

# The Grail Newsletter

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## SERMON TO THE BIRDS

This was brother human speaking but first he whistled us down from the air to congregate in the dust.

A flutter of dismay as he announced his text:  
On the death of sparrows.

I live on crumbs myself,  
he said, and I too am dying. Do not fear  
if in a starving winter you fall from the heavens  
above Assisi for has not the Lord numbered  
each of your feathers? Pause.

Your brother Chanticleer alone of all creatures  
raised his voice three times against the darkest deed.  
The Lord remembers this. Pause.

Even you, my brothers, had your nests for comfort  
when the Lord of all was spreadeagled on the cross.  
Pause.

Forgive my threadbare words. Pause breaks into  
twitters.

He tries brother sparrows, loves brother starlings. Now some took off until one larrikin piped up  
How come the God of love who, so you say, makes us makes the sparrow-hawk as well?

He had no answer and stood there useless as a scarecrow, hands upraised.  
So we perched on him and pecked the hand-out grain.  
How the wounds in his palms twitched. At our squabbles over food  
and sex he tut-tutted with a sad smile. The pious stole threads from his gown.  
We all left him and flew away.



*Giotto: St Francis preaches to the birds, c.1295*

*(Andrew Bullen SJ)*

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### SOME OTHER PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

*A Personal Journal* for prisoners - \$10 per copy (See Sydney News p. 12)  
For more information and to request copies, contact [grailjournal@ozemail.com.au](mailto:grailjournal@ozemail.com.au)

**Global Justice Overcoming Poverty Bulletin** – free by email  
(See Sydney News p. 14)

To receive a copy, contact [grailsydney@ozemail.com.au](mailto:grailsydney@ozemail.com.au)

**Blessed Be** – a spirituality resource here enclosed or attached  
To continue to receive a copy with the Newsletter, contact [helenmacauley@gmail.com](mailto:helenmacauley@gmail.com)

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## News from here and there

### International Council Meeting in Sydney, August-September

The Grail International Council (IC), made up of the International Leadership Team (ILT) and a representative from each country where the Grail is established, gathered in Sydney from 28<sup>th</sup> August to 6<sup>th</sup> September. The last time the Council met in Australia was twenty years ago!

Mount St Benedict Conference Centre in Pennant Hills was an ideal location for their meeting, providing everything they needed: comfortable rooms, tasty nourishing meals, good working facilities and great warmth and kindness from the staff. We are grateful to the Good Samaritan Sisters for creating such a welcoming place. As they left for their homes in countries in North and South America, South East Asia and the South Pacific, East and South Africa and Europe, Council members were happy and full of praise for all they received here from Mount St Benedict and everyone who hosted their stay in Australia.

The ILT – Zodwa Mabaso (South Africa), Marian Schwab (USA) and Maria Carlos Ramos (Portugal) – worked for a week before and a week after the IC meeting in the Sydney Centre and three or four of the Council members also extended their stay to visit the Grail groups in Melbourne and Brisbane. As well, some Australian members came to Sydney to spend some time with our visitors: Sheila Hawthorn from Townsville, Ann Aboud and Helen Jeffcoat from Brisbane, Carol Webb from Melbourne. Andrea Venier (Melbourne), Australia's Council member, and Mary Nelson (Brisbane),

who was asked to take particular responsibility for prayer, ritual and liturgy throughout the meeting, were present over the full 10 days.

These rare occasions when Australian Grail members have the pleasure and stimulation of meeting Grail women around the world are precious and we are grateful and delighted.

### Melbourne

Winter struck with force in Melbourne this year, with many very cold and

blustery days keeping us indoors. Some of us have had to contend with bouts of illness, personally or in the family, whilst others have been dealing with moving house. Amongst it all, we have had a few events and continued our *lectio divina*, as well as planning for our international visitors and the Grail International Council (IC) meeting, held in Sydney from Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August to Sunday September 6.

‘Hesed’ has seen some major repairs with lighting fixed internally and externally and the replacement of the hot water system. The telephone line has also been repaired and internet access restored. Finally, the driveway garden has been pruned back to allow for better vehicle access. Ann Niall, Genny Grabau and I have been dealing with the many trades-people coming in and out.

Irena Dunne has just moved into the Grail house with the help of family, while Kevin has been battling a serious infection in hospital, which has included two operations on his arm and a skin graft which is still troubling him severely. We have been praying for his recovery. On moving in, Irena felt that she was ‘encircled with love’. We are happy that she and Kevin are able to live there for the next few months until their new home is ready for them and we much appreciate Irena’s ‘home touch’.

