Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange Congregational Stance on Sanctuary
June 1986

Whereas our Constitutions call us to "search out and undertake any spiritual and corporal work of mercy that may be within the power of the congregation" and "according to our tradition we encourage and assist those who desire to follow Christ more closely, and we work to alleviate the conditions which cause poverty, suffering, oppression and lack of knowledge"; (Revised Constitution #13)

Whereas our Constitutions state that "individually and communally we pursue justice in our ministries as an essential element of commitment both to the Gospel and to our charism. We seek to identify closely with the poor, to live simply, to engage in the struggle for justice, and to work in solidarity with others for a just world"; (Revised Const. #16)

Whereas in the Acts of Chapter, 1981, we reaffirm the challenges of our Constitutions by stating: "Through our attentive listening to God in Scripture, in Church documents, in the lived experience of our charism and in the signs of the times we discern that we are experiencing an individual and communal conversion that calls us to be more sensitive to the cry of the poor and the alienated";

Whereas we, as responsible citizens, are called upon by our country to uphold the spirit of laws which fulfill our vision of America as a nation supporting social justice and opposing political repression and to oppose in the construction of just laws those erroneous interpretations which undermine that vision;

Whereas Articles 1, 32, and 33 of the United Nations Protocol relating to the status of refugees acceded to by the Senate of the United States in November 1968 states that a person with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of race, religion, nationality or political opinion should not be returned to their home country;

Whereas refugees from El Salvador and Guatemala continue to flee to the United States to escape the threat of persecution, imprisonment, torture and death;

Whereas the government of the United States continues to define these persons as economic rather than political refugees and, consequently, refuses to grant them "extended voluntary departure" status;

Whereas the government of the United States in conflict with the United Nations Convention and Protocol on Refugees, which was signed by the united States in 1968, and with the policy of the U. N. High Commission for Refugees, has deported thousands of these refugees to their: war-torn homelands where they face imprisonment, torture and death; and

Therefore, be it resolved that the Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange support the Sanctuary Movement.