breakdown by country was: Angola (1), Brazil (4), Canada (1), USA (2), Mexico (4), Mozambique (3), and Portugal (3) and 5 coordinators. Their ages varied between 28 and 46 years old.

This was the first training programme for Portuguese and Spanish speakers in the history of International Grail. The communication language was *Portinhol* (a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish). The programme was based on the principles of formation within the Grail:

- Deepening Spirituality;
- Personal development connected to the vision and mission of the Grail;
- Learning and sharing of experiences;
- Creation of cohesion to face challenges in contemporary society;
- Acquisition of knowledge on new issues;
- Change in the way of being, acting, and reacting;
- Empowerment of women and provision of help for them to have a strong spirit.

The training was very important. For many persons it was the first time they had taken part

in an international event of the Grail. We had the opportunity to deepen our knowledge of the mission and vision of the Grail. For the Mozambican team it was a valuable training because we had a lot of experiences and had unique moments like the visit to camping sites of Movimentos dos sem Terra (no land people's movement), Santa Helena settlement, and a visit to paper gatherers. We thus got to know the other side of Brazil, not only what we have been seeing on TV. The Mozambicans who took part in this training feel very privileged and came back with their spirituality strengthened.

by Benvinda Tamele, Mozambique

Portuguese version:

Decorreu de 6 a 26 de Julho de 2008 uma formação internacional do Graal, no Centro do Graal do Belo Horizonte (Brasil).

Este programa teve a participação de 20 formantes provenientes de Angola (1), Brasil (4), Canadá (1), EUA (2), México (4), Moçambique (3) e Portugal (3) e 5 coordenadoras. As idades variavam entre 28 e 46 anos.

Este foi o primeiro programa de formação de expressão Portuguesa/ Espanhola na história do Graal Internacional. A língua de comunicação foi o Portinhol. O programa foi elaborado com base no princípio do que é formação no Graal:

- Aprofundar a Espiritualidade;
- Desenvolvimento pessoal com pontos de conexão de acordo com a visão e a missão do Graal;
- Aprender e partilhar experiências vividas;
- Criar coesão para enfrentar os desafios na sociedade actual;
- Adquirir conhecimento de novas temáticas;
- Modificar a forma de ser, agir e reagir;
- Empoderar as mulheres e ajuda-las a ter um espírito forte.

A formação foi de muita importância uma vez que para muitas formantes foi a primeira vez que participaram de um encontro internacional. Tivemos a oportunidade de aprofundar o conhecimento sobre a missão e visão do Graal. Para a equipe de Moçambique foi uma formação muito valiosa pois adquirimos muitas experiências e momentos únicos como as visitas ao acampamento do Movimento dos sem Terra, assentamento Santa Helena e visita às catadoras de papel. Assim passamos a conhecer o outro lado do Brasil e não só o que temos visto pela televisão. As moçambicanas que participaram desta formação sentem-se privilegiadas e voltaram com a sua espiritualidade fortalecida.

por Benvinda Tamele, Mozambique

SWEDEN

As a step towards more regional networking in Europe, Anita Saisi, Bibi Helgesson and I committed ourselves to more contact between the Grail in Sweden and the Grail in Italy, when we met last year at the international spirituality forum. As a first step, six of us from Sweden (Anna-Maria Ahlén, Karin Beskow, Bibi Helgesson, Kerstin Jacobsson, Anne Palmér and Ninnie Wikström) went to Milano for a long week-end in May 2008. We were accommodated in the homes of the Grail members and friends, which we enjoyed very much. Such hospitality we were met with! We were guided around the city by Pia Zuccolin and Claudia Poggi. For those of us who studied church history as students in Uppsala long ago, seeing the churches from the 4th century, and the place where St Augustine was baptized by St Ambrose of Milano made a strong impression on us. Seeing the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci, also made a very strong impression on us. For those of you who have not been in Milano, go! On the Saturday we had a joint meeting, held in a 'place of hospitality', a centre for various kinds of voluntary work, providing housing for people in need and other assistance. In that open and interesting place we had our conversations, first presenting ourselves and our work. In the afternoon, Nicoletta Crosti joined us for a reflection on her paper on forgiveness and its theology which is available on the Spirituality Forum website. The afternoon ended with a Eucharist celebrated together and led by Bibi and Ninnie who both are ordained ministers in the Church of Sweden. In the evening we went to a very nice restaurant, ending an altogether splendid week-end. We hope to be able to return the hospitality in a future meeting in Sweden.