In June, we held a *Big Morning Tea* at ‘Hesed’ to raise funds for the Cancer Council. Our theme was ‘Pretty in Pink’ as we made use of the beautiful camellias in the garden to decorate the living area. It was an enjoyable morning with quite a few new visitors to the house. Since many people present had experienced cancer personally or in their family, we had a reflection together using the camellias to represent our loved ones.

In the same month, we were very saddened to hear of the death of Mary Tregear and pray with, and for, her husband, Geoff, and their family in their deep sorrow. The Tregears lived next door to Margaret McCristal and were wonderful neighbours and friends, not only to Margaret but to all who came to the unit in Hawthorn Grove.

Our *lectio divina* has continued weekly with Rita Flipo joining our regular group. Rita was a very early Grail member with many interesting experiences to share. We spent the last two months with Julian of Norwich’s

*Book of Showings*, including such themes as the Passion, God as Mother, and Prayer, to name a few. In July, our *lectio* group convened at the Eva Tilley Retirement Centre in North Balwyn, so that we could share our reflection with Joanna Waite and celebrate her birthday with afternoon tea. It was a lovely time together.

We had just begun reading Hildegard of Bingen when we heard the good news of Christa Werner's visit to Melbourne after the IC meeting. Christa, former member of the International Leadership Team, is one of our German Grail members who is very familiar with Hildegard's life and writings.

Genny, Ann and I, amongst others, visit Pat Sheeran regularly in the Corpus Christi Aged Care Facility in Clayton. She enjoys visitors as her face lights up when we arrive. Pat finds daily Mass and the rosary a comfort. However, we are concerned that she is getting much more frail.

As well as the usual business and some reflection time at our Regional Group meetings, we planned for Mary Boyd's and Christa Werner's visits and discussed some of the issues to be raised at the IC meeting.

We decided to hold the inaugural Ann Woodruff Memorial Lecture at the Kildara Centre in Malvern as a largely Grail event, although advertised to the parishes and other Catholic organisations. Our special guest, Mary Boyd from Prince Edward Island, Canada, spoke on *Justice and Health*, the two major themes of Ann's life and work. Mary spoke on Canada's Medicare, a fully-funded public healthcare system, and on the value of maintaining it. She also drew attention to current trade negotiations, particularly the Canada-Europe Trade Agreement (CETA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and their potential for degrading healthcare in both Canada and Australia. Her presentation and the discussion that followed were most informative and inspirational. We concluded with a delicious afternoon tea. Later in the day, a dozen of us convened at a nearby, very hospitable Italian restaurant for an enjoyable, rousing evening! Many thanks to Mary and to Alison Healey who accompanied Mary to Melbourne.

Mary, Alison and I then headed to Sydney for the IC meeting - an intense time of discussion, proposals, decisions, prayer and community celebration - and a wonderful experience I will try to share with members in the near

future.

Back in Melbourne, we welcomed Christa who shared some of her substantial knowledge of Hildegard of Bingen, for which we were very grateful. Thanks to Carol Webb for looking after Christa during her stay and to Irena for her hospitality on the day. Carol was back in Melbourne for a welcome couple of weeks during the time of the Council before returning to the USA.

It has been a busy and thought-provoking few months. Our mantra has become, in the words of Julian: *All will be well, all will be well, all manner of things will be well!*

*Andrea Venier*

## **Brisbane**

I write this on the eve of Gloria Lazzarini's farewell from this earthly life. It is with great sadness that we have watched Gloria's rapid decline into ill health. All of us here in Brisbane have visited her regularly and tried to keep conversation flowing. This was increasingly difficult. May she rest in peace and may those she has touched during her life remember the spirited discussions and warmth she generated.

Ailsa Paterson and Jo Vidler travelled to the Grail Centre at Cornwall-on-Hudson in the USA for a program in July titled *Sacred Activism*. They both enjoyed their experience, as you can tell from their writing included below in this Newsletter. I dreamt about visiting the Bronx in New York and Cornwall for many years before I actually got there. I had heard many stories from other Grail women about these fascinating places. I am still amazed that my daughter has already visited these places of Grail and spiritual significance. A wonderful opportunity for both Jo and Ailsa. Their participation in the program was made possible by the International and Australian Grail. They would like to thank both for their generous sponsorship.

