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Hello Friends in Christ,

In early 2000, I sent my son David, as escort and Arabic speaker with my group to **Israel**. My husband and I planned a trip there in the Fall but it was cancelled due to the political tension. I didn't know then that God had another plan.

During the wait, changes in my Mother's (in the upper picture) life brought her to Cedar Crest in Northern New Jersey. Mom's new friend and neighbor, Wanda Spallina, told her about **The Home of Peace** on the Mt. of Olives run by the Sisters of St. Elizabeth from Poland. Wanda's father sent money to Sr. Raphaela to support their mission. Wanda's husband, James, went many times to Jerusalem to build and oversee his factory employing Jews and Arabs, where they worked in harmony. Wanda also visited there 4 or 6 times where she kindled a loving friendship with Sr. Raphaela, the sisters and children. Wanda was a very successful concert pianist but her only children are at the *Home of Peace*. One time Wanda & James dined with Golda Mier and Moshe Dian. Mr. Spallina asked for a *Home of Peace* building permit to be issued so the roof could be completed. His request was granted & he gave Sister the funds to complete the project.

In the meantime, my brother Robert Tansey, a career diplomat was assigned to Tel Aviv. I became more active in the Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women and learned more about the vocation process. My **Israel** trip came to fruition in Feb. 07 thru my travel colleague, Ronen Paldi of Yalla Tours, USA. Inc. With a group of Christian travel agents, and in the midst of hurry, look and learn, I also felt Christ's peace there. On arrival Robert met me, and shared that our youngest sister, Jean, was hospitalized with a very serious back injury from a car accident. Everyday she was in my thoughts and fellow travelers prayed with me. We both returned home the same day.

On my free day to explore, Robert and his wife (lower picture with sister) and I visited the **Home of Peace**. From Sisters Raphaela and Christina we heard how they came as young women in 1967, how they lived in caves, how James brought everyone blankets and pillows when he saw the living conditions, how they take in boys and girls from Israel and the West Bank in need of peace and how they built the new home by hand, stone by stone in 1970. The sisters care for 20 to 40 children from 3 to 20 years of age. All are required to go to school (in the old city by Damascus gate) learn several languages, help with chores, and study hard daily. The children live in dormitories which help them not to be so afraid or lonely at night. Sister said they are supported by donations and miracles. She showed us

plans for a new **Home of Peace** in Bethlehem which they are now building. Sister invited me to return with Catholic friends for Mass in **Ascension Chapel** and lunch or tea with the sisters in the garden where an Olive Tree grows in James' memory.

I invite you to come to **Israel**, return the hospitality and share the experiences. I need quiet spiritual direction and Fr. Ed White will lead there. Thru my ACCW contacts at the Archdiocese, I've arranged for a seminarian to come with my groups. I met a new priest at the Upper Room and heard firsthand how his **Israel** trip added to his seminary training. This trip will enhance your life too.

May all your Journeys be like a Priceless Sunset
Kathleen

