

Retired Nuns Tackle Third World Injustice

Story by John Dash
Photos by
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Each month a feisty band of Sisters of St. Joseph take to pen and paper in a special crusade for human rights throughout the world. The Sisters, all residents at St. Joseph's Convent near the congregational motherhouse on East Avenue, are part of the Inter-Religious Urgent Action Network (IRUAN) of Amnesty International.

Those Sisters unable to write on behalf of political prisoners, remember each day in their prayers the victims of institutional injustice.

The Urgent Action program publishes the stories of political prisoners and gives addresses of responsible individuals to whom one may write protesting the prisoners' treatment. These bulletins



Sister Teresa Agnes pens a letter on behalf of Anatoly Shcharansky.

are brought to the Sisters of St. Joseph by members of the task force on human rights of the diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission.

The program was launched a year ago last month, Kay Kurz, a task force member, said last week, as nine Sisters of St.

Joseph bent over letters to the Soviet Union on behalf of Anatoly Shcharansky, the 35-year-old mathematician on a hunger strike in prison.

The Sisters first took up the case of a Turkish doctor, and in the ensuing months have written letters to the officials of such various countries as the Republic of South Africa, Republic of China (Taiwan), Romania, the Philippines, Argentina, Honduras, and Chile.

There has been some word back. Only last week a Sister received a letter detailing the treatment given several men in Honduras, men on whose behalf the Sisters had written.

The Sisters also have heard of the liberation of a woman in the Philippines, whose treatment they had protested; and of the death of their first concern, Bahadir Dumanli, from Turkey.

"We will remember him, his wife and children in our prayers," they promised.

Anyone wishing to join in the Sisters' unique prayer/direct action effort, or who wishes further information on Amnesty International and its variety of programs, has been asked to contact AI's diocesan promoter, Sylvia Thompson, 750 W. Main St., Rochester, N.Y. 14611; (716)328-6400.



Composing letters in the dayroom are, from right, Sister Ursula, Sister Ligouri, Sister Rose Gonzaga, Sister Margaret Joseph, and Sister Teresa Angelica.



Sister Ursula alerts Soviet authorities that their treatment of a political prisoner is being monitored.

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