We welcomed Mary Boyd's visit to Brisbane prior to the Grail International Council (IC) meeting in Sydney. She spoke twice in Brisbane, first in the city and then at Elizabeth Lancaster's home in Wishart. We are also hosting

a few IC members who have travelled to Brisbane after their meeting. We welcome this opportunity to experience the diversity of our international movement.

We were fortunate to visit the Holland Park Mosque recently. Ann Aboud arranged for Imam Mirza Akbar to talk to us before prayer. We sat on chairs at the back of the mosque, during the prayer at 1pm. Mirza then answered some of our questions. He was generous with his time and knowledge. The Holland Park Mosque was the first to be built in Queensland and is the longest, continuously operating mosque in Australia.

Many women in St William's Parish continue to sew kits for the *Days for Girls* project, some of which we will be sending to Ethiopia. We sent some kits to the IC meeting.

Other activities members have been involved in include an ecumenical forum on *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis' encyclical; a talk titled *The Power of the Gospel, Justice and Peace* at Lourdes Hill College; the Corinda Mental Health Practitioners Forum (MHPF) on trans-gender issues; and a Buddhist Meditation Day. Not to mention Ann Aboud's hastily arranged trip to Paris, Beirut, Venice and Spain!

We have planned a retreat weekend together in November. Helen has booked a house at Boonah, about a 50-minute drive from Brisbane. We look forward to this time to relax together.

*Jill Herbert*

## **Two young Australians to The Grail, USA**

In July, Jo Vidler and Ailsa Paterson, both students at university in Brisbane, joined an international group of young women in a program based at the Grail Centre, Cornwall-on-Hudson, New York State. Jo is the daughter of Jill Herbert and Patrick Vidler and Ailsa's parents are Helen Jeffcoat and Brian Paterson.

*Jo writes.*

The program introduced us to the concept and reality of 'sacred activism' through sessions facilitated by many inspiring women, each with different



experiences and a unique perspective on what it means to be a 'sacred activist'. Ailsa particularly enjoyed the sessions on *Women and the Environment*, led by Joy Garland and Trina Paulus, and *Women and the Arts*, led by Sharon Thompson. I found the session on *The Girl Child* particularly inspiring, as it demonstrated the importance of hearing the voices of young women and girls in our national conversations. We approached these topics from a global perspective through the prism of such UN frameworks as the *Sustainable Development Goals*, the review of the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the *Commission on the Status of Women*. For me, this global perspective reinforced the need for solidarity, particularly amongst women. This, of course, is embodied in the work of The Grail, something I learned very quickly from the wonderful community of young women who had travelled from all over the world to participate in the program. The twenty participants came from nine countries and although we differed in language and culture, we created a shared vision of change and I know that we now have the inspiration and the community behind us so that we can manifest this vision in our own communities.

This was a truly rewarding experience and I would like to thank both the International Grail and the Australian Grail for making it possible.

*Ailsa writes* about visiting the United Nations:

When I walked in the door at the start of the day my knowledge of the UN was limited to a dictionary definition: a worldwide organisation dedicated to peace and prosperity. While I had heard of the UN from school and previous speakers throughout the program, being physically present at its headquarters was an awe-inspiring and informative experience. However, I think that the essence of the day was about perspective. Sometimes our perspectives are clear, and sometimes we need another to help us to see things in a new light. Being able to walk through the UN buildings, seeing the people and spaces that make so much difference for so many people, changed the way I saw my own 'sacred activism'. Before this program, my view and experience was limited almost exclusively to the Grail in Australia; after this visit I am able to see the world





on a much grander scale, and I realise that the issues we face in Australia are spread across the globe.

Upon the conclusion of the program, after three weeks of discussion and after meeting so many wise and inspiring people from around the world, on the last day I was asked: 'What will you take away from this?'

There is no short answer but, when asked again by the Brisbane Grail to answer this, I told this story I learnt from the UN.

When tasked with the job of designing a flag for the United Nations, the designers knew that they wanted a map of the globe with all of the countries visible. Contention arose when delegates argued over which continent would be depicted in the centre, as in traditional maps. The solution was reached when the designers looked at the globe from a different perspective, viewing it from above, one that would depict all countries while also placing no one country in the centre.

The same practice can be implemented by individual Grail members in their work. Learn to see the facts and issues from a different perspective and you just might find an answer.

