In the student resistance to locating violence in the media, we found the most compelling note of cultural addiction to violence most complete. One student wrote of GI Joe:

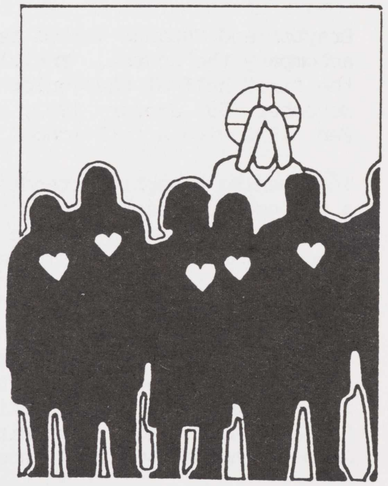
> "Every GI Joe show contains a message of safety at the end of the program. The enemy is a terrorist group, and GI Joe reacts to the attacks. It is often impossible to talk things out as you suggest. In closing, the only thing I think GI Joe would teach would be that good guys win."

Nevertheless, the nature of the programs as we reiterate over and over to students is not to get them to think as we think, but simply "to think." Certainly plenty of thinking is occurring as is evidenced by strong reactions to the program-both positive and negative. On the last of our ten classroom days, before our return for the non-violent role models assembly in January, students expressed the need to keep working on the violence within themselves as one aspect of what they had gained from the program thus far. Additionally, many felt that recognizing verbal, psychological & emotional violence towards each other in the school milieu had been an important learning experience.

After some much needed rest, we look forward to our return to one of the most welcoming faculty & administrative environment we've ever encountered in the ten years of our ministry. Certainly during this time of Advent, the words of Isaiah apply to the desert experience of our societal wilderness of "the parched land" of violence, greed and cultural addiction to both.

Perhaps the Agape program will do what Isaiah foretells at some future time;

> "Then the eyes of the blind
> be opened
> And the ears of the deaf shall
> be unstopped
> . . . . . .
>
> For the waters shall break out
> in the wilderness
> and the streams in the desert.
> . . . . . .
>
> They shall attain joy & gladness
> And sorrow & sighing shall
> flee away."



Suzanne Belote Shanley

COLLEGE RETREAT AT AGAPE

"Many, many thanks for the 'Agape' experience. You've given me hope to believe in my dreams and continue searching the depths of my heart where Jesus speaks."

Bonnie Shiel, student at Rhode Island College

"I learned so much more on the Christian faith and on the nonviolence movement."

David Eubank, student at Erie Community College
Buffalo, NY

"It is always a help to me to spend time with people who are truly living out of their deep convictions - i.e. the members of the Agape Community. It definitely helped deepen my faith and my nonviolent beliefs. . . . An experience of prayer, of community, of grounding in faith and in the conviction of nonviolence. Definitely a renewal."

Sister Eleanor MacLellan, Campus Minister
at Boston College

The above comments reflect the enthusiasm which characterized the 2nd annual AGAPE COLLEGE RETREAT, November 8th - 10th, 1991. The 22 students and 5 campus ministers who participated represented 8 colleges from throughout the Northeast.

The weekend included lively discussions on many aspects of violence in our culture and how Jesus' message of nonviolent love can be manifested in such a wounded world. The discussionns were intertwined with walks to Quabbin reservoir, silence, wood gathering, and liturgies. Saturday night was especially memorable, as we shared music and poetry around the warmth of the wood stove. The evening ended spectacularly with a moving prayer service in celebration of the Earth, around a roaring bonfire.

Once again, members of Agape were inspired by the spirit of community created through everyone's sharing his or her own personal struggles with faith and nonviolence.

Thanks to all who made the retreat a community and faith building experience.

Teresa Wheeler

COME ASIDE AND REST A WHILE

Another Agape dream is realized! We now have a one room hermitage on the property (deep in the woods!) ideal for a poustinia experience.

While it is yet only about two-thirds complete, I spent two days in the hermitage in October and if you have never done anything like this and have a need for some quiet time (boy was it quiet!), we invite you to come and spend some time in the hermitage. It has a cot and wood burning stove, a Coleman stove for cooking, a comfortable chair and absolutely no other comforts of home (honest!).

The first night I was overwhelmed with many distracting thoughts and I remember asking myself, "Are you crazy? You should be home with Irene (my wife)!" I was determined to stick it out, however, and made a real (successful) effort to get centered. Once this was achieved, the solitude became a dear friend and I spent the rest of my time there resting my head on the bosom of the Lord.