



Mercy and love
are the music of God
speaking to our heart.

*La misericordia y el amor
es la música con que Dios
nos habla al corazón.*

THESE WORDS ON A WELCOME CARD IN OUR ROOMS GREETED US at the Casa Central (Motherhouse) of our Mexican Benedictine Sisters in Mexico City. They brought back memories of our first meeting with the Sisters 40 years ago, in June 1976. At the time we did not have enough of a command of each other's language to communicate deeply, but each had music that resonated with each other's spirit. It was truly the music of God!

Remembering together brought many laughs and tears to our celebration. These 40 years have been filled with many rich and challenging experiences for both our communities. And the memories of our sisters and brothers who have passed on to new life during these years brought joy to our hearts because they remain very present even in their absence.

Over the years we have walked together to be evangelized by the poor and marginalized, the refugees, the landless and homeless in the cities and villages of Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Brazil as well as here in the United States. Through our witness as women and men living a gospel life in the Benedictine spirit of prayerful humility, mutual respect and love, and radical equality, we hope to counter the walls of separation and forced migration; the violent abuse of power through torture and sequestration, drug and human trafficking; and the increasing poverty and misery prevalent in our societies and world today.

Truly the shells encapsulating the seeds in our hearts have to break open for new growth to sprout forth the deep hope of life and peace for which all creation groans. Immersed in the music of God we have unearthed melodies that enable us to love one another as sisters and brothers, to speak a language that unites us as one people, to reach out in mercy and in solidarity to the suffering of our world as seeds blossoming with the Spirit of Pentecost.

In our bulletin we want to share the joy of our vibrant and faithful relationship with our Mexican Sisters over these forty years. Flowing from this relationship we write about a connection with the Mexican migrants living and working here in Vermont; solidarity with the ongoing pain and nonviolent witness of Palestinian people; a prayer encounter in our diocese during the Year of Mercy; and other meaningful moments in our monastic life. ■