

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JAN/FEB 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1



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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
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## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

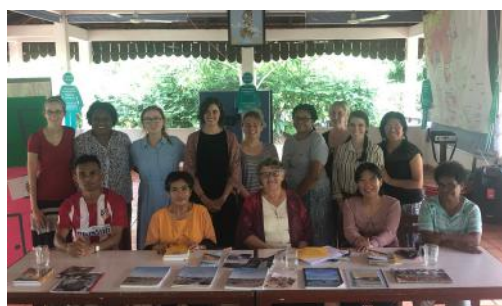
*Inaugural Group of Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders to Graduate*



The final immersion segment of the inaugural group of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship is due to begin on 12 February until 20 February, 2021.

Due to the coronavirus, the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship has met unprecedented and unexpected obstacles in its inaugural year. The first Fellowship group was due to graduate in Ireland this past July 2020. It has since then, been postponed until February 2021 and will be hosted virtually on the Zoom platform. Although this decision was very disappointing to us all, we have used this opportunity to think creatively how to move forward.

During the final virtual immersion, Fellows will be presenting their research, taking a tour of Catherine's House, participating in leadership workshops, fireside chats, art processing and more.



- [Invitation to Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellows Research Presentations](#)

‘Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellows (Group One 2019-2021) have prepared extensive research presentations on various Mercy justice issues. These research presentations will be conducted via Zoom on Tuesday the 16th and Wednesday the 17th of February, 2021.



The program, including a schedule of the research presentations, names of the presenting Fellows and a research project description can be downloaded [here](#).

We invite you to attend any/all of these events. Local times for each presentation are linked to [the program](#).

Leading up to the final immersion, Mercy Global Action will be highlighting the research projects of the Fellows and sharing their insights and reflections of their participation in the program. Join us on Twitter at [@MIAGlobalAction](#)

- [Mercy Global Action Co-Sponsored a Side Event during CSocD59](#)

The 59th session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD59) took place from 8 to 17 February 2021. This year's theme was 'Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all'.

Mercy Global Action have Co-Sponsored an event along side UNANIMA Interntaional, entitled '*Migration, Displacement & their Cross-cutting Issues In the Context of Digital Technology & Just Transitions Event Information*'. The event took place on Monday, February 9th, 2021 from 8.30-10.00AM EST (US & Canada). Cecilie Kern, MGA Research and Advocacy Associate, moderated the event.

- [Further resources on Migration](#)

Cecilie Kern was invited to speak at an event on International Migrants Day organised by the Society of the Sacred Heart at the UN. Click [here](#) to watch Cecilie's presentation on advocacy for migrants' rights that bridges between grassroots experiences & UN policymaking.



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS



- *Cecilie Kern, MGA Research and Advocacy Associate Advocates at the Global Forum on Migration*

This January, Cecilie Kern represented Mercy International Association and the NGO Committee on Migration at the 13th Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), hosted virtually by the United Arab Emirates. The GFMD is an annual, state-led, informal and non-binding process, which helps shape the global debate on migration and development. Since 2007, it has provided a flexible, multi-stakeholder space where national governments, civil society, the private sector, local and regional governments, and other stakeholders, including youth and UN agencies, can come together in a spirit of trust and mutual exchange to discuss the multi-dimensional aspects, opportunities and challenges related to migration and development. The 13th Summit brought over 2000 participants around the world to discuss the future of human mobility and how to build innovative partnerships for sustainable development.



The Youth Forum, which took place from 4-6 January, and the Civil Society Preparatory Meetings, which took place on 7, 11, 12 and 15 January, provided a space for youth and civil society delegates to collectively develop a set of recommendations on this year's key thematic areas, and to prepare to carry these outcomes and recommendations as advocacy messages through the entire GFMD Summit, to share with governments and other stakeholders. Though there are always challenges to developing joint recommendations that reflect the full range of civil society priorities and concerns, there is a significant value in ensuring a consistent voice for civil society. Following these days of intensive online debate and discussion, civil society representatives adopted four joint advocacy priorities for the GFMD Summit, with strong links across thematic areas:



- Ensuring social protection for migrants regardless of their status;
- Expanding migrants' regularization and legal migration pathways;
- Fighting xenophobia and discrimination; and
- Promoting safe access to services and to the judicial system.

Read more: [Civil Society Representatives Pick Advocacy Priorities for the GFMD Summit.](#)

The 13th GFMD Summit itself took place from 18-26 January. The Summit Roundtables were organised around the six 2020 themes selected by the United Arab Emirates Chairmanship:

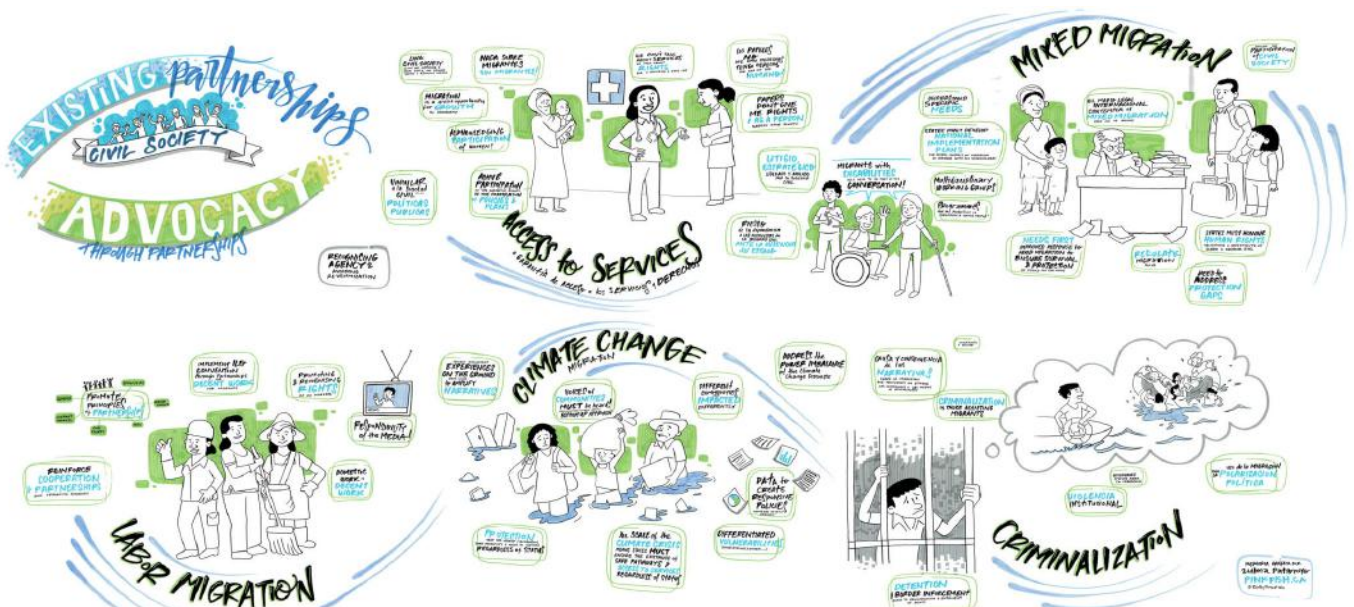
1. The Governance of Labour Migration in the Context of a Changing Employment Landscape;
2. Skilling Migrants for Employment;
3. Leveraging New Technologies to Empower Migrants;
4. Addressing Gaps in Migrant Protection;
5. Discussing Approaches to Address Irregular Migration; and
6. Fostering Partnerships to Realise Migration-Related Goals.

Because of the inclusive format, civil society messages came across strongly in the official sessions of the GMFD, as well as the side events. Governments picked up some of these points, especially those about access to social protection and regularization. The human rights of migrants, including those in irregular status, have long been confirmed by international standards and guidelines. Discussions centered on how to close the gap between international standards and national and regional practice, and to recognize and defend the humanity of all people, regardless of their nationality or migratory status.

After the official GFMD Summit had ended, governments and other stakeholders participated in a Dialogue on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) / the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), in accordance with paragraph 47 of the GCM. This dialogue, co-organized by the GFMD Chair and the UN Network on Migration, served as a platform to 1) inform about the state of play of the GCM process and sharing good and innovative practices, policies and cooperation mechanisms towards the review of the GCM; 2) offer a platform to discuss how all stakeholders contribute to GCM implementation; 3) to discuss emerging challenges in 2021 and how the GFMD and the UN Network on Migration can contribute to the first International Migration Review Forum in 2022.

As the Mercy Global Action office prepares to initiate a Migration Task Force in 2021, it is important to remain engaged in these conversations. The Migration Task Force will aim to collect stories, research and good practices from around the Mercy World and conduct analysis related to addressing protection gaps for people on the move, and on issues that did not receive so much attention at this GFMD, like climate and environmental displacement. The work of the task force will help to improve capacity building on this priority issue and to inform advocacy that will be used for the International Migration Review Forum to review the GCM in 2022, as well as future meetings of the GFMD and the High-Level Political Forum. Mercy Global Action is looking forward to engaging with Sisters, and Partners in ministry from Mercy Congregations and Institutes around the world in this important work.

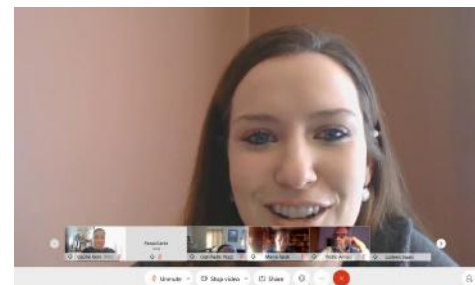
To read the full article and learn more about the GFMD click [here](#).





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH



*MGA Welcomes Collaboration with Newly Appointed Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation*

Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, was appointed the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation on November 1st, 2020.

In December, Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo hosted a public consultation online to begin an open dialogue with civil society partners and discuss his mandate. In his consultation, Mr. Arrojo-Agudo highlighted the activities and priorities of the first three years of the mandate. He plans to spotlight the triple global crisis: climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and democratic governance; all of which pose important challenges to the implementation of the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation. The Special Rapporteur hopes for his second report to be on the human rights to water and sanitation for indigenous people.

As Special Rapporteur, Mr Pedro Arrojo Agudo will focus on the following issues to promote the human rights to water and sanitation:

- Women defenders of the human rights to water and sanitation. Women are active promoters of water, not just victims. In his consultation, Mr. Arrojo-Agudo emphasized how it is essential to develop the gender vision developed by UN Women on water and sanitation projects and programmes.
- Human rights to water and sanitation of indigenous peoplesWater-related conflicts and safety of human rights defenders
- Rural sanitation
- Strengthening links between Human Rights Council mechanisms, social movements and municipalities
- Commodification of water and privatization of services and making the links to food sustainability

As discussed in his consultation, the Special Rapporteur aims to appeal for global solidarity. The pandemic is leaving a lot of pain but is also providing lessons to learn, uncovering the vulnerabilities of humans and the systems we have created. There is a broad consensus that we need to strengthen our public health systems where water and sanitation are vital needs to guarantee health for all.

Mr Arrojo-Agudo articulated his admiration for the work of faith-based organizations and the ethical commitment of Pope Francis. The Special Rapporteur aims to promote and activate a permanent dialogue with the existing civil society networks on the various fronts of work and struggles, as well as with local governments and organizations that work specifically to strengthen the capacities of the local governments.

Click [here](#) to read more ways to engage with the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation



# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

## *International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust*

**By Tylia Barnes (MELF 2019-2021)**

Remembrance is a Teacher.

Eight decades ago, our world experience one of the most horrific times in history, with the Holocaust. Over four million Jewish people were killed during this time. However, on January 27, 2021 the world remembers and honors the lives of those who are no longer with us and those who survived.

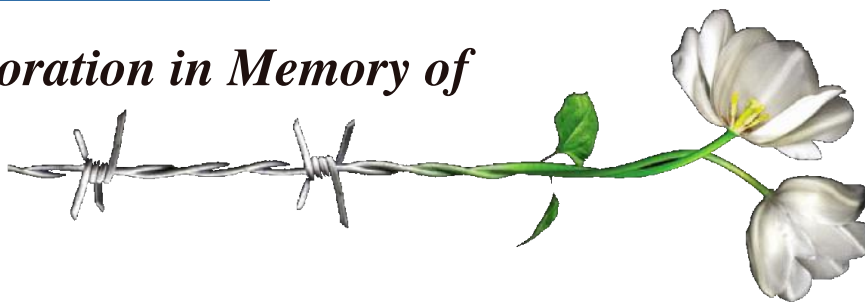
Many years ago, in 1985, I was a 7th grader at Garrison Junior High School in Baltimore, Maryland. I walked the halls with friends to World History class. Upon entering the room, I noticed a short aging woman standing next to my history teacher wearing a bright smile. I did not know who she was but quickly learned that she was once a student at Garrison Junior High many years ago. Our class was in the middle of the World War II unit and had been learning about the Auschwitz concentration camp.

Once students settled, the woman began speaking with a thick European accent unfamiliar to me. She introduced herself as Tekla (unfortunately I do not remember her last name) and told us that she studied history in the same classroom. Tekla also asked if we wondered why she was teaching class today. While surveying the class, she pulled up her sleeve showing us a tattoo on her forearm stating, "I am a Holocaust survivor and want to share my experience with you". She had our full attention. Our guest shared explicit stories that included being forcefully removed from her home, taking trains to camp, being forever separated from family and how she would never forget the smell of death. Tekla was living history and brought our classroom lessons full circle through her lens of experience.

Tekla also shared truths from camp that sustained her until liberation. Though often hungry, tired, and emotionally depleted she conveyed a reality that was not noted in the history books. She began to tell us about the richness of making the best of their circumstances. Bonds were formed between people from different countries. Together they shared knowledge, spiritual and practical gifts with one another in hopes of motivating desires to keep pressing ahead. I will never forget her saying, "The Nazi's took everything from us, but they could not take away our virtue".

That was one of the most influential moments of my life because it helped me to see hope in the face of opposition. I have lost track of Tekla over the years but never forgot her name nor have I forgotten her personal declaration. She wore an armor of resilience, grace, and belief in the power of the human spirit.

As we pay tribute on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, join me in lighting a candle for Tekla, survivors and the millions who were persecuted as we honor their lives, legacy and virtue.