## North Queensland

In spite of several meteorological predictions of 'deluging rain', the Wet season remained extremely dry for Townsville. Currently Brownsville is a very apt name for this city. Of course, dry grass, a proliferation of hard cracking falling leaves, very few green lawns and water restrictions are really no hardship at all, compared to the ever-deepening, tragic drought being experienced by many people in western Queensland and north western New South Wales.

At the end of May, I had the opportunity to glimpse just a little of these drought conditions driving approximately 500kms to Richmond, west of Townsville, and observing not only the vast, shimmering dusty land and skylines but the absence of living animals – only the numerous dead ones on the roadside, two bullocks among the wild life. In Richmond, I participated in the centenary celebrations of Mary MacKillop House, which was first occupied 100 years ago by the Sisters of St Joseph who came here

to staff a school. The house has filled several roles since: the Josephites were there for about 50 years, then other congregations came engaged in different ministries in the region until early in this century it became the Western Centre for Spirituality. The present coordinator is a Good Samaritan sister.

It has been a special pleasure to have had a number of visitors in recent months. A full-of-news, chatty morning tea with Althea and Bill Norton in April was followed by an equally pleasant news-filled afternoon tea with Margaret Tranter. Margaret's daughter, Johanna, lives in Townsville and teaches at St Margaret Mary's College, so Margaret and Andrew take an occasional short break here from hand-watering the almost 200 trees they have planted in Millaa Millaa. A surprise phone call from Judy Brown meant another occasion for a 'cuppa'. This was not long enough to catch up adequately, as I have not seen Judy for several years. We met again at the House of Prayer which is very dear to both our hearts. Judy was one of the persevering visionaries, with the late Fr Mick Mullins and Josephite sisters Carmel and Elaine, who made the House of Prayer a reality in the Townsville Diocese. A few weeks ago there was another unexpected call from Barbara Erskine who was in Cairns on a visit to the North. She later came to Townsville where we met a couple of times before she left to house-sit for a friend in Mount Isa who is overseas for a couple of months. Apart from being with friends in this part of the world, Barbara was particularly delighted to be warmer than she had been in Victoria!

Townsville Little Theatre has had a very busy year with fund-raising events, major stage productions and the Festival of One-Act Plays, during which they performed in 8 plays and won 9 awards, including 1st and 2nd for the Best Production in the Open Section. For the first time, the Little Theatre group was a lively presence at the annual Palm Creek Folk Festival. The magic show tent for children was very, very popular.

This festival is a major commitment of Deborah Pennington's and Cheryl Vacchini's every year, as they are active members of the Townsville Folk Club. Deb did 8-9 hours compering in the large performance marquee. Within days of the festival, they both departed the country with the *Aquapella Choir* to sing in Venice and Florence. Their itinerary also includes Rome, 'sailing', 'the cricket', the Purbeck Valley and Glastonbury

Festivals and the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace. Deb is due to report back to work on 11 July, 2016, so we expect to hear more of their movements in the next twelve months.

23<sup>rd</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> August was Queensland Multicultural Week when approximately 80 events across the State showcase the diversity of cultures that enrich life in Queensland. For 25 years, the Multicultural Affairs Queensland Department has given awards in various categories to recognise individuals, businesses and community organisations who, through paid work and volunteering, promote multicultural-ism and harmony in the State. In 2010 Townsville Multicultural Support Group received the Community Organisation award and in 2015 the Group was one of three finalists in the Business Excellence category. This year, the World Wellness Group was recognised for the essential work they do out of a medical practice, inclusive of allied health and traditional medicine services. The Group's mission is to provide affordable health care and any profits are directed into its services. It has established strong corporate partnerships. This year I was one of the four finalists in the category of Multicultural Ambassador. It was won by Ms Yasmin Khan who, among a number of other initiatives, started the very successful Eidfest, now in its eleventh year in Brisbane, which celebrates the conclusion of Ramadan. This event attracts thousands of visitors from the Muslim and wider community.

During Multicultural Week, Meg Davis, Manager of the Townsville Multicultural Support Group, and I were invited to attend a gala dinner in Brisbane where the 123 nominees were acknowledged; the 23 finalists were introduced to the large audience and received Certificates from the Minister for Multicultural Affairs; and the six winners were presented with their awards – beautiful, hand-painted ceramic tiles. Besides being a most enjoyable event on a balmy Brisbane night, it was a hope-filled one, uplifting to one's spirit.

