



# Peacemaking... Our Journey

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## Celebrating Twenty Years Of Peacemaking

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### Peacemaking... Our Journey

is a newsletter published  
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They are teachers on every level, administrators, social workers, prison chaplains, nurses and pastoral associates. They give shelter and hope to the homeless, and to pregnant teenagers who are alone with nowhere to go. They are the Franciscan Sisters of Peace who are instruments of just change and healing where they live and serve.

In 1986, 112 vowed women came together to form a new congregation. The formal establishment of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace took place on October 4, 1986 by a decree signed by John Cardinal O'Connor. Another historical moment was celebrated on October 1, 1989, when the blessing of the Congregation Center in Haverstraw, New York took place.

The sisters accepted their invitation to deep faith and trust that God would teach them what was theirs to do. Led by the spirit and each other, it was their desire to make an authentic response to the Gospel and the needs of the Church. The new congregation listened to the call to focus on the four fundamental Franciscan values: Conversion, Contemplation, Poverty and Minority.

**Conversion** is in answer to the gospel call that is at the center of Franciscan life.

The call is to transform one's self and engage in the transformation of the surrounding culture. **Contemplation** is an openness to receive God's love and become instruments of peace. The life of the Franciscan community unites with the entire human family and hopes for a peaceful world. The prayer of the sisters is to give unending praise and thanksgiving to God for His creation and continued blessings.

The ministerial direction of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace is to answer the Church's call to serve the poor. In living the fundamental value of **Poverty**, the sisters join with the poor both personally and communally and attend to the suffering of the people. Service to the poor is a major commitment for the Franciscan sisters.

**Minority** means becoming servants to all human creatures and bringing the good news to the poor. Following in the steps of St. Francis, the sisters identify with the poor and powerless.

Weaved through these fundamental values, is the Franciscan Sisters of Peace vision of peacemaking. Recognizing that peacemaking is a gift from God, the sisters have always, and continue, to respond to the social and religious needs of the people of God in our day.

Change is never easy and forming the new congregation was a leap of faith for the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. They accepted and faced the new challenges with faith and trust. The experience brought new life, new hope and a journey that continues today.

During these past twenty years, the sisters have worked and volunteered to the present day in many various ministries. In previous issues of this newsletter, you have read of some of the good



*The new congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace at St. Patrick's Cathedral, 1986.*

*continued on page 2*

## May Christ Teach You What You Are To Do

Last December, the Nobel Peace prize was awarded to a most remarkable woman- Wangari Maathai became the Nobel Peace Prize laureate for work in her native Kenya which began with her planting trees! Ms. Maathai had the vision, insight and courage to confront the causes of the poverty, unemployment and unrest in her nation; she made the connection between the mismanagement of the environment and its negative impact on the people's every level of life. So, she began to, literally, sow the seeds of peace by initiating a tree planting program which ultimately transformed the land, renewed a spirit of hope in the people and began a harvest of peace, of which the Nobel Prize is but a token.

While a Nobel Peace prize seems far off from us, the Franciscan Sisters of Peace might well take the example of Wangari Maathai to heart for the example which she provides of adhering to the admonition of St. Francis to his followers: "*May Christ teach you what you are to do.*" Ms. Maathai understood her task and set about doing a very simple project in the face of huge obstacles.

As we gathered this summer for our annual Chapter of Mats, we Franciscan Sisters of Peace and our associates gave serious consideration to this very

admonition of Francis. We challenged ourselves to discern an answer to the question of what we are being called to do to promote our charism of peacemaking in these troubled times. The surprising answer came in a single word- "Africa!" Somehow, our desire to unite Catholic social teaching and our determination to focus on a social justice issue converged in one insightful moment, and, as a body, we enthusiastically agreed to devote ourselves to prayer, self- education and action steps relating to our brothers and sisters in Africa. Neither the exact path nor the implications were clear, but there was no doubt that the seed was planted in our hearts as a response to our plea: Christ teach us what is ours to do! It is for us now to nurture the seed, and trust that we, like Wangari Maathai, can reap a harvest of peace.



Sr. Regina Holtz

*Sr. Regina Holtz*

## ...Celebrating Twenty Years of Peacemaking *(continued from page 1)*

works and accomplishments of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. Sr. Kathleen O'Farrell shelters homeless women at the Dwelling Place in New York City. Sr. Marita and Sr. Benedict of Nazareth Life Center comfort and help pregnant teenagers through their pregnancies and the birth of their babies. Sr. Cele helps children at the Specialized Children's Hospital in Mountainside, New Jersey who have been traumatized by unfortunate accidents or suffer from other serious physical problems. These are only a few of the ministries in which the sisters work and serve.

The sisters have served the poor overseas and the needy in other states as well. Currently they serve in New

York, New Jersey, California and Arizona. They strive to be faithful to living the Gospel of Peace as a community of women religious concerned with the diverse needs of those around them – especially the poor.