# International Day of Education - Formal Education transforms human life in Papua New Guinea



By Theresia Tina rsm (MELF 2019 - 2021)



In the past in Papua New Guinea (PNG) formal education was not recognised as vital as it is today. When formal education was first introduced in the 1960s and 1970s in PNG only the boys were allowed to go to school. Girls were to stay at home with their mothers.

Article 26 of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed in 1948, states that it is everyone's right to be educated, it must be at no financial cost and it is compulsory in the early years. However, in PNG people were not clear about the rights of every child to be educated and to be given equal respect. It is only when the giftedness of each person is valued equally and their dignity is respected, then they are able to contribute to the common good and feel included in society.

For example, when the first Sisters of Mercy came to PNG from Australia in 1956 to the highlands and in 1957 to the coast, they had to really stand their ground in order to take the girls as well as boys into the schools which they established. Very slowly, people began to recognise the importance of formal education and girls were educated equally. Achieving this change was not without its challenge.

Due to the rugged geography of our country, 75% of the population live in the villages and most of the people are still not formally educated. Children cannot go to school due to the geography of the place and the inability of many families to afford funds to pay the school fees to send their children to attend school. In most villages children have to walk hours climbing mountains and cross rivers to attend school.

Most of the remote schools miss out on the resources supplied by the Education Department. Many families struggle to afford food and shelter for the night, let alone being able to afford to send their children to school. For those of us who are formally educated and who have the privilege of a good profession, we feel more included when we can contribute to the economy and the wellbeing of our country of PNG. of our We come to realise that we are able to share our gifts with everyone.

In recent times COVID-19 has impacted formal education in many parts of the world. Many children and students have been badly affected and their studies have been disturbed as well as their mental health and self-esteem. In developing countries like PNG students have been emotionally and mentally affected. As a result some of them have turned to drugs and other forms of crime, while others are in danger of forms of exploitation such as child labour, child trafficking and becoming street vendors. In the towns in PNG (prior even to COVID-19) young children who do not attend school and who loiter around the markets become known as 'taxi boys', carrying the heavy produce on their backs for a small amount of money.

Therefore, formal education is a lifetime process. It has the power to transform the life of every person. It empowers, and fosters the development of creative, informed and resilient global citizens. In PNG formal education is a gift which opens up a world of choices and possibilities.

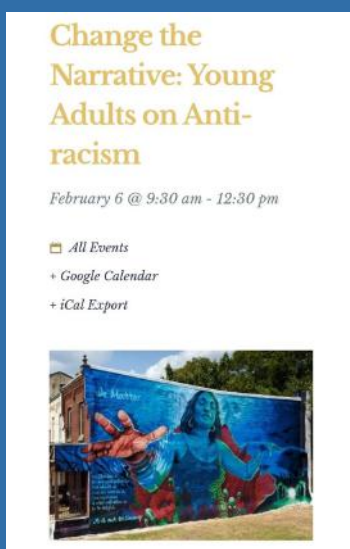


# “USEFUL RESOURCES

[Institute of Global Homelessness -  
The Better Data Project](#)



[Craneleith Spiritual Centre -  
Change the narrative:  
Young adults on Anti-racism](#)



[His Holiness the Dalai Lama In  
Conversation with Greta Thunberg  
& Leading Scientists -  
Climate Feedback Loops](#)



[#Water2Me campaign -](#)  
Share your thoughts and experiences on  
what water means to you across social  
media



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 24 January - International Day of Education
- 27 January - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust
- 4 February - International Day of Human Fraternity
- 6 February - International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation
- 8-17 February - The 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development
- 10 February - World Pulses Day
- 11 February - International Day of Women and Girls in Science
- 12-21 February - Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship Group 1 Final Immersion
- 13 February - World Radio Day
- 20 February - World Day of Social Justice
- 21 February - International Mother Language Day

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JAN/FEB 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2



## IN THIS ISSUE

**MELF FINAL IMMERSION & RESEARCH PROJECTS**

**MELF GROUP 1 GRADUATION**

**USEFUL RESOURCES**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE KERN, SIOBHÁN GOLDEN AND COLLEEN SWAIN

### Special Edition: Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship 2019-2021 (MELF)



### Greetings from the Mercy Global Action Office!

The MELF final immersion took place on the 12th-20th of February and was hosted virtually on the Zoom platform. The theme of the immersion, ‘The Fire Within’, focused on igniting the living flame of love that burns within us.

Inside this MELF Special Edition, we will explore the inaugural Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship Final Immersion and Graduation.

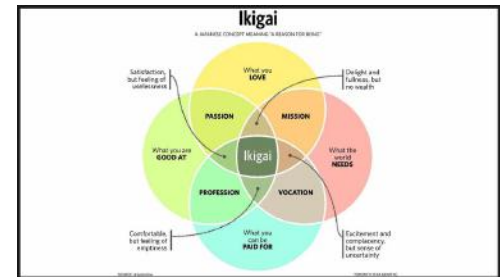


# MELF Final Immersion

The MELF Final Virtual Immersion took place on the 12th-20th of February and comprised of two Zoom sessions each day over the course of the week. Prior to the final immersion, the MELF team sent each Fellow a package full of items that would be necessary for the immersion experience. Each immersion session was opened with a blessing or meditation led by two of the Fellows. This deepened the sense of presence and connection among the group each day. During the final virtual immersion, the Fellows took part in many activities including:

- *Revisiting Ikigai*

Marietta Latonio re-oriented the Fellows to the practice of Ikigai, the practice of finding one's life's meaning. Many of the group were able to return to their journals from the Cambodia immersion and reflect on a similar guided reflection on Ikigai which Marietta offered back in 2019. Bolstered by meaningful prompts and guidance by Marietta, the Fellows spent some time personally journaling on uncovering what they love to do, what they are good at, and what the world needs now.



- *Women in Leadership Virtual Tour of Mercy International Centre, Baggot Street*



Elizabeth MacNeal, Head of MIA Heritage and Spirituality, led a virtual tour of the famous Baggot St, International House of Mercy. The Fellows heard the stories of Catherine McAuley and about the lives of the very first Sisters of Mercy as told through their relation to various furniture and decorative objects on display in the house. The stories of these wonderful early women of Mercy filled the group with inspiration and hope for making change. The Fellows reflected on the parallels between their lives as fellows and that of Catherine's.

- *Art Journaling with Marianne Hieb rsm*

The MELF team and Fellows were guided in the process of Art Journaling with Marianne Hieb rsm. Prior to the final immersion, each fellow was sent oil pastels and a sketchbook to delve into this process. Marianne provided the context that “we did not journey through the Fellowship in a vacuum, but within complex situations, and personal contexts. The Reflection and Integration Themes invite us to emerge our whole selves into our journaling meditations..”.



To learn more about the final immersion activities, read the Fellow's Final Immersion Reflections [here](#).

**The Mercy Global Action Office will be seeking expression of interest for MELF Group 3 in December 2021**



At the heart of the Fellowship is the aim to provide opportunities for women to develop and contribute to Mercy Leadership and in turn, extend their sphere of influence. This builds on and ensures that Mercy Global Leadership endures within our Mercy Institutions and beyond.



Artwork by Julia Morisi (MELF 2019-2021)

## Research projects

Over the past 18 months, the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellows (Group One 2019-2021) prepared extensive research projects on various Mercy justice issues. The MELF Fellows research presentations took place via Zoom on February 16th, 17th and 18th, 2021. To view the research presentations click [here](#).

- **Theresia Tina rsm (Papua New Guinea) - Where have the Rivers and Forests Gone? Oamug: A Case Study**

This research focuses on how unsystematic expansion of agriculture and housing for survival purposes contribute to the degradation of earth and its resources. While it is an issue for the whole country, the research focuses on one small village called Oamug in the Western Highlands Province as a case study. [Download research](#).

Theresia Tina rsm  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, Papua New Guinea

- **Jemima Walsh (Australia) - Money as Mercy: A guide for the global Mercy community on participating meaningfully in the Impact Economy**

This guide offers an introduction to the emerging 'Impact Economy', and puts forward a decision-making framework for members of the Mercy community to use when considering ways to invest, save and purchase intentionally within this new system. [Download research](#).

Jemima Walsh  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, Australia

- **Tylia Barnes (United States of America) - Cultivating Consciousness: Are you Complicit or a Coconspirator?**

Tylia's Talk will take you on a journey through aspects of historical racism and personal experience. Mercy and the wider community will be invited to cultivate consciousness through a lens of human rights and to become poised innovators of an anti racist culture within its community and institutions. [Download research](#).

Tylia Barnes  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, United States

- Amy Keller (United States of America) - What is Home and How Do We Get There?**  
 By looking at the Omaha refugee experience through their responses to the prompt “Home is...” and contrasting those with others in our community, I have created a definition of home that follows a three tier model. By viewing this new definition, within the lens of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, my aim is to show that the journey to find home is just as exciting as the destination itself. [Download research.](#)

Amy Keller  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, United States

- Siobhán Golden (Ireland) - “A Home is Dignity” – A Collection of Voices and Analysis of Women’s Psychological and Emotional Experiences of Homelessness in Ireland**  
 By reviewing previous research and listening to the voices of women with lived experience, this study hopes to educate the reader on the gendered experiences of homelessness and share insights on the profound psychological outcomes of homelessness on women’s well-being. [Download research.](#)

Siobhán Golden  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, Ireland

- Anneke Kat (United States of America) - Displacement of the Heart: A Pocket Guide to Gentrification & Community Identity in Philadelphia, USA**  
 The goal of this project is to challenge the understanding of displacement through the exploration of the root causes and impact of urban gentrification in the United States. This resource will offer self-reflection activities and a community discussion guide to encourage conversation and grassroots organizing and education on this issue. [Download research.](#)

Anneke Kat  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, United States

- Anastasia Freeman (Australia) - Photosynthetic Visions**  
 Photosynthetic Visions is a research project investigating the climate emergency, plant neurobiology and eco-art therapy techniques to encourage land and plant literacy among participants. A seven-day reflective process was created, using the premise of land as pedagogy and planthropocentric thinking. This process can be used and adapted to deepen relationships with local eco-systems and to conspire with the vegetal world. [Download research.](#)

Anastasia Freeman  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, Australia

- Julia Morisi (United States of America) - In Search of Our Stories: Retelling and Reclaiming Women's Leadership in Religious Tradition

This project aims to display and uplift the incredible examples of leadership that women of our traditions can offer us today. I hope it will illuminate the brilliant light and leadership of women in religion, but also promote it. There is so much work still to do. [Download research.](#)





"I BELIEVE THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF WISDOM THESE WOMEN CAN TEACH US ABOUT FRIENDSHIP AND HOPE, ABOUT MOTHERHOOD AND SISTERHOOD, ABOUT STRENGTH AND PERSISTENCE, ABOUT LEADERSHIP."

Julia Morisi  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, United States

- Carmen Rosa Ccallomamani rsm (Peru) Title: Itinerancia en la Pandemia del COVID-19 (Roaming during the COVID-19 Pandemic)

This research is a case study focused on the testimony of five Peruvians stranded in the US during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Through their experiences, the study highlights the dangers they faced, the action of the Peruvian State, and the roles that social media, NGOs and religious congregations played in their journey. [Download research.](#)





"THE BEAUTY THAT HAS ARISEN IN ALL THIS DIFFICULT, PAINFUL TIME THAT WE HAVE LIVED, AND THAT WE ARE STILL LIVING AS A COUNTRY, IS THAT FRIENDSHIPS HAVE EMERGED, AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN CREATED."

Carmen Rosa Ccallomamani rsm  
MELF Group 1 Fellow, Peru

## Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship Statement 2021:

**"We are a group of intergenerational, intercultural, and interfaith women from around the world who find a common connection in our commitment to live justly and mercifully.**

**As leaders in our local communities, we each represent diverse backgrounds, and we strive to bring our distinct experiences into conversation with the shared work of Mercy.**

**We cherish the longstanding ethical leadership modelled by the Mercy family worldwide, and share a commitment to living out the spirit of Catherine McAuley.**

**As Mercy fellows, we seek out practical solutions to issues of environmental and social justice. In doing so, we encourage and enable our communities and planet to thrive. We will continue to work for the empowerment of others - especially women - to experience full, safe and meaningful lives."**

# MELF GRADUATION CEREMONY



On February 20th, the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellows (Group 1) celebrated their graduation via Zoom. It was a wonderful graduation ceremony filled with joy, hope and gratitude for all involved throughout what has been an extraordinary year and a half! At the virtual celebration, we were joined by members of the MIA Board of Directors, Congregational Leaders, staff, parents, spouses, and partners from many Mercy ministries around the world. To watch the Graduation event click [here](#).

The graduation ceremony began with a heartfelt welcome from Sue Clarke, the Presider of Ceremonies and a director of the MIA Board. Sue offered a land acknowledgement and words of gratitude for elders and all indigenous people in attendance. This was followed by some opening remarks made by Berneice Loch rsm, who reminded everyone that this graduation is a great accomplishment after such uncertainty and change in our world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Later, Suzanne Ryder rsm director of the MIA Board, led us through the invocation.

To deliver a keynote address to the fellows and attendees, Mrs Mary Robinson, the first woman elected President of Ireland, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the current Chair of the Elders, was present. Mrs Robinson has been a passionate advocate for women's empowerment in leadership and has built movements for justice, peace and equality worldwide. To read more about the keynote address see page 7.

Angela Reed rsm, Head of MGA, responded to Mrs Robinson's keynote address by thanking her for being a guiding light for women, girls and those marginalised throughout the world. Sr Angela praised Mrs Mary Robinson for her transformative leadership from the grassroots to the global table and for recognising that society as a whole benefits when women reach their full potential. The keynote address called Sr Angela to remind the fellows that as they graduate from the MELF program, they "walk in the light of many women who have gone before them".

During the ceremony, the Fellows were awarded their MELF Certificate of Completion by Ron Ashworth and Sheila Carney rsm, Chair and Vice Chair of the MIA Board.

Gathered virtually, the Fellows wished to thank everyone who has offered support, encouragement, knowledge, friendship and hospitality during this remarkable experience. During the graduation ceremony, a slideshow of photos of the MELF experience was shared and each fellow recalled and offered their deepest thanks to those whom they have been so blessed to encounter on their journeys.

