



Vol. 1 No. 1

Peacemaking ~ Our Journey

April 1988

OUR HERITAGE - Roots And New Beginnings

The Franciscan Sisters of Peace trace their origin to three pioneer Sisters: Gertrude Paul, Constanza Huber, and Pellegrina Santelamezza, members of the Tertiary Franciscans for the Apostolic Missions, established on April 21, 1861 in Gemona, Italy. On December 5, 1865 the three arrived at St. Francis Parish on West 31st Street, New York City, to minister to German speaking immigrants. They soon realize that the American milieu was different from that of Europe. As they served the Church and tried to make the cultural riches of the new nation their own, the challenges they encountered demanded a unique response.

The pioneering spirit of these young women quickly attracted vocations and gave impetus to a variety of ministries to meet the needs of the United States Church of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The ministries of the sisters, supported by a steady influx of vocations grew rapidly and within a short span of time they were serving the local Church in several dioceses. Attaining the respect of the clergy and people, the sisters became well-known for their human warmth and Franciscan approach to life and to ministry. Seventeen houses were established in the United States before a second house was established in Europe.

In 1890, twenty-five years after the arrival of the first sisters, the United States segment of the congregation became the Saint Francis Province with its center located in Peekskill, New York on property purchased by the Sisters in 1869. The Constitutions of the Sisters of the Third Order of Saint Francis, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, as the congregation had come to be known, were approved in 1905. These Con-

stitutions were amended in 1933, and remained substantially the same until changed after Vatican II by the Special General Chapter of Aggiornamento held at the Generalate in Rome in 1969.

Beginning with an intense preparation for the General Chapter of 1969, the Sisters of Saint Francis Province, imbued with the spirit of the Second

Vatican Council, endeavored to respond to the Church's mandate to update and to renew. The sisters, rooting their lives more deeply in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, were not only enriched themselves by Vatican II, but they also helped to enrich the local Church with the grace and blessings of the Council.

(Continued on page 5)

There is a SEASON for EVERYTHING... A TIME TO BUILD...

As we gathered in July for our First General Chapter, the Franciscan Sisters of Peace continued to weave the threads of our giftedness to one another and to the Church. Our charism states that "we are to live the Gospel in such a way that in word and witness, we accept the challenge of being messengers of peace. As signs and instruments in **rebuilding** the Church, we are sisters to all people and in harmony with all creation."

Our charism calls us to minister in a variety of ways: to migrant workers in Georgia, to Black and Hispanic communities in Newark, Georgia, Newburgh and the South Bronx, to Native Americans in South Dakota and Arizona, to unwed mothers at Nazareth Life Center, to our youth through education and catechetical ministry, to our elderly, homebound and to all those in need through pastoral ministry and a

(continued on page 3)



(L to R) Sr. Cecilia, Sr. Virginia, Sr. Dorothy, Sr. Helen and Sr. Constance

Sisters in Georgia Face Many Challenges



Sr. Justine

If you enjoy wearing many hats and are challenged by shifting gears frequently, the Diocese of Savannah is the place for you. There are a great variety of works to be done as Sisters Justine Marcucci, Ellen Denise O'Connor and Ann Smith have discovered.

Arriving at St. Mary's Parish in Americus, Georgia in the summer of 1984, with goals of establishing a Catholic presence in the Black Community and of training lay leadership, these three sisters began to meet these challenges.

Sister Justine, a small woman by stature, but a dynamo of energy and a terrific educator, has developed a pre-school program at St. Martin de Porres Center providing a much needed preparation program for school.

Justine is active in an adult literacy program as an instructor of volunteers as well as a tutor. Her appointment to the Diocesan Board of Education and teaching CCD classes are part of her ministry.

Parish records and finances are also in excellent order under her capable administration.

With her usual flare, Sister Ellen energizes the Religious Education program of the Parish. Grades K through 8 and the youth group experience her

guidance. Preparing the teachers at all levels enhances the quality of this program.

Liturgy, so vital to the parish, is a high priority for Ellen as she works closely with the liturgy committee and trains and encourages the liturgical ministers.