Peace be with everyone,

*Sheila Hawthorn*

## Sydney

The latest news is that the 2015 version of the Personal Journal for prisoners in correctional centres has arrived from the printers for distribution. The team responsible for it – Elizabeth Lee, Anne Marie George, Marian Kelly, Nour Barcha and Alison Healey – had learned from the first publication in 2013 and are very happy with the easier production process this year and the outcome: new images, new quotations, high quality printing. What remain the same are Marian's lovely, creative designs, the numbers of copies and the method of distribution. We have printed again 2000 journals. We will sell 1000 at the cost of \$10 each; the remaining 1000 will be given by chaplains and pastoral workers to inmates of correctional centres. In other words, every person who buys a journal gifts one to a person in prison.

The 2013 journal was very well received and stories we have been told of their use by men and women in our gaols were really encouraging. We hope readers of this Newsletter might join us in this project, purchasing a copy themselves, and/or taking multiple copies to sell in their locations. (See p. 2.) During the International Council meeting here, we received orders for multiple copies to be sent to the USA and Sweden.

From 18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September, well over 100 prison chaplains from around the world will be in Riverview College for a Conference. Elizabeth is one of the organising team and has taken some boxes of journals to display and sell there. We hope they may take the idea home and produce something similar appropriate to their own culture. We were inspired initially by a publication in the USA of Sr Joan Chittister, OSB, and have adapted it for Australia.

If you don't read this Newsletter sequentially from the beginning (as I know many don't) let me refer you back at this point to the Brisbane news of Jo Vidler's and Ailsa Paterson's trip to the USA for a young women's program with the Grail there. In 2013, Bernadette Gemmell, Tricia and Geoff's daughter, spent three months in New York at the Grail house in the Bronx and Tricia has written here news of her doings since then:

‘Bernadette has often said that her three month internship with the Grail in the Bronx and her participation in the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2013 changed her life completely. Fresh from finishing a Masters in International Development, she went to New York in

February 2013 ready to broaden her knowledge and understanding, but emerged from her Grail-embedded experience with a passion for advocacy and a burning desire to follow a career path in that direction. She was fortunate to be employed by the Global Network for Rights and Development in Stavanger, Norway, as a research officer, but soon became responsible for setting up the whole department focussed on the empowerment of women. Now she has found another job, as Research and Communications officer for the European Institute of Gender Equality in Vilnius, Lithuania. She can still hardly believe that it all started with the Grail and that the journey has already taken her to so many different countries and life experiences. She is looking forward to the challenges of the new job but also to staying in the one place for the next three years!

Over a six-week period in June-July, six women participated in a program of *Introduction to the Grail*, which we normally hold at least once a year for women interested in either closer association with, or membership in, The Grail. We always enjoy these sessions as every new group brings new experiences and insights to our reflections and conversations. We look forward to our continuing journey with them. We still have to find an effective way of overcoming distances and growing relationships with interested women living in regional areas of the State.

Other regular activities continue. The Book Club, convened by Sonia Mrva, is always stimulating and enjoyable. We move from home to home on the fourth Friday of each month. This year Carol and Jack Flanagan celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in their house in Gerringong, which was once the Station Master's residence, and invited all the Club members to join them over a weekend. What a lovely time it was. We all admired very much the additions to the original small cottage with its heritage status. Carol and Jack had enlisted the talents of architect John Murray, partner of one of the Book Club members, Maureen Partridge, herself a gifted colour adviser on the project.

Wednesday evenings, 7.30 – 9 pm, are devoted to *lectio divina* on chosen texts. At present we are focussed on Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*. Every second month on Tuesday mornings from 10 am to noon, Tricia Gemmell

convenes another similar program of reflection. The theme for this year is the spirituality of Benedict. Anyone is welcome anytime to these programs

We couldn't take advantage of Mary Boyd's presence in Sydney for the International Council meeting as much as we would have liked. Mary is founding director of the Mary MacKillop Social Justice Centre in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada, and a prominent activist for justice at local, national and international levels. She spent one afternoon with Sydney Grail women speaking particularly about regional trade negotiations involving both Canada and Australia: how certain proposals threaten public health policies in both countries and subject a national government's authority to legislate to the profit-making interests of foreign corporations. Mary also visited the office of AFTINET (Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network) where she met with the Convenor, Pat Ranald, and some of the Working Group to exchange information and perspectives on global trade.