*"We thank you for walking with us during a year of upheaval and learning. In imparting your gentle wisdom and encouraging us to keep going, you have passed on a spirit of Mercy in a practical, durable sense, and we are grateful."*

They concluded their vote of thanks by holding up their candles to celebrate the light and new wisdom that the new Mercy Emerging Leaders in Group 2 will bring into this hopeful community. To read more click [here](#)

## A GRADUATING FELLOW'S REFLECTION

*"When we first met in Cambodia in August 2019, I don't think that any of us realised the extent to which we would connect with one another, support one another, and feel empowered by one another. We were a group of dreamers who shared a vision for justice and change. Little did we know that we would suddenly become the greatest of friends whose dreams became more achievable when pursued together."*

*The fellows and I have been overwhelmed by the kindness, support and generosity offered by the Mercy Family during our time as fellows in Group 1. We are forever grateful for this once in a lifetime experience. To Angela Reed rsm, Colleen Swain, Marietta Latonio, Cecilie Kern and Nicole Christensen, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your vision, outstanding leadership, organisation and creativity.*

*Congratulations to all of the MELF graduates!  
It has been a journey. And this is only the beginning."*

# MELF GRADUATION CEREMONY KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY MRS MARY ROBINSON



— **Mary Robinson**  
Chair of the Elders, Former President of Ireland, Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

**“ Investment in the education, empowerment and encouragement of women and girls is the best investment in the world.**

*I'd like to commend Mercy International for this initiative of an Emerging Leaders Fellowship to help extend women's sphere of influence in our world. This is incredibly important but such funded fellowships are all too rare. We are making links now between empowering women and girls and development of communities but it is so much more than that. We need to understand that women's leadership in our world really matters... women tend to lead differently, to be more problem solving, to be more collaborative, to be less hierarchical, and to be more listening.*

***I'm most impressed and also inspired by what each of you has achieved already in your young lives, and in particular, your commitment to the values of justice and mercy.***

*All of you are building on quite difficult situations that you have found in the communities that you are working in but you have the optimism of hope in that sense. We all have to have hope, as well as justice and mercy. I wish our nine wonderful graduates that they continue in their lives paths more encouraged, more inspired, because they have understood that the quality of mercy is very blessed."*

To read Mrs Mary Robinson's full keynote address click [here](#).

To view the Graduation Programme click [here](#).



## ANGELA REED RSM, HEAD OF MGA, RESPONDING TO THE KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE MELF GRADUATION

“

Mrs Robinson your virtual presence here today is an honour and a privilege.

I couldn't think of a more appropriate person to stand in solidarity with and impart such a strong message both in your words and your very being to our women leaders as they bring their Mercy Global Fellowship to completion this evening.



Since I first read your memoir, the story you told of the light in the window has remained with me as an abiding image. In Your words....



*'The idea of the light in the window appealed to me. I had promised, in my acceptance speech, that there 'there will always be a light on at the Presidents House for our exiles and our emigrants'. ..We had a lamp made in the shape of a candle - with no 'off' button – and put it on the window sill of our family kitchen upstairs, which was under the main portico of the house and could be seen from the public road. I hoped that emigrants would learn of the symbol and know that we at home in Ireland were thinking about them, felt connected to them and understood if they were lonely or in need of support'.*

I believe you have opened up this symbol far beyond Ireland and indeed to the world. You have shown solidarity with the marginalized throughout the world, especially women.

As a Lawyer you shone a light on Human Rights, using law as an instrument for social change

As an Irish Politician...you were not afraid to challenge the status quo. It was the light of collaboration where you always sought to build capacity in groups and coalitions and share power with the people, especially women.

As President of Ireland, it was the inspirational light of justice, peace and love that you held up before the nation.

As a Teacher you shone a light on not only Civil and political rights but Economic, Social and Cultural rights, challenging your students to put people and planet at the heart of any solution.

As UN High Commissioner for Human Rights you approached the declaration of Human Rights as a living document, focusing on massive inequality throughout the world, especially for women. You have borne witness to this injustice by being close to the victims and bringing their accounts to the Global Table. You have amplified the voices of victims and alerted the world to what was happening to them, Shining a light on many dark places in the world.



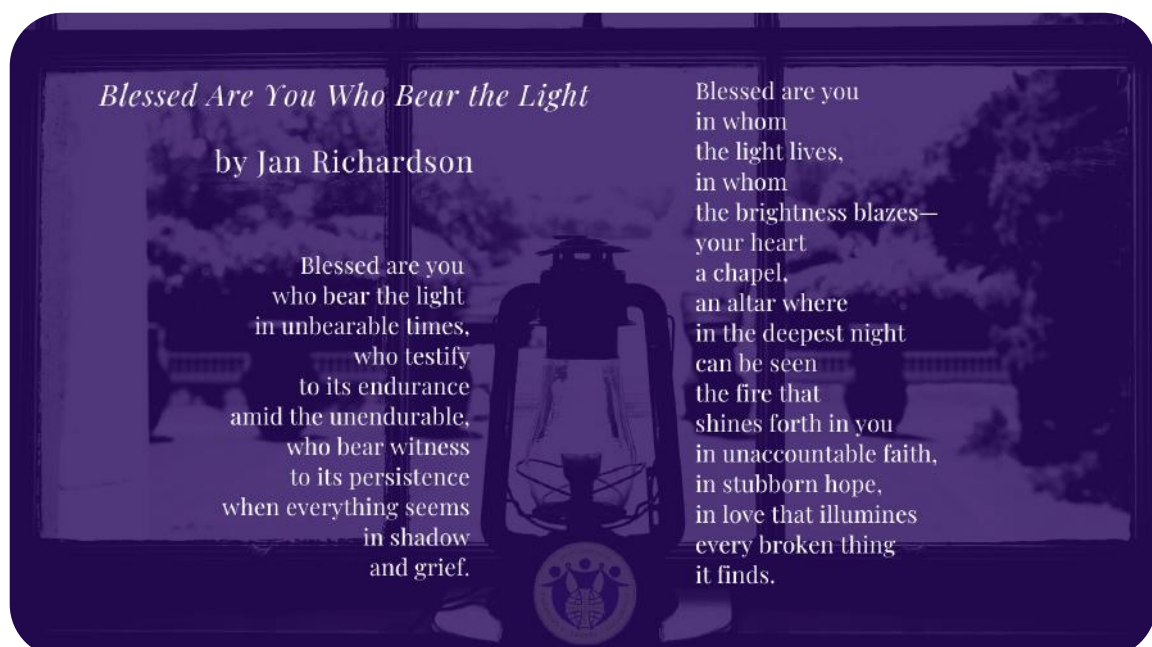
As a Grandmother you established the Mary Robinson Foundation on climate justice, recognising on the birth of your first grandchild the impact that climate change would have on him and all future generations. You then called on the world to look at climate change from the perspective of the poorest, seeking just solutions based on equity and the right to development and recognising that it is women who bear the brunt of climate change.

As an Elder you shine the light of wisdom- the fruit of your experience. With enduring empathy and respect for others, you listen to their stories and affirms their dignity and worth. You continue to challenge the narrative by rejecting short term mindsets and insisting on thinking intergenerationally for the sake of the planet.

Mary, you write of some significant dates in your family. For example, the serendipity of your first grandson's birth on your wedding anniversary, December 12. You have noted that this date is also important to you as it signifies the Signing of the Paris Agreement which you describe as a 'triumph of hope over darkness' for people and planet. For the Mercy World, December 12 marks Foundation Day, the day, our founder Catherine McAuley began her work to address the injustices of her time. I believe your grandmothers name was McAuley. Catherine, like yourself, challenged societal norms, creating a new narrative in which women would come together to make a difference to our world and foster a spirit of Compassion.

As a Woman you have shone a light of exemplary leadership, recognising that society as a whole benefits when women reach their full potential. You foster transformative leadership, from the grassroots to the global table. As we heard today, you identify the challenges women face in leadership and maintain a strong conviction of the need to surmount barriers in order to empower women. You recognise women as agents of change.

To the Fellows, as you leave here today as graduates of the Mercy Global Action Fellowship, you walk in the light of many women who have gone before you. Mary, Today we thank you for the guiding light that you have been and give thanks for your enduring leadership. And I have invited Siobhan Golden, a graduating Fellow, to pray this blessing on you today. By way of inclusion, I ask everyone to extend a hand of blessing and the fellows to hold up their candles."



# Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship Graduates 2019-2021



**Tylia Barnes**  
(United States)



**Carmen Rosa Ccallomamani**  
rsm (Peru)



**Amy Keller**  
(United States)



**Theresia Tina** rsm  
(Papua New Guinea)



**Julia Morisi**  
(United States)



**Jemima Welsh**  
(Australia)



**Anneke Kat**  
(United States)



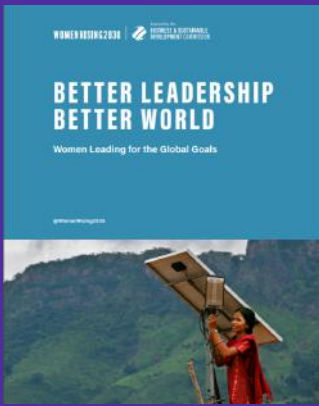
**Anastasia Freeman**  
(Australia)



**Siobhan Golden**  
(Ireland)

# “USEFUL RESOURCES

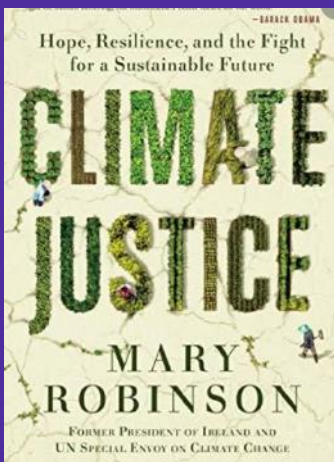
[Better Leadership Better World - Women Leading for the Global Goals](#)



[BCCIC - Leveraging the Interlinkages: Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment and the SDGs](#)



[Mary Robinson - Climate Justice: Hope, Resilience and the Fight for a Sustainable Future](#)



[CSW65 - Report of the Secretary General](#)



*MERCY GLOBAL ACTION WISHES ALL WOMEN OF MERCY AND JUSTICE A*



● **Happy** ●  
**International Women's Day!**



**8th March**

Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).

Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)

Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

MAR/APRIL 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, SIOBHAN GOLDEN AND  
COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

MGA is pleased to announce that we will be offering Virtual Advocacy Workshops during 2021. These **Virtual Advocacy Workshops** are open to members of the Mercy World who wish to engage in advocacy for systemic change at local, national, and international levels. The workshops will focus on the Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach, which is rooted in the experience of Earth and people, theological reflection, as well as tools and tactics for advocacy and action. While the core of each workshop will be the same, we will give special attention to different priority issues.

MORE INFO AT [mercyworld.org](http://mercyworld.org)

### MIA's Digital Programs+

2021 | ZOOM  
MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

REGISTER ONLINE

MERCY RETREATS & EVENTS

- Renewal Retreat
- Young Mercy Leaders
- Virtual Conference

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS

Sustainable Development	Climate Justice & Water	Violence Against Women
25th MAY *	3rd AUGUST *	23rd NOVEMBER *

- [Tue 25 May 2021](#) - Advocacy Workshop: **Sustainable Development** [RSVP Here](#)
- [Tue 3 Aug 2021](#) - Advocacy Workshop: **Climate Justice** [RSVP Here](#)
- [Tue 23 Nov 2021](#) - Advocacy Workshop: **Violence Against Women** [RSVP Here](#)

The workshops will be offered once at 11am and again at 10pm GMT (Dublin) to accommodate timezones. Check your local timezones [here](#).



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *MGA Participated in the Working Group to End Homelessness' Social Media Campaign*

MGA is a proud member of the UN NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), advocating for the human right to adequate housing for all. Siobhán Golden, MGA Intern, participated in the WGEH's social media campaign by sharing a video across their social media platforms, outlining what MGA has been doing to eradicate homelessness. Check out the video [here!](#)

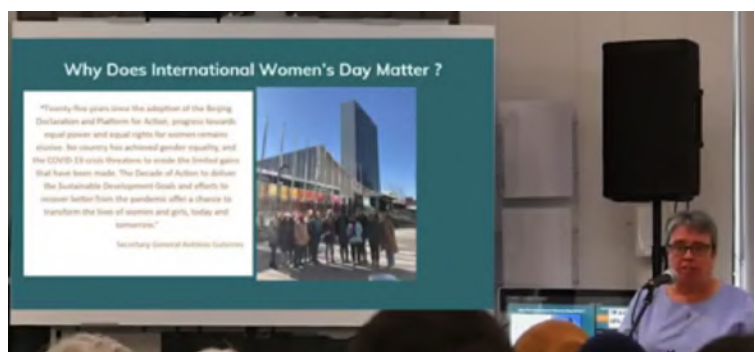
- *MGA met with Carol Vale, from McAuley Community Services for Women, to learn what her Ministry is doing to eradicate homelessness and family violence*

Siobhán Golden met with Carol Vale, Head of Strategic Planning at McAuley Community Services for Women in Melbourne, Australia, via Zoom, to raise awareness on issues of homelessness and to spotlight the various ways in which her ministry is responding to the families, women and children who find themselves in situations of homelessness and family violence. Carol has worked in the homeless sector for over 25 years and has vast experience in project management, direct service delivery, networking and advocacy. She highlighted many of the wrap around services and supports that McAuley Community Services for Women provide. These supports largely focus on building back women's confidence, managing psychological stress, and overcoming vulnerabilities, so that women can successfully reintegrate into communities and support themselves. Carol affirmed that with the right legislation, goodwill and compassion, the issue of "homelessness can be eradicated". To watch the recording of their conversation and learn more, click [here](#).



- *Angela Reed RSM, Head of MGA, Presents at the Mercy Hub on International Women's Day*

On Thursday March 11 at 4.30pm AEDT, Sr Angela Reed rsm spoke at the Mercy Hub in Melbourne to celebrate International Women's Day and Sacred People Sacred Earth Day. In her presentation, Sr Angela discussed the importance of women's leadership, MGA's advocacy work at the UN, and the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship programme. To watch the recording of her presentation, click [here](#).



**Check out the Global Mapping of Organizations Working on Gender and Migration** through frontline responses, research, advocacy, and mobilization. Click [here](#).