The local college campus of the University of Georgia was in need of a Catholic Campus Minister and Ellen rose to the occasion. Working closely with ministers of other denominations

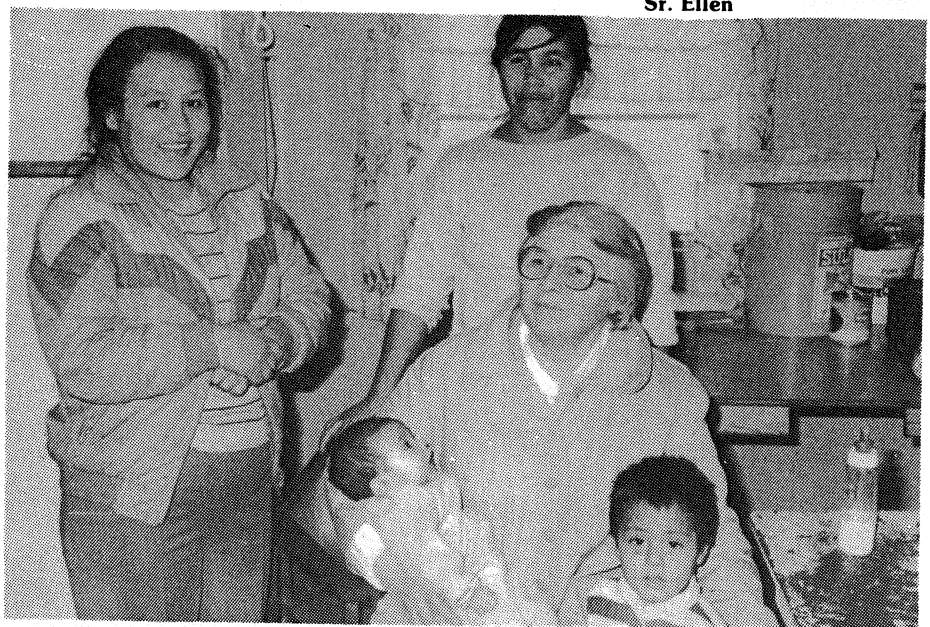
Ellen's warm, easy-going and friendly outreach to the students has had its impact. Recently she was appointed Diocesan Director of Campus Ministry, a challenge to promote this ministry and support those ministers involved.

Renewal programs are vital to the life of a parish and Ellen is the guiding force behind the program at St. Mary's Parish and St. Michael's, a mission church.

(continued on page 7)



Sr. Ellen



Sr. Ann

THE SIGN OF THE DOVE

Our Program Committee recently arranged for sisters and lay associates an opportunity to reflect with Father Thaddeus Horgan, S.A. on **Franciscan Spirituality of Peace for Third Order Franciscan Women in light of the Four Values**. Thaddeus began by affirming the presence of the Holy Spirit in us corporately as we travel on our pilgrimage. Through the movement of the Spirit, we came to know what our new name would be: Franciscan Sisters of Peace. The question before us then is "What does **PEACE** mean for us?"

Thaddeus looked at the question from three perspectives: That of Scripture; of Francis; of the four fundamental values.



In Scripture, the gift from the Spirit is **Shalom**. Shalom is wholeness - that is creation being in unity, all of creation not just humans. Shalom is health - emotional, physical, intellectual, social and psychological. Shalom is harmony - our relationships with God, ourselves and others are in right order. Shalom is prosperity - having what one needs. Shalom is also the absence of hostility because where there is hostility prosperity cannot reign. In Scripture we are called to live the Law of Love - the person who has the gift of Shalom is always pardoning and faithful. God's greatest gift to Shalom is Jesus Christ because He reconciles us to wholeness, health, harmony and prosperity. It is by following His example in our journey with others that we realize perseverance in peace is the way to heaven, not the reward of heaven.

