



Washington, D.C. March 5, 2018 – The National Council of Catholic Women unites schools in Holy Land with U.S. Schools

The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) is delighted to announce the first school pairing in our project to enhance knowledge of the daily life of Catholics in the Holy Land. This came about at the request of Catholic women in the Holy Land who indicated that they wanted to increase awareness in the U.S. of the constraints under which Catholics live in the Holy Land. The presence of these “living stones” in the land where Christ walked is diminishing rapidly due to discrimination in jobs, confiscation of their ancestral lands, and difficulty in obtaining passes for travel such as from Bethlehem or Nazareth to Jerusalem.

NCCW President Maribeth Stewart noted, “As they told us, in Bethlehem going to Jerusalem is a dream for most of them. We determined that a very effective way to assure them that we know and care about them and pray for them is to begin a program with our USA Catholic schools and their Franciscan schools in the Holy Land. The students will share this experience with their families and friends and this will help reassure them that we indeed think of and pray for our sisters and brothers in that ancient troubled land.”

The Franciscans suggested that the first school to participate would be Terra Sancta College in Bethlehem that has students from preschool through High School and that we should concentrate first on the grammar school ages. Accordingly, we are very happy to announce that Saint Lawrence School in West Haven, CT, with grades from pre-K -8, was selected as the USA school paired with Terra Sancta!

After securing the very willing cooperation of the administration and teachers at both schools, an initial exchange has begun with the lower grades sending drawings and the upper grades letters. We are very pleased to note that the exchanges worked very well and that the students are now actively engaged in learning about each other and their daily activities. The letters reveal, in a charming way, the similarities of students despite where they live. Sports, hobbies, school, religion, and family life figure in exchanges from both sides. We look forward to further exchanges and to expanding the program to encompass more schools in the US and the Holy Land through the Service Commission of the National Council of Catholic Women.

For more information or to interview NCCW President, Maribeth Stewart Blogoslawski, please call 703-224-0990 or email lbennett@nccw.org.



Saint Lawrence School, West Haven, CT



Terra Sancta College, Bethlehem