Kerstin Jacobsson (Sweden)

Grail Meetings Reports

EUROPEAN GRAIL MEETING — THE CHALLENGE OF A LIVABLE AND VITAL EUROPE

European Grail Meeting, 2008, Germany

On August 10-17 twenty-six participants from 7 countries met at a Benedictine abbey in Bavaria to discuss the concerns and possible contributions of the Grail movement in the context of the European Union. Although coming from the North American continent, I was one of them, marrying my Polish origins (I visited my family in Poland at this time) with my Canadian point of view. I found that our Canadian experience of integrating multiple cultures

was very useful in the discussions about the different problems facing Europe today.

Our week began by asking what we have in common and what is the common good; do we have a vision/dream of what our life in the new Europe could be; conflicts, fears, differing interests; present and future possibilities. We prayed and celebrated together. We were particularly fortunate in having an international team of young Grail women who were working in Brussels with various European Union departments and who were able to explain its workings. We had workshops on anti-discrimination training, religious diversity, and intercultural dialogue. There was serious work on what European Grail women could undertake as effective lobbying actions, either nationally or trans-nationally, and we were particularly helped by the women from the Brussels team who presented effective strategies; we accepted responsibility for presenting these concerns to our national Grail entities.

There were also concerns about food security and agricultural policies, the military, financing social supports, and the question of religious roots of Europe.

We went from looking at our personal Grail histories to a consideration of contributions the Grail could make in our own countries. We gave our support to the group of younger Grail women who have asked the ILT to consider them as a Grail entity in Brussels, Belgium. Personally this touched me the most, seeing that there were younger women who wanted to carry on Grail concerns and values.

August 15, feast of the Assumption of Mary into heaven, is a holiday in Bavaria and celebrated everywhere with liturgical celebrations and the festive blessing of herbs and flowers brought to church, as well as the wearing of Bavarian dress by men, women and children, also lots of beer and music!

As a Canadian I became aware of how far we have come in dealing with our immigrant cultural realities here at home and how much we take it for granted, whereas in some other parts of Europe it remains a theoretical problem, with fear or unrealistic expectations on the part of national populations. We do not have the same numbers of illegal and internal migrants because of our geographic situation (surrounded by water). This meeting was for me one where I felt that I had many things to contribute to the discussion and I am very glad to have been able to participate.

by Nusia Matura, Canada

GRAIL MEETING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Translation from Portuguese:

I have been a Grail member since 2001. I feel that my life changed when I became part of the Grail. I learned new things and met people who through their influence made me to accept new challenges in life. I got to know people who were crucial in changing my life and giving it better meaning, in knowing that as a human being it is necessary to do something for humanity and that peace is a gift to which we are all entitled.

In a few lines I will talk about my experience at the annual conference of Grail - South Africa, starting by saying that it was a gratifying experience because despite being surrounded by older Grail members I felt that we are one family, that our motto is to feel that we are useful to the society and can help change the attitude of that society regarding poverty. In this experience in South Africa I felt a light inside me, something that I cannot explain, it seemed that the Holy Spirit was speaking in our hearts. In those four days I was like a newborn baby that comes to the world for the first time.

by Ilda Andre Amuge, Mozambique

Original in Portuguese:

Chamo-me Ilda André Amuge, sou membro do Graal desde 2001. Sinto que a minha vida mudou desde que passei a fazer parte dessa agremiação, aprendi coisas novas, e conheci pessoas que por influência delas acabei por ter novos desafios na vida. Conheci pessoas que foram cruciais para que a minha vida mudasse e tivesse uma maior expressão, em saber que é necessário como humanos, fazer-se alguma coisa em prol da humanidade, e que a paz é uma dádiva que todos nós temos direito.