Peacemaking – Our Journey was developed as a communication vehicle through which the sisters can share their stories. During this celebratory year you will get to know the sisters better by reading their stories. You will also get to know our senior sisters, who have given so many years of selfless love and service. Through all of their ministries, the Franciscan Sisters of Peace evangelize the message of peace and social justice.



The Franciscan Sisters of Peace in 1988.

*(Parts of this article are excerpts from earlier newsletters written by Sr. Dorothy DeYoung, the first Congregation Minister of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace.)*



## The Franciscan Sisters Of Peace Remember Hurricane Victims

It is certain that none of us will ever forget the devastation Hurricane Katrina left in Louisiana and Mississippi. The picture of the little boy waiting to be rescued and pleading, "please help us" is imbedded in our hearts and minds forever. All of us want to help and we desire to do more than we can do. As we join with our brothers and sisters around the nation, the victims of this horrific disaster are being remembered in the daily prayers of each of our sisters. We pray that they will all be reunited with their families, and that our loving Lord will give them peace, strength and courage to face their new beginnings.

## History Of The Franciscan Sisters Of Peace To Be Published

*"If you don't know history, you can't go forward"*

This newsletter offers a short summary of the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. In the near future we will all have the opportunity to learn more about the Congregation's history when the book, "Peacemaking Our Journey – A History of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace," written by Sr. Constance Gaynor, FSP, will be published. Sr. Connie, who is very learned and articulate, has spent two years researching the beginnings of the Franciscan sisters, tracing their movement to the present. She has given much of her time into putting her findings, information and knowledge into print for all of us to share. We look forward to reading the new release.

Sr. Connie, our former Director of Development, has served in several other roles for the Congregation. She has worked with children at the former Kennedy Home in the Bronx, and with the poor in Guatemala just to mention a few of her accomplishments. We thank her for her tireless efforts in writing the history of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace.



Sr. Constance Gaynor

## Development Update

Lucy Sinacore, Director of Development

The Development Department continues to seek ways to raise support for the ministries of the sisters, and for the care of our beautiful senior sisters. Currently, we are receiving response to our Franciscan Fall Raffle. We thank you for your very generous support of this effort. A final raffle report will be issued in our next newsletter.

As we close out our current fiscal year and look to the challenges of the new, I reflect on your generosity through the year.

We thank all of you for your kind generosity. It is only through your support that the sisters can continue in their ministries and fulfill their mission of peacemaking. Our senior sisters especially thank you for all of your kindnesses in helping in their care. You are in the prayers of the sisters daily.

If you have any questions or would like to visit us at the Congregation Center, please call me at 845 942-2527, Ext. 107. Thank you for your contribution. Checks may be made payable to the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

## We Remember

**WE REMEMBER** and ask your prayers for the following persons who have gone to their eternal reward since our last newsletter:

- Harold Henzi – Brother of Sr. Mary Peter Henzi, FSP
- Sr. Ann Nagl, O.P. – Aunt of Sr. Alice Francis Nagl, FSP
- Anne Picciurro – Mother of Sr. Joanne Picciurro, FSP
- George Hall – Brother of Sr. Barnabas Hall, FSP
- Maura Colleary – Mother of Sr. Maureen Colleary, FSP
- John Rogan - Brother-In-Law of Mary Rogan, Development Office Staff Assistant

*Peacemaking comes as  
Creative energy  
Passionately alive  
Vibrating through life  
Peacemaking comes as  
Surprise  
Laughter – tears  
Transformed  
Into a celebration of who we are*

Sr. Patricia Glynn, FSP



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*Peacemaking...Our Journey –  
The Lives and Ministries  
of the Franciscan Sisters  
of Peace and Associates*

## *Mission Statement Of The Franciscan Sisters Of Peace*

The mission of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace is to proclaim and live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Saint Francis.



*Peace Pole at  
Congregation Center*

In the Franciscan tradition, our congregation participates in the mission of the Church through the evangelical life, which is based on the four fundamental values of the Franciscan Third Order Rule: Contemplation, Conversion, Poverty and Minority (humility). As vowed women, we enable a life of committed relationships to others through community and to God through prayer. The Franciscan women comprising the Franciscan Sisters of Peace announce the evangelical message of peace and penitence.

Our first sisters gave our charism its unique identity in the United States by their pioneering spirit; so we, too, respond to the social and religious needs of the people of God in our day.

In work and witness, we accept the challenge of being messengers of peace. Through ongoing conversion, we continue to trust that God will teach us what is ours to do. As signs and instruments in rebuilding the Church, we are continually called to be sisters to all people and in harmony with all creation.

## ***BE REMEMBERED FOREVER...***

By naming the Franciscan Sisters of Peace in your Will.

For further information, contact:

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Our legal title is **Sisters of St. Francis of Peace.**

The Sisters thank you for your continued support of their ministries.

Please indicate on the enclosed envelope if you will name the Franciscan Sisters of Peace in your will or already have named them in your will. Thank you.