In the writings of Francis there are seventeen references to peace. Francis identifies peace with Christ. We must announce peace as Christ did and if people won't accept our greetings of peace, we must leave them. This allows us to preserve our own inner peace; it's



Father Thaddeus Horgan, S.A.

their choice and in the end it's up to God. We are called to live religious life and to witness. Living the life is primary; ministry is secondary. How we live our

lives is the incarnation of the peace of Christ. We must be thankful for the good that God does through us, for the peace that He invokes through us. Francis believed that if you are filled with the Spirit of peacemaking, there is no need to worry, it will show in your living. Francis, in the Cantic of Creatures, speaks about the integrity of creation and the harmony that must exist with all of creation in order that we endure in peace. "Enduring in peace" is something that we must work at for our lifetime. It is a perseverance in the Gospel way of life. The witness of our peaceableness is what Christ wants us to bring into our relationships.

Lastly, Thaddeus spoke about each value in relation to peace. **Conversion**

Conversion's goal is peace. We are called to be followers of Christ after the example of Francis. We are people who stand against hostility and injustice.

Minority - Minority or humility is connected to peace by our sense of awe when we dwell on the goodness of God. **Contemplation** - Franciscan prayer is contemplative by its nature. We are called to discipline ourselves to

"rest in God's peace" - to make a dwelling place within ourselves - to let the presence of God be our security. Franciscan peacemaking arises out of contemplation.

Poverty - Understanding poverty in its greatest sense by resisting anything that stands against our relationships is the connection with peace. Apartheid, prejudice and racism all fracture the wholeness that we strive for and must be eradicated. We are called to follow the poor and oppressed Christ and share all we have received.

Maureen Colleary, FSP

Season (continued from page 1)

variety of other social ministries.

Recognizing that quality ministry should be maintained, we hold in esteem the heritage left to us by our founders in their zeal for the Church's mission. Our lives are rich as we respond to the needs of God's people weaving peace while journeying with them.

The election of the first Congregation Minister and Council for the Franciscan Sisters of Peace considered those who would willingly serve in the spirit of Francis enabling the Congregation to implement its Future Directives. As a new Congregation we are called to bold and imaginative initiatives. This was truly a sacred moment as the Spirit among us called forth those who would be Servant.

Immediately after the Chapter, the Congregation Council began to collaborate, share, create and initiate. September found establishing our Congregation Center in Haverstraw, N.Y. - an area that is both simple and poor, appropriate for us as Franciscan women. Now we can function from a central location.

Both vowed and non-vowed (Lay Associate) members are engaged in sharing their gifts through participation in developing policies and preparing programs that will enrich us and enable us to continue our journey of peacemaking. The fruits of their labors have already been evidenced and we've only just begun to **build!**

—Sr. Dorothy DeYoung, F.S.P.
Congregation Minister

Sister Ellen Byrnes has been involved in the ministry of education as a teacher and principal since graduating from Ladycliff College in 1965.

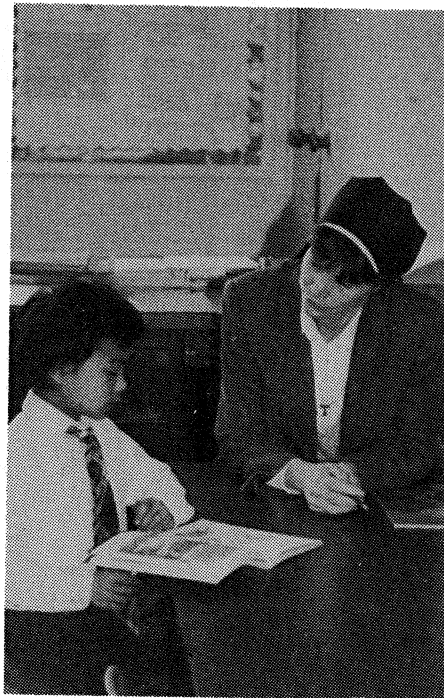
As you listen to Ellen share her thoughts and beliefs about her ministry, you realize that it goes far beyond imparting knowledge and facts or running a well ordered school. Rather it is people and being in relationship with them that makes all the difference. This ministry involves children, teachers, families, secretaries and janitors -ultimately the entire parish. Ellen is about “creating an atmosphere of love, truth and honesty which brings about peace.”

“Parish is people; school is an accidental.” It is in parish you meet people, get to know them and what makes them tick. “You socialize with them and become a part of their lives.” Ellen believes that today more than ever, you become involved in every level of family life through the ministry of education. “The call to love, and being in a position to love...not necessarily without pain...is what it is all about” describes Ellen’s role as an educator.