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH



- *Mercy Global Action and the Value of Water*

On 22 March, 2021 we commemorate the 23rd annual World Water Day. World Water Day provides the opportunity to celebrate water and raise awareness to its various intersectional issues and injustices. This year's theme for World Water Day is "Valuing water." [UN World Water Day](#) toolkits highlight that how we value water determines how water is managed and shared; further resources demonstrate that the value of water is so much more than its price. Water has a complex value on our households, culture, health, education, economics and the integrity of Earth.

Catherine McAuley stated: "Water is a free beverage." Mercy Sisters, Associates and Partners recognize the human right to water and advocate to change systemic failings that prevent water being available to all, especially those that limit access to, the protection of and preservation of clean water and sanitation. For the sake of people and Earth, food security and water management must be a priority for governments, the private sector, and local communities. These systemic failings and injustices include the privatization of water, poor water governance, unsustainable agricultural practices and gender inequality.

Water is much more than a commodity. It is a commons. More and more we have seen that privatization is not a just or equitable means of implementation or management. Maude Barlow explains in the report [Our Water Commons](#), "many indigenous societies to this day cannot conceive of denying a person or a family basic access to food, aid, land, water and livelihood, as these are all shared as part of a commons." This World Water Day, Mercy Global Action strives to change the narrative of valuing water --valuing water as a commons --a social and public good that no one owns, shared equitably for the public good.

Core to Mercy Global Action's advocacy on water is Catholic social teaching, including Pope Francis' encyclical [Laudato Si'](#), indigenous wisdom, and ways in which our various Sisters, Associates, and partners in ministry are working on issues related to water. In 2021, our office is launching a Water Task Force that will be made up of Mercy Global Action staff, Sisters, and Partners in ministry from Mercy Congregations and Institutes around the world. The Water Task Force will aim to collect stories, research and good practices from around the Mercy World and conduct analysis related to the connections between water and gender, extractivism, and climate justice.

To read more about ways in which Mercy Global Action has advocated on water in the past year and how you can be involved, click [here](#) and check out our poster on page 4.

### Further Resources on Water

- [Blue Planet Project](#)
- [Water & Sanitation: Privatization is not a Means of Implementation of the SDGs](#)
- [Discover Ways to Advocate for SDG6 on Water](#)
- [UN World Water Development Report 2021 on 'Valuing Water'](#)



# Mercy Global Action and the Value of

# Water

## A People's Guide to SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation



*“Water is a free  
beverage.”*

- Catherine McAuley



Mercy Global Action  
strives to change the  
narrative of valuing water  
--valuing water as a  
commons --a social and  
public good that no one  
owns, shared equitably  
for the public good

## **HOPE IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC**

### Revealing the Sacredness & Injustices of Water:

*“This pandemic is an opportunity, a  
challenge, and a warning ... causing  
us to slow down to Mother Earth  
based pace so that we can hear  
what she is saying.’*

### Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders

Fellowship (MELF) Research  
Theresia Tina - Where have  
the Rivers and Forests Gone?  
Oamug: A Case Study



### NGO MINING WORKING GROUP at the UN

## Rights-Based Litmus Test:

1. First, do no harm
2. Eradicate the root causes of poverty
3. Peoples as rights-holders
4. Sustainability

### Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship (MELF) Research: Ana Freeman - Photosynthetic Visions



### The MGA Water Task Force 2021:

- Research
- Analysis
- Good Practices
- Collaboration



### REFLECT:

- How do you value water?
- How does water affect males and females differently?
- What role will water play in your future?
- What do you use the most water for?
- How does water affect the food you eat?



**MERCY**  
INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

65th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION  
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Monday, 15 March 2021  
4.00pm-6.00pm (EDT)

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE & DEGRADATION OF OUR COMMON HOME

### Speakers:

Theresia Tina, rsm - Justice Advocate, Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea  
Ana Siufi, rsm - Justice Advocate, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas  
Yolanda Flores Montoro - Educational Promoter, Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente  
Pat Ryan, MM - President, Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente  
Jocelyn Bignold - CEO, McAuley Community Services for Women  
Representative of Australian Government (TBC)

### Moderator:

Angela Reed, rsm PhD - Head of Mercy International  
Association: Mercy Global Action

TO JOIN: Register as Advocate on the [NGO CSW65 Virtual Forum](#) and Register as participant on the [Event Page](#)

\*English/Spanish Interpretation Available\*



### *Mercy Global Action hosted a Parallel Event on 'Domestic Violence: Gender-based Violence and Degradation of Earth' at CSW65*

On Monday 15th of March, Mercy Global Action (MGA) hosted a parallel event during the United Nations Sixty Fifth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). As all events were online this year, it was a great opportunity to bring in experts from across the globe. Our event, "Domestic Violence: Gender-based Violence & Degradation of our Common Home," was held virtually and examined the relationship between gender-based violence and violence against Earth. Sr Angela Reed rsm, Head of MGA, moderated the event. We were very fortunate to have panellists from Argentina, Australia, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Peru.

Sr Theresia Tina rsm shared her experience of gender based violence and degradation of Earth in PNG, highlighting different types of violence and its implications for women. Her recommendations included; increased support from the government to tackle issues of gender based violence, the provision of health services to survivors of violence, counselling facilities for survivors and the need for safe houses where women can go and get help.



Sr Pat Ryan MM and Yolanda Flores brought perspectives from their work with Derechos Humanos y Medio Ambiente (DHUMA), in Puno, Peru. They highlighted that mining is prioritised over the needs of the people, with drinking water polluted and causing major sickness to the people consuming mining minerals. This impacts women's lives enormously as they bear the brunt of the pain and suffering caused by extractive industries. They called for many actions, including; prohibiting mercury and cyanide mining, financial assistance to victims of mining, remediation from the perpetrators of mining, prioritising the Indigenous population, provide free healthcare, listen to the 'cry of Earth and the cry of the poor' and be in dialogue with Mother Earth (Pachamama) and her elements.

Sr Ana Siufi rsm shared her wisdom from Argentina. She named extractives, global markets, consumerism and colonialism as the causes of devastation to Earth, and spoke of the killing of biodiversity perpetrated by multinational companies and the governments. Drawing a correlation between the degradation of Earth and gender based violence, Ana argued that the same mechanism of abuse is perpetrated on women whereby patriarchy and extractives both exploit through violence, 'utilising Earth and women as merchandise, cutting off the access to rights'.

The final panelist was Jocelyn Bignold from Australia. Jocelyn stated that gender inequity for women is still a reality in Australia where there are many incidents of violence, sexual assault and systemic bullying of female representatives in government. Jocelyn argues for making homes safe, enabling women and children to stay safely in their homes and not having to flee for protection. She recognised in particular the special needs of women in rural areas of Australia who often have less access to resources, less options, longer travel to safe services and less anonymity.

- Click [here](#) to read the full [report](#) or to watch the full [recording](#) of the event.
- Read our [written statement](#) submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women.





### *Mercy Global Action Participated in Generation Equality Forum*

Mercy Global Action participated in the Generation Equality Forum, a global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the Governments of Mexico and France with the leadership and partnership of civil society and youth. After a year of postponement due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum kicked off virtually in Mexico City, Mexico from 29 to 31 March 2021 and will culminate in Paris, France from 30 June to 2 July 2021.

The Generation Equality Forum is a multi-stakeholder gathering designed to propel ambitious new global commitments to advance gender equality and energize movement building. It brings together governments, international organizations, the private sector, civil society, and youth to examine the structural and systemic obstacles that prevent the achievement of true gender equality. The Forum also aims to confront and respond to the gender equality crisis by spurring financial and political commitments for gender equality and taking ambitious steps towards the full implementation of the critical Beijing+25 framework, to guarantee the exercise of human rights for women and girls on the global level.

The Forum in Mexico included three days of in-depth thematic dialogues, ‘Action Coalition’ sessions, cultural moments, and other speaker networking opportunities, organized with a civil society lens. It issued a global call to action to accelerate gender equality implementation, and energized civil society and feminist movements in the drive towards securing commitments to propel acceleration in the gender equality agenda. The program was designed around the following critical themes: (i) Power (ii) Crisis & Hope (iii) Action

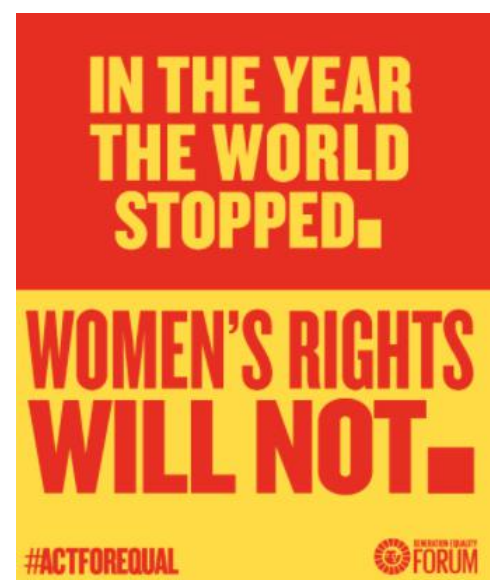
Based on human rights principles and through a data-driven process of consultation with international feminist groups, grassroots activist organizations, governments and other stakeholders, the themes chosen for the Generation Equality Action Coalitions are:

1. Gender-Based violence
2. Economic Justice rights
3. Bodily Autonomy and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)
4. Feminist action for Climate Justice
5. Technology and Innovation for Gender Equality
6. Feminist Movements and Leadership

To read more about MGA's participation in the Generation Equality Forum, [click here](#).

## GET INVOLVED!

- **Use your voice:** Share the campaign placards and help draw attention to the issue.
- **Write:** Ask your government or major companies to act - download an example letter you can use [here](#).
- **Join the conversation:** Influence the Generation Equality Forum through the Public Conversations platform.
- **Read more:** Understand the extent of the problem and learn how we can fix it:
  - Read [this summary](#) of the current status of women's rights
  - [Unpack](#) how gender inequality affects women's everyday lives.
  - [Visualize](#) the data on women's representation across the world.
  - Check out this [UN Women](#) report on gender equality in the wake of COVID-19.





Mercy International Association is deeply saddened and appalled by the violence of the Burmese military (Tatmadaw) against its own people in Myanmar. We join with Buddhist, Christian and Muslim leaders who have urged that this violence stop immediately and called for the release of all people who have been arbitrarily detained.

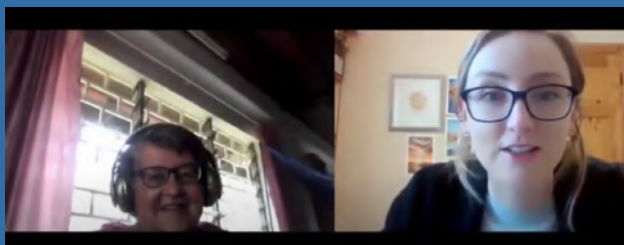
Our Mercy Sisters have worked over the years with many of the different ethnic groups of this land, including Burmans (the majority), Karen and Karenni, Kachin and Rohingyas, Chin and Arakanese. We believe that their efforts together can bring about the return of democracy. The Tatmadaw is not the elected voice of the people and its use of brute power only emphasises its illegitimacy. We urge that the return to democratic values be inclusive of the voices and rights of the people of Myanmar, in all their diversity.

We stand with the nuns and monks, the medics and journalists, the youth and students and the brave men and women who have struggled for years for justice and freedom. We pray each day for you. We also pray that the international community will have the wisdom and strength to address this crisis in a way that puts the needs of those rendered poor and the right to justice for marginalized and oppressed people at its core.

Keep courage People of Myanmar! You are a light to the world!

### *Mercy Global Action was joined by Sr Denise Coghlan rsm to Commemorate the International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, via Zoom*

Siobhán Golden, MGA Intern, met with Sr Denise Coghlan via Zoom to celebrate the International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. During their discussion, they talked about the roles that civil society and the UN can play to ensure mine clearance and people's safety, as landmines continue to kill and inflict serious injuries on millions of people globally. Sr Denise shared many of the advocacy strategies used during the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) which led to the adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty and receiving the Nobel Peace Prize in December 1997.



“Keep funding and keep focused on clearance... We've been campaigning for 30 years or so, but still, people are being injured. Survivors still need assistance... **Don't forget about the one's injured by mines in your Sustainable Development Goals. Civil Society & Governments together, can do many, many things. Keep it up!**”



— **Denise Coghlan, RSM**

Sharing a message to Governments and the United Nations in relation to ensuring landmine clearance and people's safety

[Click here to watch the recording.](#)

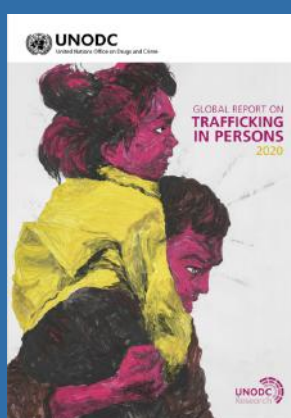
# “USEFUL RESOURCES

FI & CIEL Publication:

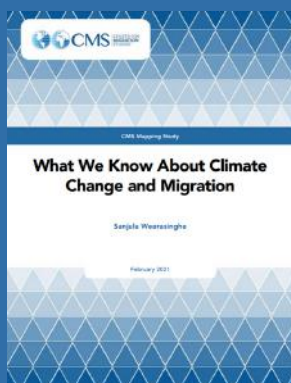
A UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights & Climate Change? Regional Perspectives



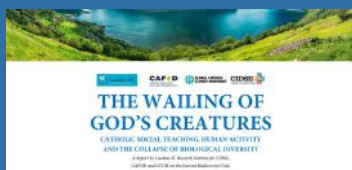
UNODC - Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020



CMS Report - What we Know About Climate Change and Migration



CIDSE Report: THE WAILING OF GOD'S CREATURES - Catholic Social Teaching, Human Activity and the Collapse of Biological Diversity



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 2 April - World Autism Awareness Day
- 2 April - International Delegate's Day
- 4 April - International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action
- 5 April - International Day of Conscience
- 6 April - International Day of Sport for Development and Peace
- 7 April - International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda
- 7 April - World Health Day
- 14 April - World Chagas Day
- 20 April - Chinese Language Day
- 21 April - World Creativity and Innovation Day
- 22 April - International Girls in ICT Day
- 22 April - International Mother Earth Day
- 23 April - English Language Day
- 23 April - Spanish Language Day
- 24-30 April - World Immunisation Week [WHO]
- 24 April - International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace
- 25 April - World Malaria Day
- 26 April - International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day
- 28 April - World Day for Safety and Health at Work

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

APRIL/MAY 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 4



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, SIOBHAN GOLDEN AND  
COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

*Mercy Global Action is offering the first of three [virtual advocacy workshops](#) on May 25th.*

**Topic:** Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

**Date & Time:**

- Session One - May 25th, 6:00am NY/11:00am IRE/10:00pm AU
- Session Two - May 25th, 5:00pm NY/10:00pm IRE/7:00am AU (26th May)

\*\*It is expected that participants will attend both morning and evening sessions as it is formational in the advocacy workshop process.

