

*The LORD is good to those who wait for Him,
to the soul that seeks Him.*

Lam. 3:25 RSV



Canaan in the Desert, Fall 2007

Our dear Friends,

We send you our love and warmest greetings.

When last summer started we wished each other, as usual, a pleasant and refreshing time. We trust that many of you had that great blessing. For others this summer was different. Natural disasters have been striking the land – flooding rains, scorching heat and extensive wildfires. Thousands of lives were in danger. How much do we also feel with those who are involved in the war in the Middle East or fear for their loved ones. Tragic events happened here in the US and worldwide. All of this brought hardship or great loss to many families.

It may be good to reflect for a few moments on Mother Basilea's words in *Nature Out of Control?*¹⁾ They are right for all of us, whether we have been affected or not. She writes, "It is true that in the natural disasters of our times God is revealing Himself in His holiness, His wrath over sin, His awesome majesty as Judge. But equally, if not more so, He is manifesting Himself in His love and compassion."

Mother Basilea continues to quote from the prophet Jeremiah (Lam. 3:22-33 RSV): "*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.... The Lord is good to those who wait for him... he will have compassion according to the abundance of His steadfast love.*" Sharing amazing stories where His judgments were "noticeably tempered by mercy," she writes, "In all this we can sense the love of God. His preliminary judgments are primarily warning signs. God is pleading with us, 'Turn around, come back, so that worse calamities do not befall you.' Will His actions and words evoke in us the right response?"

60 Years of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary

Our 60th Anniversary was a beautiful celebration to praise God for His "*compassion and the abundance of His steadfast love.*" Our Sisterhood was founded in 1947, in the midst of the ruins of post-war Germany. At that time too God was waiting for our response of turning around and turning back to Him. We have sought to do this over the past 60 years.



Celebration - Herald Chapel on Kanaan

Now the Land of Kanaan, headquarters of our ministry, is an oasis of joy, peace and beauty for many who come from all over the world. Many have expressed, "the Presence of God is almost tangible here." What a precious gift of grace and forgiveness!

Our Founder Mothers chose to depend on God alone, so that He may be glorified. When we look back on these 60 years, we can testify that He is the most faithful Provider. The Father always knew a way how to help and provide, even in very difficult circumstances.²⁾ And often it has been you, our dear friends, whom He has used.

For the celebration of our 60th Anniversary, Sisters from our branches all over the world converged on Kanaan. What a special time of thanksgiving, rejoicing and renewal! Our Sisters at home had prepared a wonderful program with many surprises. We shared with each other what God had done on Kanaan and in all the branches and were awed by His goodness and faithfulness.

The highlight of this anniversary was the Bridal Dedication of four young Sisters, one from Chile, one from New Zealand and two from Germany. The festive services were like a foretaste of heaven, as Jesus' love was portrayed in word and song.



“First love” for Jesus (Rev. 2:4) is not just something for Sisters. We all were created to love God with all our heart and mind and to know His love for us. We need to have our lamps burning with love for Jesus, and to make sure that we have enough oil for the hard times ahead (see Matthew 25).

We continue sharing a few events which we Sisters on Canaan in the Desert experienced this past summer.

Threatening hour for Israel – Jews and Christians unite

In our times, as threats against Israel and the Jewish people mount daily, new hope is dawning in Jewish-Christian relations.

We experienced this overwhelmingly this past June at Phoenix' first locally sponsored “A Night to Honor Israel.” It was inspiring as 300-400 Jews gathered with 1600 Christians to fill beautiful Phoenix Symphony Hall. Around 60 such events have taken place across America in the past year under the leadership of Pastor John Hagee's newly founded organization - *Christians United for Israel*.



The crowd was brought to their feet numerous times during the evening; one of which was Pastor Hagee's statement, “We have come in the worst of times to say to the Jewish people in Phoenix, America, and the world – ‘you are not alone’!” A local rabbi blew the shofar as a call for unity and then we Sisters gave a 5-minute presentation to welcome the Holocaust survivors who were present. The Holy Spirit gave much grace as we shared about Mother Basilea's repentance and her love for the Jewish people. Sister Deborah's words as a German were especially moving and hearts were deeply touched. A lady afterward told us: “You probably did not see that many people wept during your presentation.”



Unexpectedly, our ministry of reconciliation was underlined by the following speakers. One of our friends noted that “every speaker wanted to be identified with ‘those Canaan Sisters’ after you spoke, and the message of repentance went to the forefront, instead of being an add on!”³⁾

Our book table was stormed! All that we had brought went out – 40 books *ISRAEL, My Chosen People*, 600 *The Guilt of Christianity* and 200 DVDs of our Denver Repentance Service!