Ellen enjoys meeting the challenge of enabling others to grow, particularly faculty members. She invites them to grow spiritually and encourages them to do what they do in the classroom even better. Helping to deepen her co-workers awareness and belief that they too are involved in ministry is very important to Ellen. One of her obvious gifts is her ability to unite people and give them the sense of “everyone is in this together.”

Asking Ellen to describe herself, she states “I am a ‘carer’ and what I do is simple.” Everything she says and does reflects her belief that “God is in relationships and you allow God to be there and you delight in that reality.”

Her involvements go beyond the school itself, to teaching CCD, participating in **RENEW** and the various meetings and committees of the parish. Does she ever get tired? Her “YES” is spoken honestly but she is re-energized by people. Her job is made easier by having a good secretary. Playing golf and tennis connects her with friends who also help to energize her outside of her ministry.



Sr. Ellen Byrnes

Being raised in a large family was a bonus, particularly as she began to live community! As one of eleven children “you learn to share, wait your turn, do without, be a part of”. Ellen states her mother and two sisters have had a profound influence on her life and ministry. Ellen believes her faith was influenced by her mother whom she refers to as “a woman with a good heart who loves with no strings attached.” “I believe I learned to have a good heart from her, to encounter people with acceptance.” In her sisters she has real friends and role models. They have helped her to understand how to work and deal with people. They give example of nurturing relationships.

Living a life of love and truth is part of her community experience. Prayer, common goals, and being present to people is important. Her hope for her Franciscan sisters is that they always nourish and empower each other to be a prayerful, spirit-filled group set on fire to love and serve in truth.

Relating to people is the key. It calls Ellen forth to a life and ministry of caring in love and truth, a reflection of what the Franciscan Sisters of Peace are about in today’s world.

In Memoriam



We Remember...

Constance Tardio was taken from us without warning on Tuesday morning, the 17th of November. She left this world violently with the impact of metal on metal, headlights crashing - wheels screeching. She would no longer be with us.

How unlike Connie was her going forth from this world. Connie was gentle, quiet and unassuming.

Connie was one of the first lay associates of the Franciscan Sisters. She was a Cursillista involved in all the facets of the movement. Connie was the daughter of Maria, the sister of Joan and Anthony; she was a friend. She was a kind and loving person. Always there to do, always doing. There was nothing that was ever asked of her that she refused. Connie brought the joy of the Lord into all our lives.

A nurse by profession, Connie was compassionate, always ready to listen, hear you out and if you asked for it, she gave her advice. She was level headed and knew about the things of this world. Connie had the courage of her convictions, and at the center of her life was Christ.

She read His word each day and put flesh and blood to the gospel.

Connie was a strong Christian woman, living her life in an imitation of Christ whom she followed so well. Jesus was meek and humble of heart and His death was violent. Connie’s death was violent too. We thought there was so much more for her to do, so much more life for her to live, but God’s ways are not ours.

We give praise and glory to God because we have known her. Connie continues to touch our lives in a special way.

— Barbara Stofko

Lay Associates Program

A little over four years ago, while each was on her individual spiritual journey, the paths of five Franciscan sisters and four lay women met at a crossroad. The sisters were searching for new paths for their congregation, and the lay women were searching for spiritual enrichment and a deeper expression of their faith. Together they desired to be with like-minded people in the spirit of St. Francis. Encouraged by the Holy Spirit, they began to explore the possibility for a lay associate program.

The original task force, headed by Sr. Constance Gaynor, met monthly. At these meetings the women reflected, discussed and challenged each other. Mutuality of membership would be a priority. Relationships developed. Everyone was enthusiastic and excited with the possibilities.

The formal proposal for the Lay Associate Program was submitted to Sr. Kathryn King and her Council for their consideration and was favorably received.

On the Feast of St. Francis, October 1984 the four lay women were invited to speak to the Congregation members and explain how and why the Lay Associate Program would be mutually beneficial.

The Task Force held regional meetings for anyone interested in learning more about the Program.

On May 5, 1985 the possibility became a reality! Kathy Daly, Ruth Lutt, Mary McGinnis and Norma Mendelsohn were received into the Lay Associate Program as its first members.