I represent The Grail in this Working Group and Mary and I coordinate an international network of Grail members and friends concerned with issues of *Global Justice Overcoming Poverty*. Six times a year, we produce a 4-page Bulletin of short articles on current topics, which can be sent by email free to anyone interested in receiving it. (See p. 2.)

Congratulations to Kay and Peter Hunt on their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. The celebration of family and friends in June was a joy.

Joy turned to sadness in August when news came of the death of Sr Ruth Boland RSJ, who sang alto in the Grail Singers for several years. Mary Robertson and I were able to carry greetings from the choir to the sisters of the Lochinvar community and join them for Ruth's fare-well Mass and burial in Lochinvar. In the same month, Francine Maclurcan (Parmentier) also died. Francine was one of the earliest of Grail members in Sydney, a beautiful and admirable woman, a true friend and, to her children, a 'cherished mother'. In honour of her French heritage, her casket was borne from the church at the end of the Eucharist to the stirring sounds of the *Marseillaise*.

Now, in late September, Mark Crombie has told us of the death of his mother, Helen, younger sister of Moya Merrick. The rest of Helen's family being overseas for a grand-daughter's wedding, the funeral ceremonies are being held over until they return in early October . Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers are with them all.

We plan in October to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of St Teresa of Avila, after whom our Sydney Centre is named 'Avila' and who inspires us always with her life of contemplative action.

*Alison Healey*



## In Memory Of Gloria Lazzarini

23<sup>rd</sup> January 1937 – 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2015



Gloria's death came surprisingly quickly, even though we had seen her health steadily declining over recent years.

How often this seems to be the way of things...

Her farewell Eucharist took place in the parish church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Coorparoo, Brisbane. It seemed to me that there were people there, family and friends, from every period and part of her life.

There were the members of her family who had shared her childhood and schooldays on the sugar farm at Finch Hatton in a picturesque valley west of Mackay, Queensland. Her sister Claire prepared the liturgy with loving attention to Gloria's wishes and her younger brother James gave the eulogy, drawing on all his cherished memories of her.

There were former residents of 'Ballybrac', the Grail Centre in Mackay where young women like Gloria found a home when they came to town for work or training. At 'Ballybrac' they also were offered a vision and formation for their adult Christian lives and Gloria typically responded with strong faith and idealism. She went south to 'Tay Creggan' in Melbourne and then to Springwood in the Blue Mountains for further formation before making her dedication in the Grail. There were former residents and staff members of 'Tay Creggan' and Grail Nucleus members in the gathering, all of us having lived and worked with Gloria over the years.

From her days in Townsville, first as Deputy Principal and later as Principal of St Raphael's residential college for women on the campus of James Cook University, came former students and colleagues who had become life-long friends. Jo Flynn was there from Melbourne. She and Gloria had spent several years together in Tasmania and Melbourne working in their respective professions, Jo as a medical doctor and Gloria as a social worker, and had maintained a close friendship to the end. When Gloria decided to

leave the Nucleus, she did not leave the Grail. For the last twenty years or so, she lived and worked in Brisbane and was a member of the Brisbane Grail group. They had been attentive to her in her illness and, needless to say, were all strongly present in the Coorparoo church.

While in Brisbane, Gloria researched and wrote her PhD thesis on the continuing relationships and bonds of obligation Filipino immigrants sustained with their extended families back home, expressed particularly in regular remittances. The abstract of her thesis was printed in the last major work for the Grail that Gloria undertook. She, Sheila Hawthorn, Helen MacAuley and I were the editorial team for the international Grail publication, *Migration Matters*, containing a wide range of contributions from Grail women around the world working with people who had, by choice or perforce, moved from their country of birth to another. There were some indications even then of her fading strength, yet she tried for two years more to put her mind to writing the history of the Grail in Townsville.

Gloria is greatly missed by her many friends and family. She was a stimulating presence, eager for conversation, enjoying competing ideas and opinions, quick and witty with her repartee. She was an ardent lover of nature and of all things beautiful. Reading was a great pleasure to her; she could quote poetry – at length – at the drop of a hat. She was gifted with a generous and hospitable spirit that was both particularly her and particularly Italian. Her brother James spoke of her never-stilled seeking. This is how she was – longing for a freedom and fulfilment this world could not give her. I found myself smiling broadly listening to her choice of music for the Offertory: the *Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves* from Verdi's *Nabucco*. Now, we believe, she has found what she sought, and more, in the love of the God in whom she placed all her trust.

*Alison Healey*