A memorable moment came when a Jewish couple spontaneously stood up and reached for the hands of a few Sisters to dance the hora in the aisle as the musicians played “Hinei Ma Tov” and “Heveinu Shalom.” Many others tagged on as we joyously danced in unity. Who would have ever dreamed that such a moment would come between Jews and Christians? It felt “bigger than us.”

Mother Basilea prophetically wrote of such a time in her book, *Israel – My Chosen People*: “As God’s plan of salvation nears its final consummation after a period of two thousand years and hatred flares up against Him more than ever, there will be a bringing together of those who belong together because they fear the living God and give Him glory – Jews and Christians.”

The booklet we enclose, “*Where Is the King of the Jews?*” is a gem. We hope it will help us Christians in our understanding of our Jewish neighbors.

Battle of Faith with America’s Future Lawyers and Judges

In July we had the privilege to meet with 100 law school students, selected from all parts of the country, to participate in the Blackstone Legal Fellowship, a nine-week summer training program, sponsored by the Alliance Defense Fund. How delightful it was to spend a Sunday evening with these students!

Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), from the beginning led by Alan Sears, is working across America to defend religious freedom, sanctity of human life and traditional family values in the courtrooms. Through Blackstone Legal Fellowship, ADF trains part of the next generation of lawyers, litigators and judges.

ADF had come to our aid in 2003 when an ACLU inquiry instigated the removal of our three praise plaques in the Grand Canyon, the expression of worshiping God as our Creator.

We were able to tell the students how the Lord first had to work in our own hearts and show us that we had become indifferent in bringing Him praise and honor as our Creator. After we Sisters had a time of worship and repentance, the Lord acted and the plaques were remounted.

A mini Bible study by Mother Basilea from Exodus 17 brought to life our continual battle with the enemy – and the powerful weapon of prayer. The students were delighted to know that ADF also can mean “Amalekite-Defeating Forces!”



The most important part of the evening was teaching the Battle of Faith. Legal battles upholding God’s standards must be under-girded by spiritual battles, starting with our own sin. The leadership wanted their students to understand this important principle. Immediately the young people were on their feet, waving enthusiastically the prayer banners they had just received. All the available Spiritual Warfare CD’s were quickly taken from the book table, along with stacks of books and other materials.

Later, the Senior Vice-President and Officer of Strategic Training for the Blackstone Legal Fellowship wrote to us, “You have impacted a new generation of attorneys, legal scholars and judges. I believe we are seeing history in the making....”

Bringing the Promise of Jesus' Love into Prisons

Part of our summer activities was to reach out to 89 Prison Chaplains, who are thankful to receive the literature. We sent 103 boxes filled with booklets, leaflets and bookmarks (a total of over 212,000 pieces) to prisons across the country.

A Chaplain in the Arkansas Department of Corrections wrote to say that their prison population is rapidly increasing. While this fact is sad for our nation, we are blessed to help them meet their goal of providing good Christian literature for their library and sent them many books that have proven to change lives! Truly this is a population of people who can and are being reached with Jesus' love and His promise of hope. — We add a few responses from the inmates.



“I have all the cards and things you sent me hanging up on my cell wall and it’s blessing to wake up and look at them. I look forward to any time you send something.” *Gerald*



“I received the books and bookmarks, I am so happy...I’m a sobering alcoholic and have been a heroin addict. I got sentenced to seven months, but with God and our Savior Jesus Christ on my side I’m the most happiest and fulfilled I have ever been. My kids are so happy also because they have never seen me glow as much as now. If you have any different books, I read so much....” *Ursula*

“I opened my mail from you and immediately started looking and walking towards the new-comers. Man, when I pass out the first bookmark, I can only hear, “I want one too!” And in less than 2 minutes I had passed every one of them OUT! Please send me more!” *Rosena*



Thank you, our dear friends, for your love and prayers. May our Lord guide and protect you wherever you are. May you be strengthened by experiencing ever anew, “*The Lord is good to those who wait for Him.*”

In His fellowship,

the Sisters at Canaan in the Desert

- 1) *Nature Out of Control?* – see book and DVD brochure
- 2) The book *Realities of Faith* was written for a time when “a fear of that which is coming has, perhaps to some extent unconsciously, laid its grip on mankind.”
- 3) See DVD brochure *A Service of Repentance* in 2004