Since then we have grown to fourteen members. One group meets monthly at Our Lady of Hope Convent in Peekskill; the other meets at St. Leo's Convent in Elmwood Park, N.J. for prayer and sharing with each other. Reflection Days in the Spring and Fall bring together all members for a day of spiritual development. Our group continues to grow. New members are received into the Program on the Reflection Days and current members renew their commitment for another year, if they desire to do so.

The Lay Associates were privileged to be part of the formation and birth of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. This has served to bind us together in a unique way. All Lay Associates receive word of all Congregation activities and are encouraged to participate whenever possible. We have truly been welcomed in the spirit of St. Francis.

We look forward to the future with great joy and anticipation. We welcome you to join us on our journey!

— Mary McGinnis



Mary is a native of New Jersey and has taught at St. Joseph's of the Palisades High School in West New York for almost thirty years. Though the Franciscans were her colleagues there, Mary's keen interest in everything Franciscan was brought into focus with the beginnings of our Lay Associate program. She was a member of the original Task Force which explored the possibilities of such a program and became its first Chairperson.

Mary is very pleased with the development of the Lay Associate program over the last few years and looks forward to its continued growth. The relationships she has formed with both the lay associates and the sisters has enriched and strengthened her faith.

Heritage (continued from page 1)

Provincial Chapters were permitted for the first time by the revised Constitutions of 1969. Since the Sisters of St. Francis Province felt that their lived experience had not been fully captured in terms of charism, spirit, and identity, at their Provincial Chapters held in 1971, 1974, 1977 and 1980, they tried to rediscover and to articulate these. Slowly an awareness evolved that, for a very significant number of sisters, their identity as a religious institute was distinct from that of the larger congregation. Through discernment, by prayer, reflection, study and dialog, it became clear to these sisters that their roots, charism, and identity as a community were found in the pioneering spirit, faith, and trust in Divine Providence of Sisters Gertrude, Constanza and Pellegrina, who brought peace to others through their works of mercy and justice.

The conviction of the sisters regarding their unique identity as a religious community led in 1982 to the initiation of a process for the establishment of a new diocesan institute in the Church, the Franciscan Sisters of Peace. The decree formally establishing the new congregation was signed by John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, on October 4, 1986. On November 29, 1986, with peace and joy, one hundred twelve vowed women in the presence of many of their associates in ministry, relatives, friends, other religious, and clergy celebrated the establishment of the new Congregation by renewing their vows as **Franciscan Sisters of Peace** at a Eucharistic Liturgy in St. Patrick's Cathedral, with John Cardinal O'Connor presiding.

Having claimed our identity as God-given, fashioned by His Spirit to meet particular needs of the local Church, we **Franciscan Sisters of Peace** continue to serve in ministry with people of God. In education we foster values which can effect true human progress: in pastoral service we help to lead the people to the fullness of life in Christ; and in social service we bring the healing love of Jesus to those in need. Rejoicing in the gift God has given us, we invite others to join us, to share with us, and to support us in our efforts to follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

ADOPTED FROM THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE FRANCISCAN SISTERS OF PEACE

Vocation - Formation



Sr. Patricia McDermott

Formation and Vocation Directors are positions of service to the community. Today, however, they also serve the

larger Church.

Women who are asked to serve in these ministries are well educated and rooted in community and Franciscan Spirituality. They have an understanding of Church and the varied needs of today's world.

After input from the membership the Congregation Council named Sister Patricia McDermott as our new Director of Formation.

Pat entered the community in September 1960. After her profession, she taught at both elementary and secondary levels in various schools in New York and New Jersey.

Completion of her Masters in Rel. Ed. from Loyola University, Chicago, led Pat to new ventures: Director of Religious Education, Ministry to the Elderly in Roxbury, N.J. and SHARE, Diocese of Paterson. From 1978-81 Pat served as the Director of Ministry for the

Community. Her leadership was called upon for another four years serving as Assistant Provincial and representing us at the General Chapter. Most recently, Pat has been Director of Religious Education at St. Anthony's Parish, Passaic, N.J.