Em poucas linhas irei falar da minha experiência na conferência anual na África do Sul, e dizer que foi uma experiência gratificante, porque apesar de estar rodeada por membros do Graal mas velhas, senti que somos todos uma única família, que o nosso lema é sentir-se útil para a sociedade e fazer com que essa mesma sociedade mude de atitude em relação as mazelas existentes. Nesta minha experiência senti uma luz dentro de mim, algo que não consigo explicar, parecia que o Espírito Santo estava a manifestar-se em nossos corações, mas isso deve-se a nossa espiritualidade perante o Senhor. Nesses 4 dias voltei a nascer de novo, como se fosse uma criança recém nascida que vem ao mundo pela primeira vez.

por Ilda Andre Amuge, Mozambique

In Loving Memory of Our Grail Sisters

Magdalene Oberhoffer, 1924 – 2008 (Germany)

Dear friends around the world,

In the silence of the night – at 3:20 a.m. on Tuesday, December 2, 2008, eternity touched her earthly life creating a space in which our dear Magdalene Oberhoffer could be absorbed in the great love that surrounded her all her life – in GOD.



After months of suffering, where she impressed the caretakers with her humor, loving attention, patient and peaceful acceptance, she is now released and has come to the fullness of her life.

The Prioress Sr. Enikö of the Carmel was with her – fulfilling Magdalene's wish to die in Carmel at Dachau – as Dachau has come to her for the hour of death. The coming night, December 4, her body will be with the sisters.

We will celebrate a joyful Resurrection Mass Saturday, December 5, 2008, at 10:30 a.m. and put her to rest at the cemetery of the Carmel in Dachau thereafter.

To all of you who accompanied her with prayers a heartfelt "thank you."

United with you in the pain of loss and in hope,

*Christa Werner
For the Grail Germany*

Gertrude Morris (United States)

Gertrude Morris will long remain in my memory bank of happy thoughts, warm-hearted people and kind experiences. I knew and enjoyed her for years at Grailville, but I had some personal encounters when she welcomed me to stay in her Washington, D.C. apartment.

She was a wonderful hostess, always fun, and she told me a fascinating story that I don't know if others have heard.

We went to Mass at the previous Washington Cathedral. As part of her work as director of evangelization for the National Office of Black Catholics in Washington, D.C., Gertrude had months working with a committee preparing for a revival, or perhaps a celebration of Black Catholics. She was vehement in insisting that it be held in the old cathedral we were sitting in, while everyone else on the committee wanted a

smaller, more modest place.

Gertrude was bold and firm. After all the indignities and injustices Black Americans had suffered, after all the good places they couldn't be seated in, including this cathedral, she said the event must be held in a place with this prestige, history and importance -- they must be able to sit there now, they needed this, nothing less.

Gertrude told me she was bold, confident and definite when she was at committee meetings. However, she said when she got home, in the middle of the night she was terrified. What if no one came? What if all the others were right, and she was wrong? Was she making a complete fool of herself? What if the whole thing flopped?

At the next meeting she was again adamant that the event be in the Cathedral, and she swung the whole committee to her view -- that was where it was finally held. And after all her fears, the place was packed. It was a huge success.

I so enjoyed this story, and could identify with it. I have shared her humanity in being terrified that something was going to flop, and I loved hearing that perseverance and confidence (by day) won the day, and led to a great success that she really deserved.

She's in an even bigger cathedral now, singing from her heart and I'm sure still interacting with her fellow citizens of heaven with warmth, humor and love.

—Jeanne Heiberg, USA

I was always was impressed with Gertrude's presence, her power, her commitment both to the Grail and to her black community....Gertrude was also a BLACK QUEEN and she is in heaven, in fullness, sharing with us so much of her power and commitment to the Grail. May we, the Grail in Portugal, who are celebrating our Jubilee, be inspired by Gertrude Morris' gifts and grace.

—Ticha Vasconcelos, Portugal

Announcements

- The full [International Grail Work Meeting Report](#) from the meeting held in Utrecht, The Netherlands from October 29 to November 7, 2008 is available from International Council representatives, National Leadership Teams, and the Grail International Secretariat.