**Who's this for?** The workshop is open to members of the Mercy World who wish to engage in advocacy for systemic change at local, national, and international levels.



VIRTUAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP, OPEN TO MEMBERS OF THE MERCY WORLD WHO WISH TO ENGAGE IN ADVOCACY FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS. THIS WORKSHOP WILL FOCUS ON MIGRATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. SPECIAL EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON THE MERCY JUSTICE ADVOCACY APPROACH, WHICH IS ROOTED IN THE EXPERIENCE OF EARTH AND PEOPLE, THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION, AS WELL AS TOOLS AND TACTICS FOR ADVOCACY AND ACTION.

(More information on Page 2)

**The Workshop:** Over the course of the two sessions, the workshop will equip participants with effective tools and strategies to advocate in areas of migration and development. Objectives include:

1. Build capacity and skills for critical thinking, analysis and advocacy.
2. Learn about Mercy Global Action's strategy for advocacy and how to participate in advocacy on our key justice priorities
3. Introduce core documents in relation to migration and development in 2021
4. Identify allies/network in relation to migration/development
5. Create an advocacy pitch on migration and development
6. Encourage participants to seek out ways to engage in advocacy in migration and development in their region
7. Instill curiosity and explore the theological dimension of migration and sustainable development



**Location:** This workshop will be facilitated via Zoom video conferencing. A link to the zoom meeting will be sent via email to all participants.

**Presenters:** The Mercy Global Action Team

**How to register:** To RSVP for this event, please complete the Google Form found [here](#). Questions can be directed to the Mercy Global Action team at [mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie](mailto:mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie).



*Angela Reed rsm, Head of MGA, celebrates twenty five years as a Sister of Mercy*

Angela Reed rsm, Head of MGA, sat down with Fiona Basile from the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne for a profile on her life and mission as a Sister of Mercy. Read the full story [here](#).

“

***We need to increase our advocacy and join movements that are fighting for what are, in essence, human rights and Earth rights.***

***I believe we're called to regain our deep sense of the sacredness of Earth and people."***





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *Cecilie Kern's Migration Spotlight Presentations*

On 2 April, Cecilie Kern, MGA's Global Policy and Research Advocate, presented to the Loretto Community on the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). As a former Loretto Volunteer, Cecilie provided the group with concrete actions for advocacy on migration, stating that *"we, as civil society, have an important role to play as service providers in implementing the various policy actions which are outlined in the global compact"*. Highlighting the International Migration Review Forum as the global platform for follow-up and review of the GCM, Cecilie said that *"we, as stakeholders, must make use of the Forum to share the experiences of migrants and communities, and contribute to discussion on the progress, challenges, and emerging trends regarding migration"*. To watch her presentation, click [here](#).

**The Global Compact for Migration:**  
What migrant advocates should know

Loretto LACC Immigration Spotlight  
April 2, 2021

Teresa Blumenstein & Cecilie Kern



On 22 April, Cecilie Kern was invited to speak at the NGO CSW NY April 2021 monthly meeting alongside Teresa Blumenstein, Co-ordinator of the Justice Coalition of Religious, to discuss the intersection between climate change, migration and gender. The climate crisis has been established as one of the root causes of migration. In 2019, 24.9 million people were internally displaced due to environmental disasters. During their presentation, Cecilie outlined that the GCM is the first international commitment to address climate change, environmental degradation, and environmental disasters as drivers of forced migration. Cecilie and Teresa also discussed global trends on gender and climate displacement, and shared from their experiences at the United Nations, advocating for rights-based and gender-responsive migration policies to ensure that girls and women impacted by the adverse effects of climate change and environmental degradation can migrate in safety and dignity. Their presentations proposed opportunities to engage in further advocacy, especially at the International Migration Review Forum in 2022. The recording of their presentation is available [here](#). It starts at 14-minutes.

- *MGA met with Libby Fernandez rsm, Founder of Mercy Pedalers in Sacramento, California, via Zoom, to learn what her ministry is doing to tackle homelessness*

On 13 April, Siobhán Golden, MGA intern, was joined by Sr Libby Fernandez, Founder and Executive Director of Mercy Pedalers in Sacramento, California, to discuss the work her ministry carries out to support those living on the streets. The Mercy Pedalers are a ministry of cyclers who reach out to people experiencing homelessness on the

streets, emphasising the importance of 'welcoming the stranger'. Sr Libby speaks of the situation of homelessness in California and of the many challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic has posed on those living on the streets and on her service delivery. She calls on all of us to reach out and support those experiencing homelessness, stating, *"each individual person has the ability to bring mercy to the streets!"*. To watch the recording, click [here](#).

### MGA in Conversation with Sr Libby Fernandez

What is your Ministry Doing to Eradicate Homelessness?

*"Each individual person has the ability to bring Mercy to the streets"*





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH



### *Earth Day 2021: Restoring our Connection to Earth*

International Mother Earth Day is celebrated on April 22nd. This year, coinciding with the [Super Year For Biodiversity](#), we focus on '[Restoring our Earth](#)'. We are ever-reminded of the need to shift towards a more sustainable economy and increase ambition to reduce our carbon footprint. We continue to educate ourselves and advocate for policies that stand for people and Earth over profit.

In the days leading up to International Mother Earth Day, Mercy Global Action encourages the Mercy World and beyond to restore our relationship with Earth and its rich biodiversity. Anastasia Freeman, graduate of the inaugural Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship, researched extensively on the climate emergency, plant neurobiology and ways to encourage ecological thinking.

In her [research](#), Anastasia asks the question “How can we as humans...work with all kinds of plants to radically shift our own perceptions and our eco-systems to prevent the worst effects of Climate Change?”

Greta Thunberg states,

*“We need a whole new way of thinking.... We need to cooperate and work together and share the resources of the planet in a fair way. We need to start living within the planetary boundaries, focus on equity and take a few steps back for the sake of all living species. We need to protect the biosphere, the air, the oceans, the soil, the forests...”*

Through her [research](#), Anastasia created a seven-day reflective process to deepen our relationship with our local ecosystems and shift away from anthropocentric thinking. The focus of this creative and reflective process is to slow down enough to gain valuable insights from the ecosystems of which we live. By accepting land as pedagogy or teacher, we can develop awareness, become more deeply in touch with Earth systems and better know how to fulfil our ecological function as humans. Throughout the seven day process, our relationship will grow deeper with the environment around us, much like that of a seed.

Days 1-7 encompass the growing cycle of a plant beginning with a seed, exploring the roots, watching the stem rise, the extension of the leaves, the budding of the flowers, the journey of the pollinators and lastly the development of a healthy fruit.

Each reflection asks the participant to:

- Read the story for that day (20mins)
- Water the seeds of happiness (10 mins)
- Visit your sit spot for at least 1 hour and there do the following
  - Resting in awareness (20mins – 1 hr)
  - Observation of ecosystem (20mins – 1hr)
  - Journaling about observations (10mins – 30 mins)
- Complete an eco-art activity (20mins – 3hrs)
- Reflect on the eco art activity, through journaling (20mins – 1 hr)
- Walk the land (20mins – 2hrs)



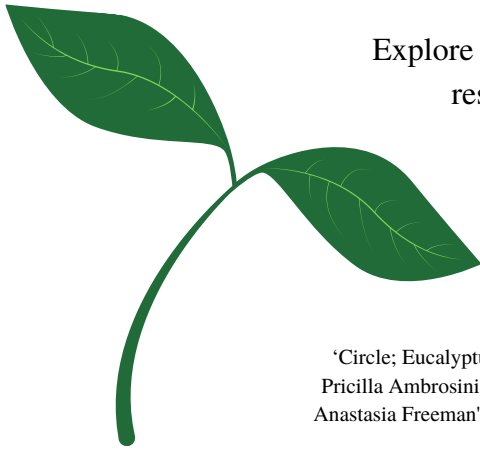
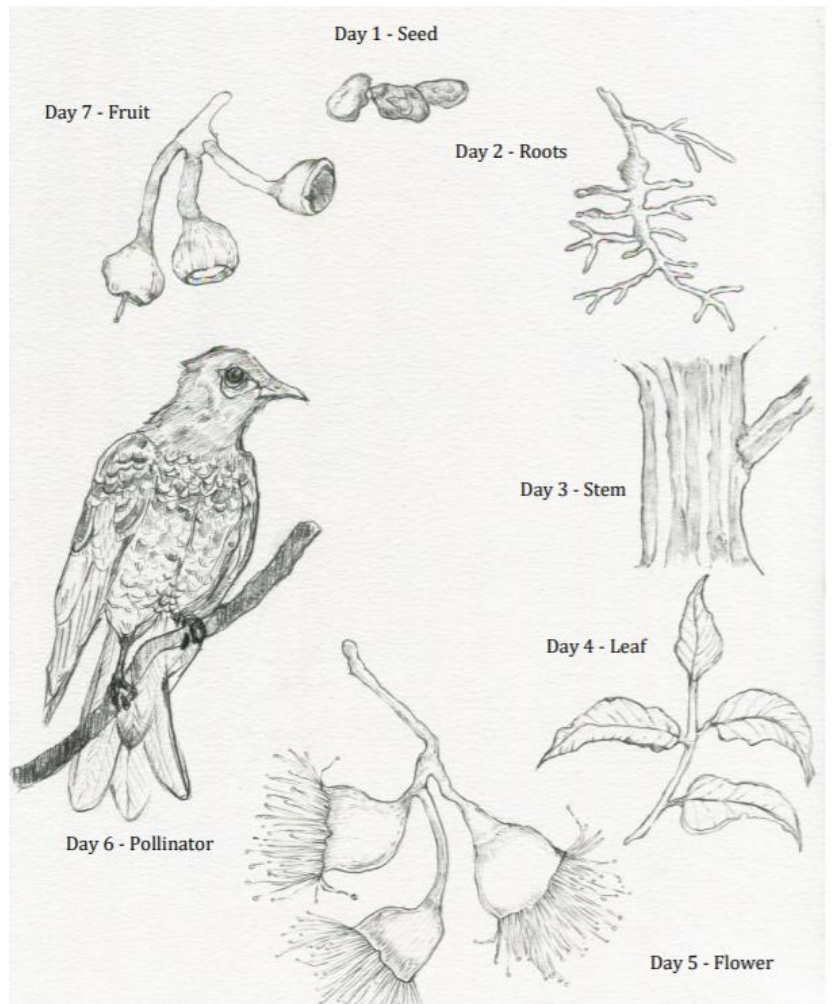
After the seven day reflective process, Anastasia offers tips on how to fulfill our ecological function as humans and ways to slow down the consumption of our natural resources.

*“Prayer is a plant... but its growth depends on the care we take to nourish it”*

– Catherine McAuley

Explore Anastasia’s research [here](#).

‘Circle; Eucalyptus sideroxyton’ by Pricilla Ambrosini 2021, taken from Anastasia Freeman’s Research project



## Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship (MELF) Making Strides Towards Carbon Neutrality

In the research of Jemima Welsh, graduate of the inaugural Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship, we are encouraged to envision ways in which the Mercy community can meaningfully contribute to the impact economy. She states, “Simply put, where traditional capitalism puts the attainment of profit before all else, the impact economy represents those emerging financial structures and institutions that also take into account the social and environmental impacts of their transactions. This economy places values not just on productivity and growth but also on sustainability and wellbeing. It relies on, and allows, each one of us to be purposeful in our decisions – to see ourselves as agents of change with our money.”



In the spirit of using Money as Mercy, as Jemima coins, Mercy Global Action has purchased strategic carbon offsets to reduce the carbon footprint of the inaugural Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship.





The Inaugural Group has made a significant contribution to the [Glor Na Mara Bundoran Community Garden](#) in County Donegal, Ireland. The Glor Na Mara Bundoran Community garden has transformed the land into an organic community garden, absorbing carbon into the soil and aiding the reduction of carbon emissions. It is an abundant space that provides food for the local community in their homes and restaurants. In addition, they have a butterfly and bee garden as well as hens to provide eggs to the community.

The Glor Na Mara Bundoran Community Garden continues to offer courses to the local people on the New Cosmology, biodiversity, energy, organic growing, cooking, herbs, health, spirituality, ritual and sustainable lifestyle choices. They share visions of reclaiming the connection with the natural world by promoting a sense of place and belonging with a profound sense of the Sacred in all of it, in the context of the unfolding story of the universe.

As we know, there is no fixed price on carbon and the cost of an offset varies from project to project. Critiques of purchasing carbon offsets include the support and extension of oppressive colonial and capitalist systems. However, through impact investing with a heart of Mercy, purchasing carbon offsets can reduce the carbon footprint of the program by investing in communities and emission reducing projects that make positive impacts on the environment. It is our hope that future MELF programs will be fully carbon neutral. We continue to support sustainable solutions that center on the well-being of people and planet including: traditional knowledge, carbon reducing programs, energy efficient initiatives, renewable energy, zero waste efforts and more.

## AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



*MGA Invites the Mercy World to Reflect on the World's Indigenous People*

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) commences 19th April, 2021 and concludes 30th April. This Forum will largely take place virtually with some in-person meetings at UN headquarters in New York. The Forum was founded in 2000 with the express purpose of attending to Indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human Rights. The theme for this year's forum is "Peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16".

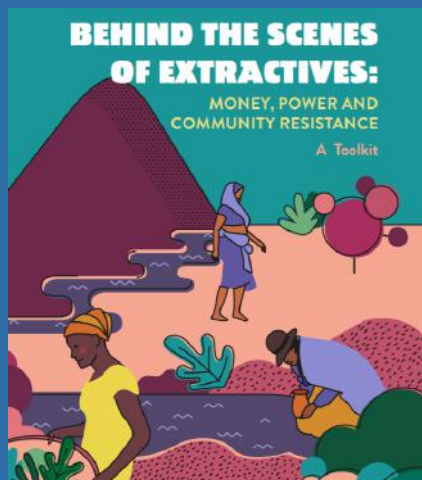
Last year, Pope Francis in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Amazon and Indigenous people, "[Querida Amazonia](#)" called on the entire world to stand in solidarity with the Indigenous people of the Amazon.