In addition to many other involvements, Pat is a member of the newly formed Advisory Board for the Institute of Mission and Ministry, a Franciscan Center for personal and spiritual growth in West Paterson, N.J.

As Director of Formation, Pat will be responsible for all Initial and on-going Formation and will be Chair of the Formation Team.

The process for selection of a new Director of Vocations has begun. The Vocation Director will also be a part of the Formation Team.

Congratulations and our prayers as Pat begins her new ministry!

ICJP

Sr. Cindy Borders and I are the Congregation's liaisons with the **Intercommunity Center for Peace and Justice**, located at 20 Washington Square North, New York, N.Y. 10011. The Center is a coalition of more than forty Catholic religious orders of women and men in the tri-state area (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut). Since 1974 the ICJP has been engaged in the challenge recently articulated by the U.S. Bishops in their Economic Pastoral. Specifically, it seeks "the integration of faith and justice in all areas of life so that we may effect changes in societal structures toward the realization of a more human, just and peaceful society." (ICJP Mission Statement)

In support of the justice and peace agenda, the ICJP disseminates a great deal of information. Specific areas are targeted for action. These range from local issues to international problems. The methods used are varied: prayer vigils, fasting, letter writing campaigns, boycotts, seminars, educational pro-

grams, just to name a few. The ICJP has filmstrips, slides, audio/videos and speakers available as justice and peace resources.

By unifying the power of religious congregations and networking with other groups, the ICJP will be able to speak as one voice in all areas dealing with justice and peace.

The monthly meetings are both informative and inspiring. Formats include guest speakers, panels and small informal group sharings. It is a genuine consciousness-raising experience to participate.

Since this is a presidential election year, we are reminded that the privilege of living in a democracy carries with it responsibility for active involvement in the political process.

Both Catholic social teaching and democratic theory assert that as citizens we have a significant role to play in the creation of the public policy of our country. We must be informed so that we can make the right choices. We too

"must respond to the social and religious needs of the people of God in our day." (FSP Mission Statement)

We will keep you updated on all of the ICJP's activities and projects. If you have any questions or comments, please contact either of us. We will be glad to respond to them. Remember - "All of us can do Something".

— Norma Mendelsohn



In Memoriam

SISTER JANE EDWIN



Sister Jane Edwin Williams, F.S.P., a member of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace for nearly half a century, died February 19.

A native of Butler, N.J. "Janie" was a science teacher and guidance counselor at elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese of New York. She held a Bachelor's degree in chemistry from Marywood College in Scranton, Pa., and a Master's in guidance from Fordham University.

Sister Jane Edwin was a member of the faculty of St. Veronica's School in Manhattan for two years; St. Joseph's in Greenwich Village for nine years; Ladycliff Academy in Mohegan Lake for thirteen years; St. Joseph's Home in Peekskill for five years and Franciscan High School in Mohegan Lake for two years.

Those of us who knew her would agree that "Gentle Woman" would be an apt description of "Janie". Few knew for how many years she had coped with the illness that finally took her life.

Yes, this is a quiet woman who never wanted to stand out, yet Sr. Jane Edwin was destined to be the first to go safely home from our community.

Development

Enjoy!

"A Night At The Races"

Due to your overwhelming response to our Fall Lottery Drawing, the Development Office of the Franciscan Sisters of Peace has been encouraged to pursue a second fund-raising event. We have reserved the "Good Time Room" at the Yonkers Raceway for the night of Friday, April 29, 1988 from 7-11 p.m. It promises to be a night of fun and excitement with time for dining, dancing, horse racing and sweepstakes drawings. There will be a drawing held for three monetary prizes. The first prize will be \$1,000, the second \$500 and the third \$250. Admission tickets, costing \$30 per person and chances on the prize money selling for \$1 each are now be-

ing sold.

If you would like to participate in this, our first "Spring Gala", please contact me, Sister Georgeanne, Development Director, at 20 Ridge Street, Haverstraw, N.Y. 10927. The phone number during the work day is 914-942-2615; evenings at 914-942-2483. I will be happy to respond to any of your requests for tickets or chance books.

Once again, we in the Development Ministry, would like to express sincere gratitude for all that you continue to do for us.

