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A FAITH MESSAGE FOR THE GRAIL AS IT MOVES INTO THE NINETIES
(from IGA 1988, Report pp. 20-23)

Dear Grail Sisters around the world,

We journeyed to the Tiltenberg with great hope in our hearts. For more than 67 years we have been a faith community of women, trying to strengthen and support one another in our search for God. We have urged each other to be open to the Spirit and to work towards transforming our world into a place of justice, peace and love.

The richness of the Faith Testimonies prepared by the national groups as well as the special sharing we have had in this Assembly have touched us deeply. We who have met here together want to offer to all of you our effort to express a Faith Message for the Grail as it moves into the future.

God is the central mystery of our lives,
creator and life-giver to the whole universe,
beyond, yet within us,
our horizon and beyond our horizon, who calls each one by name,
who is with us always and all ways.

The Grail is an international movement of women, rooted in Christian faith. In the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Grail women have seen revealed the compassionate heart and unflinching love of God. This revelation carries with it a call to make real in our own lives the same compassion and love.

At this time of our history we also find some among us who are deeply touched by the Mystery in other ways. When we live and work together, we know through our day-to-day experience that we do stand together on common ground. But when we try to express this sharing in words, we sometimes feel confused. We place our trust in the Spirit and the Spirit help us see that our common ground is likewise a common path, that all of us are journeying toward the healing and wholeness of ourselves and our world.

Through our Grail life we have often received great spiritual riches. But our personal lives and our life in community have also brought us moments of anger and frustration, confusion and loneliness, darkness and dry seasons. These are painful tests of our faith, yet we believe that, in spite of all, the desert will finally flower.

Our faith move us to celebrate: We can give thanks for all we have received, we can sing and drum and dance, praise and rejoice, laugh and shout and play together, in countless languages and forms.

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We bring our faith to a world which is becoming a global village:

- a village with a great variety of cultures, traditions and expressions, cultures which enrich and challenge us as well as limit and dominate us;
- a village confronted by the powerful forces of science and technology and by unjust economic, social and political structures.

As Grail communities we are rooted in local cultures. Together as women we want to use our collective talents and energy to transform the whole global village into a place where each person and culture will grow and enrich the others.

We heed the cry of people everywhere, longing for freedom, dignity and justice. We are called to action in a world where people struggle to put bread on the table and to fill their jugs with water; where women try to take their own lives in hand; where all dream of a hope-filled future for every child. The challenge of the Gospel message of liberation becomes real for us in many struggles.

In each place our actions take different forms. But we believe that in the pain of every effort to bring about change new life is breaking through. Our hope in the transformation of the global village and of the whole creation is strengthened by the conviction that terror, poverty and oppression will not have the last word. We rely on God's promise: 'Behold I make all things new'.

We are a faith community of women. Just as the 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. But who can limit the sparking rays once the sun has touched the crystal?

We are learning that we are nourished and challenged by different well-springs:

- the magnificence of the cosmos: God alive in every star, in every person, in every blade of grass;
- a deep and personal relationship with Jesus Christ;
- the Bible as we read it with women's eyes;
- the church as it is becoming a community of believers;
- the strength and hope of those who struggle for justice;
- new symbols and rituals that help us celebrate the experiences of our daily lives.

Indeed, we see God revealed in many ways in our world. Often we simply remain quiet before the Mystery, knowing that there is 'nothing so much like God as silence'.

We share the hope that the Spirit will guide us step by step to understand one another. We support one another's searching and discoveries, rejoicing in the radiant colors which the one light evokes from the crystal.