You are invited to spend time with this sacred [document](#) and to reflect on the inherent value of Indigenous people throughout the world and to pray for their continued wisdom and culture.



# “USEFUL RESOURCES

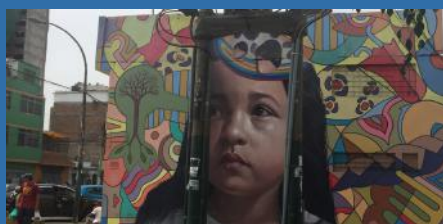
[JASS - Behind the Scenes of Extractives: Money, Power & Community Resistance, for women land defenders confronting unwanted and damaging extractive projects - A Toolkit](#)



[FI launches factsheets on COVID-19 and indigenous peoples](#)



[Women's Human Rights Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy Resource - Promoting equality through education, advocacy, and action.](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 3 May - World Press Freedom Day
- 8 May - Time of Remembrance and Reconciliation for Those Who Lost Their Lives during the Second World War
- 8 May - World Migratory Bird Day
- 15 May - International Day of Families
- 17 May - World Information Society Day
- 21 May - World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- 22 May - International Day for Biological Diversity
- 23 May - International Day to End Obstetric Fistula
- 25 May - MGA Advocacy Workshop - Sustainable Development and Migration
- 26 May - Day of Vesak
- 29 May - International Day of UN Peacekeepers
- 31 May - World No Tobacco Day

Check out MGA's parallel event for CSW65, "Domestic Violence: Gender-based Violence & Degradation of our Common Home," mentioned in the [Global Sisters Report](#).  
Click [here](#).

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

MAY/JUNE 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 5



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### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, SIOBHAN GOLDEN AND  
COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

*Learning, Experiencing, Growing: Reflections  
of an Outgoing Intern by Siobhán Golden*

"Applying for the intern position at MGA was one of the best decisions I've made! It has been a year of learning, experiencing, and growing, and my heart is filled with gratitude as it comes to an end.



Here are my top five things that I've learned during my internship with MGA:

### **Having a supportive team around you is so important**

From the very start of my internship, I was welcomed with open arms and smiles by Angela, Colleen and Cecilie. The MGA team cultivates a compassionate, joyful, and supportive culture that fosters the voices, ideas and participation of all team members. The world of international justice work and the United Nations was completely new to me, which meant that the MGA team's wisdom, guidance and support was critical to my understanding and development. I was encouraged to work both autonomously and as part of a team on a range of projects related to mercy and justice, and knowing that I had the MGA team behind me boosted my confidence and self-esteem greatly..."

Read the entire reflection at: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS



- *Mercy Global Network Called to Recognise Nakba Day*

May 14th marks Nakba (Catastrophe) day for the Palestinian people.

At a recent gathering of the Mercy Global Action Network, Sr Kathleen Rushton called on the Mercy World to acknowledge the Palestinian people and to make an effort to learn about the significance of Nakba and its implications. We are invited to listen to Indigenous Palestinians in a significant document, 'A Cry for Hope: A Call to Decisive Action. We cannot serve God and the oppression of the Palestinians'. Published less than a year ago by Kairos Palestine and Global Kairos for Justice, it calls on all people of faith for decisive action in relation to the people of Palestine over their continuing loss of land since 1947. The document invites "fellow Christians ... to respond to our common witness" through several actions including: "Initiate processes at local, denominational and ecumenical level ... for decisive action ... on the misuse of the Bible... "Engage in study and discernment with respect to theologies and understandings of the Bible that have been used to justify the oppression of Palestinian people. Offer theologies that prophetically call for an inclusive vision of the land for Israelis and Palestinians, affirming that the creator God is a God of love, mercy and justice; not of discrimination and oppression... Oppose anti-Semitism by working for justice against anti-Judaism, racism and xenophobia, oppose the equating of criticism of Israel's unjust actions with anti-Semitism."

For more information, click [here](#).

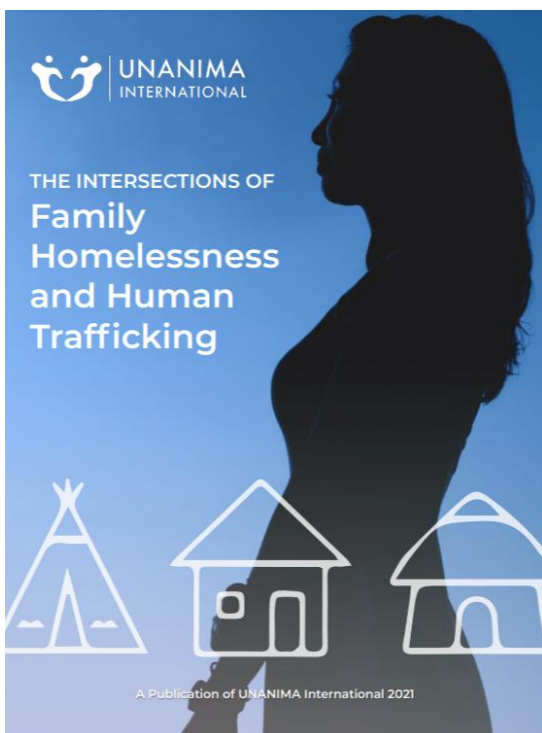
- *MGA Contributed to UNANIMA International's recent publication on 'The Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking'*

UNANIMA International's recent [publication](#) *The Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking* discusses the signs of risks for trafficking and homelessness in our communities, and highlights the urgent need to address and prevent these drivers and protect all people.

The publication spotlights Dr Angela Reed RSM's Doctoral research on human trafficking and sexual exploitation in the Philippines. Her research reveals that trafficked women find the following elements of greatest value: "Safe accommodation; emotional support; income generation projects; education; family reunion; community engagement; and peer support.

Cecilie Kern, MGA's Global Policy and Research Advocate also contributed to the report. Cecilie called attention to the exposure and vulnerability of migrants and refugees to experiences of homelessness and trafficking.

To learn more, click [here](#).



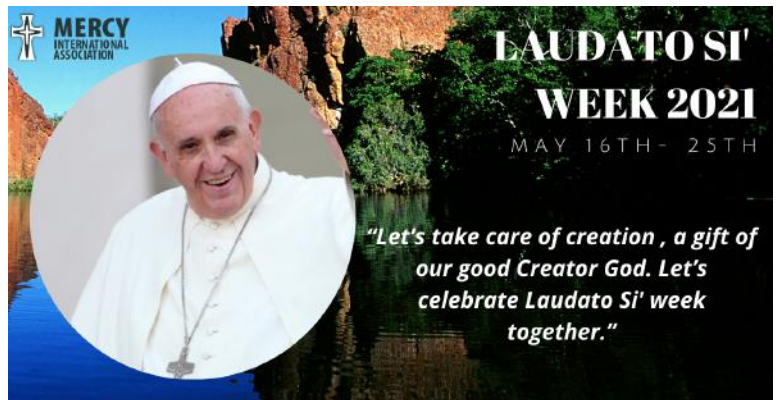


# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- **MGA Participated in Laudato Si' Week 2021**

Mercy Global Action participated in Laudato Si' week 2021, held virtually from May 16th- 25th. Hosted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement (GCCM) with the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and endorsed by over 150 organisations, including MIA, the week provided opportunities for reflection, prayer and action for our common home.



Significantly on May 17, GCCM broadcasted an event entitled Laudato Si Dialogue. This event highlighted the

political opportunities in 2021 to 'create change, the essential relevance and inspiration of the Encyclical letter Laudato Si' and a Catholic voice on preparation for UN's COP15 summit on biodiversity as well as the COP26 climate summit. Last year MGA published 'Hope in a Time of Pandemic' which addresses many of these issues, spotlighting systemic inequalities in social, economic, political and environmental areas.

- **MGA Hosted an Advocacy Workshop on the topic of Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

On Tuesday May 25th, Mercy Global Action offered the first of three Virtual Advocacy Workshops. The workshop aimed to equip members of the Mercy World with tools and strategies to engage in advocacy for systemic change at local, national and international levels. The focus of our first workshop was the topic of Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The interactive workshop introduced participants to the Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach, which is rooted in the experience of Earth and people, theological reflection, the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Global Compact on Migration.

MGA will host more advocacy workshops on Tuesday, 3 August on the topic of Climate Justice & Water, ahead of UN COP26, and on Tuesday, 23 November on the topic of Domestic and Family Violence.

Click [here](#) to [RSVP](#).



MERCY MEANS COMPASSION, EMPATHY, A HEART FOR SOMEONE'S TROUBLES. IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU DO - IT IS SOMETHING IN YOU, ACCESSED, REVEALED OR CULTIVATED THROUGH USE, LIKE A MUSCLE



WHO IS WITH US?

- Individuals
- Church communities
- Civil society and faith-based organizations
- Governments

"We do not work alone but join with the many others who yearn for Earth and people to flourish."

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



- *MGA Amplifying the Plight of Haitians at the United Nations*

For the last few months, Catholic Sisters, Brothers, priests and their partners in mission in Haiti have been sending deeply concerning reports of the rapidly escalating unrest in Haiti to their representatives at the United Nations. Since sitting Haitian President Jovenel Moïse rebuffed significant pressure from political opposition to leave office in early February, a country that was already in the grips of poverty and health crises, has been unraveling into a state of utter chaos. The Haitian people have been living with the constant threat of random acts of violence – daily kidnappings for ransom, killings, rapes, and other forms of intimidation. They are avoiding traversing the streets – even to attend to daily needs– for fear that they will not return home alive.

With rampant policy corruption, the dissolution of more than two thirds of the parliament, the closure of the judiciary and tribunals, and dictatorial rule by decree, no one is working for the safety and well-being of the Haitian people. The Archdiocese of Port-au-Prince has described the country’s recent trajectory as “a descent into hell.” The notion of holding fair, free, democratic elections in such an environment is unimaginable to those attempting to live and work in the center of the socio-political and economic storm.

With many political agendas at play on the international stage, Haiti’s existential crisis seems an important moment for international actors in government and civil society, to make an earnest effort to hear and learn from the insights and perspectives of those most impacted by the unrest. Over the past weeks, Mercy Global Action has been working with our colleagues representing other communities of Catholic religious at the United Nations to meet with various contacts in Haiti and Latin America at large in order to listen to testimony and get a better grasp of the current situation on the ground and the priorities of the Haitian people at this time. Based on these conversations, as well as various news articles and statements coming out of Haiti these past weeks, we have composed a letter to the Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations as well as nearly identical versions to the Missions of Canada, France, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Ireland. We targeted these countries for a variety of reasons, including their geopolitical influence on Haiti, and/or their positions on the UN Security Council.

The letter calls upon the UN Security Council to convene a hearing that allows testimony of Haitians’ experiences to be heard directly by representatives of UN Member States. The letter also emphasizes that the restoration of public safety is paramount, and a necessary prerequisite to holding any referendum or elections. Civil society and religious leaders have been advocating for Haiti to have a national dialogue on constitutional reform. To achieve sustainable political progress, such a dialogue must bring all sectors to the table and secure a concrete commitment to principles and practices of good governance. As one of our partners voiced, “Haitians are victimized people who want to be actors.” Their capacity for leadership is strong, and their participation is essential.

In response to the letter, Mercy Global Action, our partners at the UN, and two doctors from Haiti have already met with the government of Canada, and we hope to meet with the other recipients of the letter. We hope to collaborate with Mercy Focus on Haiti and the Justice Team of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas to continue our advocacy, especially targeted towards the government of the United States, which has significant geopolitical influence on Haiti. We are also planning on convening our own online hearing to amplify Haitian voices and shine a light on their experience of the present chaos.

This event will aim to increase awareness of the situation in Haiti among Religious, media and other members of civil society, and to give Haitian contacts/colleagues a sign of our solidarity and support for them during this crisis. We will publicize this event on our Twitter account (@MIAGlobalAction) as soon as more information becomes available.

**HELP US TO TAKE ACTION by sharing the concerns and recommendations raised by our Haitian colleagues with your government:**

1. Condition political/financial support on:
  - a. an end to violence and kidnappings so that freedom of movement and free participation in elections will be within the realm of possibility;
  - b. arrangements for/facilitation of a nationwide hearing to guide reform of constitution/governance practices
  - c. the establishment of a Permanent Electoral Council and arrangements for elections be overseen by independent monitors and meet specific standards for legitimacy
  - d. the creation of pathways for the campaigning/emergence of leaders from beyond the existing oligarchs
2. Place sanctions on individuals, not society as a whole
3. Route all development aid going into Haiti via UN agencies and trusted NGO partners rather than through government
4. Jointly mediate a national dialogue on constitutional reform and good governance practices in which people from many walks of life are consulted
5. Revoke foreign visas/citizenship of national leaders to incentivize longer-term, more sustainability-driven vision and approach among leadership who had planned to leave Haiti following their term of service
6. Revisit international trade agreements/contracts/regulations (or lack thereof) that allow few families in Haiti to hold monopoly over imports and distribution of food and other basic goods upon which all Haitians depend
7. For the government of the United States only:
  - a. Adjust/regulate remittance fee structure for personal wire transfers to Haiti
  - b. Renew TPS for Haitians to prevent deportations during this time of unrest and instability and extending the Employment Authorization Documents of Haitians eligible for TPS beyond October 2021 to ensure they are able to support themselves while residing in the US (may already be in progress; affirm if already happening)
  - c. Appoint a US Ambassador who is well-versed/experienced in Haiti's culture, history, languages and well equipped to listen to/work with/support the Haitian people in bringing about their nation's full potential.