God bless you all and hopefully we'll see you "At the Races"!!

Sisters In Georgia

(continued from page 2)

Work with the indigent calls forth the gentle and accepting gifts of Sister Ann. A central part of her ministry is to the Hispanic migrant farm worker population. Needs are varied from collecting and distributing food and clothing, bringing people to clinics and doctors, praying with them, counselling them, is much of her work. Ann is trained to help with the legalization process for undocumented workers.

Sharing the needs, concerns and events of the parish by writing the weekly bulletin and also articles for newspapers, calls upon another of Ann's gifts.

Her ministry requires funding beyond the budget of the parish so Ann is found writing grant proposals to assist in the works of the parish and her ministry.

True to their Franciscan call, our three sisters in Georgia are about their work to build up the Church as they respond to multiple and diverse needs at parish, diocesan and ecumenical levels.

They extend their warm hospitality to all who wish to visit Southwestern Georgia to relax and "be" with them.

Newsbits

Sr. Joan Caldano has recently been appointed Patient Advocate at Calvary Hospital where she has ministered for seven years.

A number of Franciscan Sisters of Peace attended the **Ladycliff College Alumni Association** annual luncheon/meeting at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City.

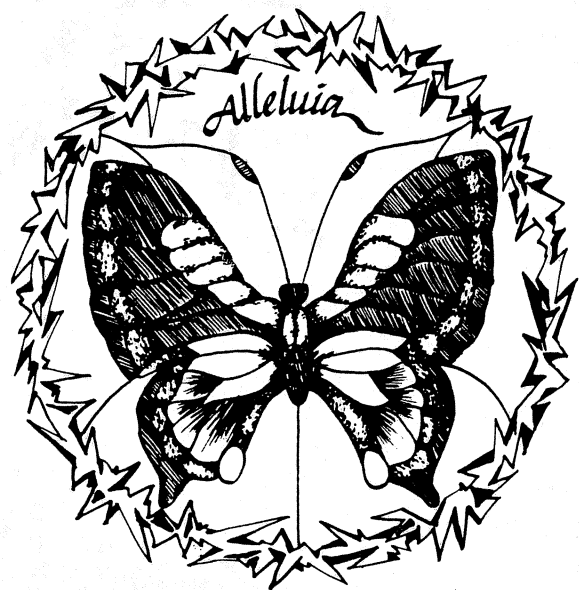
Sr. Eileen Halloran, Campus Minister at Marist College arranged for seven students to spend a week, during Christmas break, at Providence Ministries in Holyoke, Massachusetts, working in shelters for the homeless and a soup kitchen.

The Prayer Group which meets every Tuesday evening at our East 66th Street house in Manhattan invites others to join them.

Sr. Ann Smith has been appointed Vicar for Religious and elected President of the Council of Religious for the Diocese of Savannah.

Dateline

April 16. 1988	Spring Reflection Day for Lay Associates Sacred Heart Convent - Yonkers
April 17. 1988	Community meeting - St. Leo's School Elmwood Park. N.J.
May 21. 1988	Community Meeting
June 24-25-26. 1988	Reflection Weekend for Women Ventnor. N.J.
July 8-9-10. 1988	Annual Community Meeting

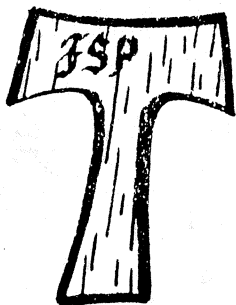


Peacemaking ~ Our Journey

Peacemaking - Our Journey is a newsletter published quarterly by the Franciscan Sisters of Peace, 20 Ridge Street, Haverstraw, N.Y. 10927. Tel 914-947-2527. It is sent to all persons interested in our religious congregation and our ministry. Newsletter committee: Marian Blake, Georgeanne Farrell FSP, Constance Gaynor FSP, Eileen Halloran, FSP, Eileen Sheehy FSP, Kathleen Sullivan.

Art Work - Lucinda Borders FSP, Barbara Haworth FSP, Frances Scarfone SC

Franciscan Sisters of Peace
20 Ridge Street
Haverstraw, NY 10927



April 1988
Address Correction Requested

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 0408391 ccm