# “USEFUL RESOURCES

## Laudato Si' Goals



## GRFDT Webinar: Climate Change and Migration

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION**  
Tuesday, 18 May 2021, 3 PM CEST  
Simultaneous Interpretation in ARABIC, ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH

**Speakers**

- Tasneem Siddiqui: Patrick Science Professor, University of Dhaka
- Pafi Kingi: Migration Focal Point for Pacific Civil Society
- Lucy Dazbacher: Project Officer, Free Movement Protocol, IOM
- Jean D'Curbo: Senior Global Adviser on International Migration, UN Women
- Ilana Monterosso: Scientist, Center for International Forestry Research

**Moderator**

- Evallyn Tennant: Associate, GIPA and CIDP Steering Group

2:00:21

## Environmental Mobility and Solidarity Programme CIDSE



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 1 June - Global Day of Parents
- 4 June - International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression
- 5 June - World Environment Day
- 8 June - World Oceans Day
- 12 June - World Day Against Child Labour
- 13 June - International Albinism Awareness Day
- 14 June - World Blood Donor Day
- 15 June - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day
- 16 June - International Day of World Family Remittances
- 17 June - World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
- 19 June - International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict
- 20 June - World Refugee Day
- 21 June - International Day of Yoga
- 23 June - Public Service Day
- 23 June - International Widows' Day
- 25 June - Day of the Seafarer
- 26 June - International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
- 26 June - International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
- 30 June - International Asteroid Day

**Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative weekly e-newsletter (MercyNews).**

**Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: [www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)**

**Subscribe to our e-newsletter to learn about our vision in action and the ministries carried out by our member congregations: [www.mercyworld.org/subscribe](http://www.mercyworld.org/subscribe)**



# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JUNE/JULY 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 6



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### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN AND COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

### • *Mercy Global Action Seeking Expressions of Interest for New Task Forces*

Expressions of Interest (EOI) are now open for membership of an MGA Task Force and will close on Tuesday, July 13th 2021 at 5pm. Sign up [here!](#)

Each of the task forces are directly linked to Mercy Global Action's priority themes of **MIGRATION** and **WATER/CLIMATE CHANGE**. The task forces are issue-based, time limited and have an action-oriented focus. Comprising of twelve members, including the MGA team, the task forces will draw upon the experience, expertise and aspirations of its members in relation to either migration or water/climate change.



Mercy Global Action is specifically seeking members from the Mercy World who:

- Are energetic and enthusiastic about either of the issues
- Have direct knowledge and/or experience in either of the priority issues
- Willing to develop and exchange ideas, advocate and enact change
- Ability to work collaboratively with a diverse team

Selection will be based on a range of perspectives, including different knowledge and experience levels, geographic locations, cultural background and other lived experiences.



# THEMATIC AREAS

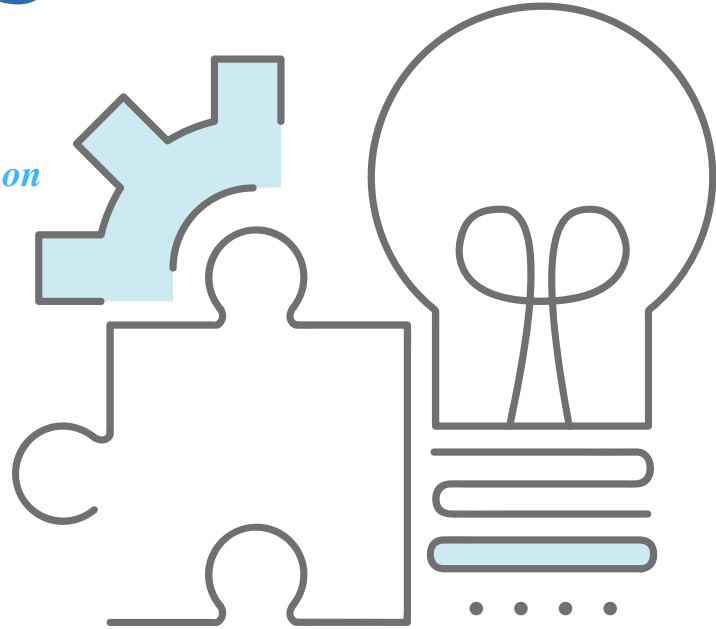
## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

### *Mercy Global Action Hosted First Advocacy Workshop on Migration and Development*

On Tuesday May 25th, the Mercy Global Action (MGA) team offered the first of three virtual advocacy workshops. Our first workshop was facilitated by Cecilie Kern, MGA's Global Policy and Research Associate, and focused on the topic of Migration & Development, ahead of the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

The interactive workshop took place in two sessions:

The first session began with Setting the Stage for Advocacy. "Advocacy involves speaking out for those who have been silenced in their efforts to rectify injustice. It demands our engagement with the issues and initiatives of those who struggle for life, justice, equity, rights and peace. Advocacy is a mission activity of the church in the world. It is one way in which the church participates in the ongoing mission." (World Council of Churches, 2009 Praying, Speaking Out and Acting Together: Theological Reflection on Advocacy). Key to this session was a deeper understanding of the theological background of advocacy and an introduction to the Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach. As Mercy advocates, we must ground ourselves in the experience of Earth and people, undertake self-reflection, understand our tools for advocacy, know our allies and who we are advocating for, and lastly, take courageous steps towards action leading to advocacy.



In the MGA Advocacy Showcase, Cecilie honed in on the processes of international advocacy, specifically detailing the negotiation process towards the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration in 2016-2018 and how our Mercy advocacy is strengthened through our global coalitions. Siobhan Golden, former MGA intern, highlighted the Mercy Global Action COVID-19 Task Force which utilized the Mercy Justice Advocacy Approach to lift up the experiences of Mercy networks during the COVID-19 pandemic and create strategic recommendations to individuals, faith-leaders, governments and more.

In the second session, participants delved into the Tools, Tactics and Resources used in advocacy. Attendees were introduced to the key strategies of engaging and influencing target decision-makers and analyzed advocacy meeting "do's and don'ts".

The workshop concluded with Future Plans for Mercy Global Action Advocacy on migration and development; particularly upcoming opportunities for advocacy at the UN. Join us in our efforts to continue to advocate with a strong Mercy Voice. Upcoming advocacy areas include:

- The High Level Political Forum in July 2021 (linked above). The theme is "Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development".
- Follow up and review of the Global Compact on Migration through the International Migration Review Forum. The International Migration Review Forum will take place every four years beginning in 2022. Governments will be making voluntary reports and NGOs will be called upon for further reporting.
- Mercy Global Action will be launching a Migration Task Force made up of Mercy Global Action staff, Sisters, and Partners in ministry from Mercy Congregations and Institutes around the world. The Migration Task Force will aim to collect stories, research and good practices from around the Mercy World and conduct analysis on migration and intersecting issues of displacement.

- *On World Refugee Day, MGA reflects on protection, support & inclusion of people forced to flee*

World Refugee Day honors the strength and courage of over 80 million refugees around the world, and encourages public awareness and support of people who have had to flee their homelands to escape conflict or persecution.



This year, we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees, the international

treaty that defines the term ‘refugee’ and outlines the rights of refugees, as well as the legal obligations of States to protect them. We recognize that, increasingly, people are forcibly displaced from their homes by the sudden- and slow-onset effects of climate change and environmental degradation. The tens of millions of people who are forced to migrate and are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin because of climate impacts aren’t considered “refugees” under the 1951 Convention, so there is this critical gap in international law. We believe more concerted action and cooperation are required to improve assistance, protection, and solutions for vulnerable communities and individuals uprooted in the context of climate change. And this includes the establishment of legal definitions and instruments to fill the gap and protect the rights of climate-displaced people.

World Refugee Day is also an occasion to build empathy and understanding for their plight and to recognize their resilience in rebuilding their lives. As a Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellow, Amy Keller explored the topic of “What is Home, and How Do We Get There?” In her research project, she shared her experience working with Restoring Dignity, a non-profit in her hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, which seeks to offer support to local refugees by providing resettled families with much-needed household items, cleaning and organization education, and advocacy to ensure refugee rights are protected and promoted. Amy’s research explored the challenges refugee families face in their new communities, and the physical, emotional and social aspects that make up “home.”

Read full article at [mercyworld.org](https://mercyworld.org).



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *MGA Head on Expert Panel on Women's Agency in Climate Crisis*

On the 10th of June, Angela Reed rsm presented on a panel titled "Promoting Women's Agency in Responding to the Climate Crisis".

In 2019, the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights warned that climate change will have devastating consequences for people in poverty. Women and girls, who constitute the majority of the world's poor, will be disproportionately negatively affected, but also already play a role in preparing families, communities, and countries for what lies ahead. Faith organizations are gathering tools to better understand multiple sides of this dynamic, as well as how entrenched gender inequalities, climate change and displacement will intersect to worsen the life chances for women and men, boys, girls and diverse communities who are already vulnerable.



Watch the event at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jovkyP-ohZE>

- *Mercy Global Action Offering Advocacy Workshop on Climate Change and Water*

Mercy Global Action is offering the second of three virtual advocacy workshops on August 3rd.

**Topic: Climate Change and Water, ahead of COP 26**



**Date & Time:**

- Session One - August 3rd, 6:00am NY/11:00am IRE/10:00pm AU
- Session Two - August 3rd, 5:00pm NY/10:00pm IRE/7:00am AU (4th August).

\*\*It is expected that participants will attend both morning and evening sessions via Zoom as it is formative in the advocacy workshop process.

**How to register:**

To [RSVP](#) for this event, please complete the [Google Form found here](#). Questions can be directed to the Mercy Global Action team at [mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie](mailto:mercyrep@mercyinternational.ie).

For more information visit [mercyworld.org](http://mercyworld.org)

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

- *On World Day against Child Labour, MGA Focuses on Migrant Children at Risk of Trafficking*

On 14 June, 2021, in commemoration of the World Day against Child Labour, the NGO Committee on Migration and the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons hosted an event, “Improving Outcomes for Migrant Children at Risk of Trafficking,” to call attention to the urgent need for prevention of trafficking and forced labour of migrant children. The event also took place during the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, which aims to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and accelerate progress towards the goal set by SDG 8.7, to end all forms of child labour by 2025. [The recording of the event is now available.](#)



MGA Global Policy and Research Advocate, Cecilie Kern, who is the Vice Chair of the NGO Committee on Migration, and a member of the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons, gave the welcoming remarks during the event.

The interactive panel discussion was moderated by award-winning journalist Leif Coorlim, the Executive Editor of CNN International’s Freedom Project. After more than 10 years of broadcasting, the Freedom Project has told more than 1,000 stories of modern-day slavery and helped to free nearly 2,000 people held in slavery.

The distinguished panellists included:

- Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children;
- Mr. Fernando de la Mora Salcedo, the Coordinator for Economic, Social, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs at the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations, and a member of the co-facilitation team of the Global Compact for Migration;
- Ms. Saskia Blume, the Deputy Lead of UNICEF’s Children On the Move Team where she coordinates UNICEF’s work for migrant, displaced and trafficked children; and
- Mr. Kwami Adoboe-Herrera an anti-trafficking advocate, speaker and trafficking survivor, who was trafficked from Togo into the United States, where he endured 6 years of child labour and modern-day slavery.

The conversation revealed the importance of distinguishing trafficking in persons from migrant smuggling, ensuring that migrant children are included in social protection systems to reduce vulnerabilities in countries of origin, transit and destination, addressing demand for child labour and migrant exploitation, as well as bolstering systems of justice to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable.

[Watch the event: “Improving Outcomes for Migrant Children at Risk of Trafficking”](#)

[Read more: New publication from UNICEF/ILO: Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward](#)

# “USEFUL RESOURCES



## Principles for Human Rights in Fiscal Policy



## Environmental Mobility and Solidarity



NGO Mining Working Group High Level Political Forum Event July 14th 7:30 am NYC Time



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 03 Jul International Day of Cooperatives
- 11 Jul World Population Day
- 15 Jul World Youth Skills Day
- 18 Jul Nelson Mandela International Day
- 20 Jul World Chess Day
- 25 Jul World Drowning Prevention Day
- 28 Jul World Hepatitis Day
- 30 Jul International Day of Friendship
- Jul 30 World Day against Trafficking in Persons
- 01 Aug World Breastfeeding Week [WHO]
- 09 Aug International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples
- 12 Aug International Youth Day

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# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 6



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN AND COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

- *MGA's Commitment to the Generation Equality Forum*

The year 2020 marked the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most comprehensive global agenda to achieve the empowerment of women and girls in all aspects of life, as well as the achievement of gender equality. Twenty-five years after its adoption, public rhetoric on gender equality has not been matched by action and implementation.



The Generation Equality Forum, a global gathering for gender equality, culminated in Paris, France from 30 June to 2 July 2021.

The Generation Equality Forum was convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the Governments of Mexico and France with the leadership and partnership of civil society and youth.

During this a once-in-a-decade opportunity to advance women's rights, Mercy Global Action made a commitment to continue to build the capacities of women within our organization, helping them to transform their lives and enhance their skills to become future Mercy leaders around the world. There is a need to focus on the gender dynamic in the international arena and encourage young women to participate and share their skills. These women will lead our Mercy Institutions into the future and will need to have global vision and acute analytical skills as well as a Mercy heart. Read more about the Generation Equality Forum [here](#).



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

### *World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2021*

World Day Against Trafficking in Human Persons is marked by the United Nations on July 30th. This year's theme is "Victims' Voices Lead the Way". Recognising trafficking survivors as experts in the field has been core to the work of Mercy Global Action for many years. Victim/Survivors can reflect on the experience and phenomenon of human trafficking in a way that no theoretical framework can. In preparation for the 30th July, we invite the Mercy World to utilize the numerous resources Mercy Global Action has produced over the years that have endeavoured to give voice to trafficking survivors.

Resources that focus on the 'Voices of Victims'. To view full list see [here](#).

- **#16Days:16Stories**

Mercy Global Action at the United Nations in partnership with the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd prepared a campaign for the 2016 UN sponsored 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence. Our campaign, #16Days16Stories focused on the experience of formerly trafficked women and girls who give testimony to gender discrimination and marginalization from childhood into early adulthood. Their stories, told in their own words, highlight the many human rights violations and cumulative disadvantages in their life journeys. Through their stories, survivor advocates provide key insights into preventative measures to end human trafficking.

### *Prayer Intention - Victims of Human Trafficking*

In a July 2021 statement marking World Trafficking Day, Talitha Kum calls for #CareAgainstTrafficking... 'On World Day Against Trafficking In Persons, we ask our networks and partners to stand together and amplify our efforts to transform the economy of trafficking into an economy of care that empowers everyone, and especially women, to foster safe and thriving communities. Today, we call on all people of good will to come together and tackle the systemic causes of human trafficking. We call on governments to commit to long-term support for survivors, including quality education, work permits, access to justice and compensation, and medical and psychosocial assistance.'

*As people of Mercy let us pray,*

*All-embracing God, in this moment we stand with all those who have experienced human trafficking.*

*In this moment, we know you bear their excruciating fear, hurt, and pain. May they feel your peace and grace wash over them.*

*We pray for justice to be served.*

*We pray for their release from the unbearable dehumanization, anguish, and humiliation they feel.*

*We pray for their liberation from being held captive against their will, and by your grace for Good Samaritans to restore their lives.*

*We pray for the healing of victims and for their loved ones....*

[Read full prayer here](#)





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

### • *Checklist for Plastic Free July*

Australian zero-waste chef Anne Marie Booneau said "We don't need a handful of people doing zero waste perfectly. We need millions of people doing it imperfectly."

Last month, we once again were challenged to go plastic free for July. In the spirit of Ms. Booneau's words, Mercy International Association has asked Mercy communities to commit to an imperfect plastic free July. To find something you can change in your routine, to keep trying to reduce in-home plastic usage, and to challenge your own community to learn more about the planet crisis.

Some of us compost and have a designated bin in our homes, others carry our reusable water bottle everywhere we go, but none of us is perfect. We all have room for growth and the capacity to learn more about how plastic, garbage, and pollution affects our planet. So where should you start?

*mercy international association*

## REDUCING YOUR PLASTIC CONSUMPTION

- COMPOST AT HOME & AS A COMMUNITY 
- WRAP FOOD IN REUSABLE WAX 
- SWAP SHAMPOO BOTTLES FOR BARS 
- DRINK FROM A REUSABLE BOTTLE 
- PURCHASE ECO-FRIENDLY CLEANERS 
- SAY NO TO SINGLE USE PLASTIC 

[www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)

- View Mercy International Association's [Plastic Free checklist](#). What can you change about your daily routine?
- Learn more about plastic in our oceans by watching documentaries like *A Plastic Ocean* available here and on Netflix. How do you help our earth and ocean thrive?
- Read about last week's [Mercy Global Action's virtual programme](#) on climate change and water to understand more about intersectional justice issues. This event was in preparation for COP26.
- Share with the Mercy community what you are doing to care for our earth and invite them to join you!

As we journey through our own ecological conversion, working to improve our relationship with our common home, we are encouraged to know all in our Mercy community are on this journey alongside us. We are committed to our 8th work of Mercy and finding new ways to strengthen our relationship with earth.

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

- *Mercy Global Action Contributes to Review of Migration-Related SDGs*

The annual High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) took place virtually from 6-15 July 2021 to measure progress on achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Under the theme “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic,”

the 2021 HLPF reviewed progress on SDGs 1 (no poverty), 2 (zero hunger), 3 (good health and well-being), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 10 (reduced inequalities), 12 (responsible consumption and production), 13 (climate action), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), and 17 (partnerships). Among these are the targets most directly related to the relationship between migration and sustainable development, especially SDG 8.8 (labour rights and safe and secure working conditions for migrant workers); SDG 10.7 (facilitating orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration); and 10.c (reducing the transaction costs of remittances).

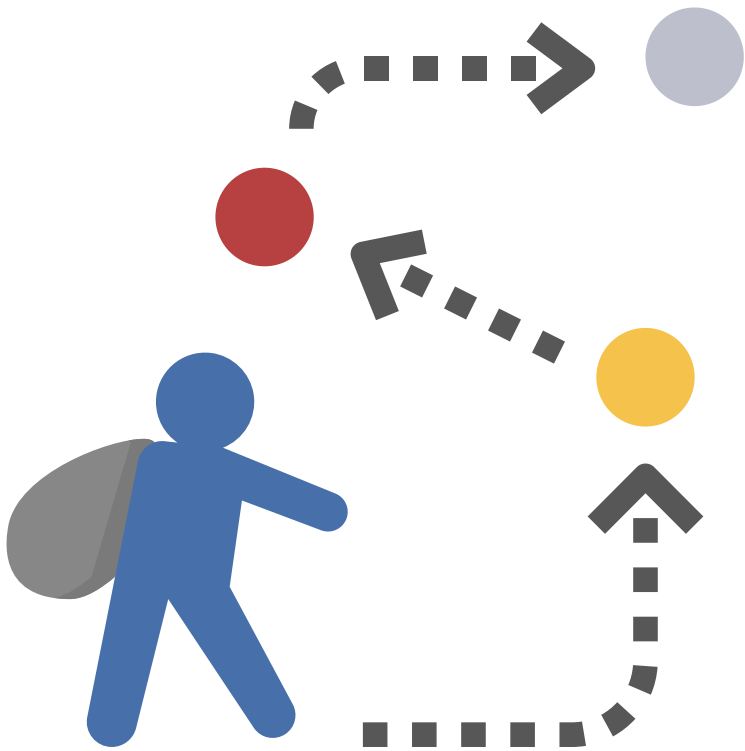
As a member of the NGO Committee on Migration, and in close collaboration with the government of Mexico, Mercy Global Action advocated strongly with the co-facilitators of the HLPF Ministerial Declaration to ensure that the outcome document reflected the emphatic importance that the 2030 Agenda gave to the role of migrants and migration in development. This reference had been notably absent from the early drafts of the document.

The letters and conversations MGA and other civil society partners had with Member States resulted in a positive outcome. The final version of the Ministerial Declaration contained a stand-alone paragraph on migration and development, which read in part: “We recommit to cooperating internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, and to supporting countries of origin, transit and destination in the spirit of international cooperation, taking into account national circumstances” (paragraph 31). The Declaration also called upon Member States to take steps to support the full inclusion of migrants in the COVID-19 response and recovery efforts.



On Monday, 12 July, Cecilie Kern, MGA's Global Policy and Research Advocate, Vice-Chair of the NGO Committee on Migration, and a member of the Civil Society Action Committee, was a panelist during the VNR Lab on Migration. During each year's HLPF, the VNR Labs provide an informal platform for experience sharing and reflection on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) process, in which Member States report their progress towards the achievement of the SDGs. The VNR Lab on Migration, entitled “Leveraging the potential of migration for achieving the SDGs,” was organized by the United Nations Network on Migration in collaboration with the Group of Friends on Migration, chaired by the governments of Bangladesh and Ireland.





During the VNR Lab, the governments of Chad, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Iraq, the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration, and representatives of UN agencies and regional mechanisms, academia, and civil society assessed progress made in achieving migration-related targets of the SDGs, while highlighting the cross-cutting nature of migration in the 2030 Agenda and taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They also explored interlinkages in monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), especially as we approach the first International Migration Review Forum (IMRF), to be held during the first half of 2022.

In her remarks, informed by the MGA publication “[Hope in a Time of Pandemic](#),” Cecilie emphasized that the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed how the GCM is more relevant and necessary than ever before. During the pandemic, many governments have implemented policies to remove barriers and facilitate migrants’ access to regular status, remittance channels, social protection and basic services. They have shown that they can make major changes to migration governance systems when it benefited them during COVID-19. Now they need to make permanent systematic, structural and institutional reforms that continue beyond the pandemic if we are to achieve the migration-related SDG targets. Cecilie also highlighted the critical role of civil society in implementing and reviewing the SDGs and the GCM, and called for open and inclusive civil society participation in the IMRF, to ensure real and effective opportunities for robust engagement.

[Cecilie’s full remarks](#)

[Event Recording \(Cecilie’s remarks begin around 1:25:17\)](#)

[Concept Note and Agenda of the Event](#)

# HOPE IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

RESPONDING TO COVID-19  
THROUGH A MERCY LENS



# “ USEFUL RESOURCES

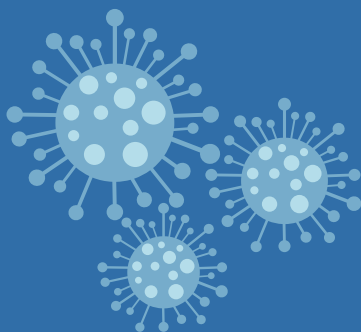
IPA Gender Based Violence  
Respond - Advocate - Prevent



New Narratives | A seat at the table



UN COVID 19 Recovery and Civil Society



Sisters empowering women -

ADVOCACY: LINKING LOCAL TO  
GLOBAL



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- **09 Aug - International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples**
- **12 Aug - International Youth Day**
- **19 Aug - World Humanitarian Day**
- **21 Aug - International Day of Remembrance and Tribute to the Victims of Terrorism**
- **22 Aug - International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief**
- **23 Aug - International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and Its Abolition**
- **29 Aug - International Day against Nuclear Tests**
- **30 Aug - International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances**
- **31 Aug - International Day for People of African Descent**
- **05 Sep - International Day of Charity**
- **07 Sep - International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies**
- **08 Sep - International Literacy Day**

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# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 7



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN AND COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

- You are Invited to Open the Doors to an Emerging Future!*

As we move into the third century of living mercy in the spirit of Catherine, MIA seeks to gather the inspirations and energies of the Mercy world. Are you curious about how Catherine's energy is alive in the world today? What Mercy's future might be? Are you open to engaging in generative conversations for exploring what is wanting to emerge?



Mercy International Association invites all passionate individuals who feel called to imagine future possibilities on a journey of emergence. This four-day process will be an opportunity to engage in intentional dialogue as we envision the third century of Mercy. There is time to register to attend what promises to be a lively and enlightening conversation around the mission of MIA since Catherine's times and especially now in our present era. Spanish translation will be available for this event, including translated materials. More information about the event is available [here](#).



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

### *Called to Bear Witness*

Your continued prayers are asked for the people of Afghanistan and all who suffer anxiety about the welfare of those who are displaced because of the recent upheaval in that country. In Haiti, there are many who are suffering, due to the death or injury of loved ones and so much loss and insecurity as the country suffers the impact of major earthquakes and storms. Sadly, there are many other situations we could add here in which great suffering is being experienced.

May our hearts be moved to compassion and to making whatever merciful response is possible for us. In Jesus, we know that God is with all who suffer and that God shares the suffering of people and all of Creation. We pray especially for all those who are making an immediate response to bring relief, that they may find strength in the difficulties they face. God-of-those-who-suffer, let them know, and let us know, your presence among us.

As we witness the devastation and upheaval in Afghanistan, in Haiti, in many parts of our world, remember we are trees...

**It's not you who should solve my problems, God,  
But I yours, God of the asylum-seekers.  
It's not you who should feed the hungry,  
But I who should protect your children  
From the terror of the banks and armies,  
It's not you who should make room for the refugees,  
But I who should receive you,  
Hardly hidden God of the desolate  
You dreamed me, God,  
Practicing walking upright  
And learning to kneel down  
More beautiful than I am now,  
Happier than I dare to be  
Freer than our country allows.  
Don't stop dreaming me, God.  
I don't want to stop remembering  
That I am your tree,  
Planted by the streams  
of living water.**



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Engage in the Season of Creation with Mercy Global Action!*

As the Season of Creation approaches, the Mercy World celebrates the beauty, wisdom and generosity of all Creation. The theme of the 2021 Season of Creation is ‘A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God.’

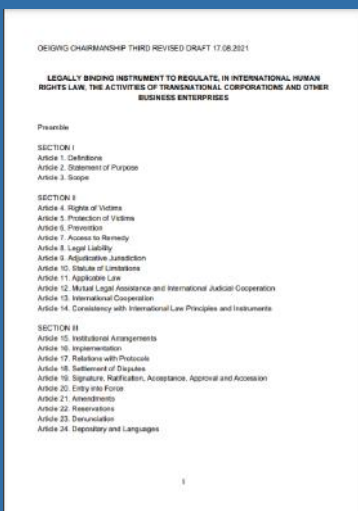
In the midst of global turbulence, the Christian family has awakened to the urgent need to heal our relationships with creation and with each other. This year’s invitation to celebrate the Season of Creation is accompanied by a substantial guide filled with prayers, advocacy and more. The guide highlights that “Sustaining just ecological, social, economic and political relationships requires our faith, reason and wisdom. By faith, we join in remembering that we are not stewards of an inanimate creation, but caretakers within a dynamic and living community of creation. The Earth and all that is not a given, but a gift, held in trust”.

Click [here](#) to uncover ways to get involved this Season of Creation!

- *MGA Advocacy Workshop on Climate and Water*

On Tuesday August 3rd, the Mercy Global Action (MGA) team offered the second of three virtual advocacy workshops. Our second workshop was facilitated by Colleen Swain, MGA’s Leadership Development and Advocacy Associate, and focused on the topic of Climate Justice and Water, ahead of COP26. Read more about our second session [here](#).

MGA is hosting its third and final Advocacy Workshop on Domestic and Family Violence on November 23rd. Sign up [here](#)!



- *Release of the third draft legally binding treaty on Transnational Corporations*

The United Nations Permanent Mission of Ecuador sent a message to parties regarding the upcoming open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights. His message included the third revised draft legally binding instrument to regulate in international human rights law the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises. Read it [here](#)!

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

## • *Mercy Global Action Commemorates World Indigenous Peoples Day*

International Day for the World's Indigenous Peoples was commemorated on the 9th of August. This year's theme invited reflection and insight on "Leaving no one behind: Indigenous peoples and the call for a new social contract". The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable and marginalized communities all over the world that were already suffering from poverty, discrimination, political instability and more. For many indigenous communities, the impact is even starker.

Sr Mary Tee in her Mercy Global Presence article "Bringing Together the Wisdoms of Indigenous Peoples and Faith Traditions" states that:

*Listening to the wisdom of Indigenous Peoples and touching into the wisdom of diverse faith traditions, we will be co-creators with a merciful God in an evolving universe. We will find the conversion of heart needed to create paths of peace not violence, paths of hope not division, paths of mercy not destruction. Then together, we – the people and Earth – will truly know the fullness of life flowing from our belief that, "Mercy is the very heartbeat of God resonant in creation; the warmth that pulses through all things as the divine Mystery flows out into created form" (Cynthia Bourgeault).*

Mercy Global Action renews its commitment to learning from indigenous wisdom. We must continue to work together to ensure indigenous peoples, especially women and girls, have equal opportunities, a voice in decision-making and a chance to use their collective experiences to drive systemic change. We invite the Mercy World to utilize the various resources shared below and join the call for a new social contract that will let us rebuild our world in a way that is merciful, equitable and targeted to the most marginalized.

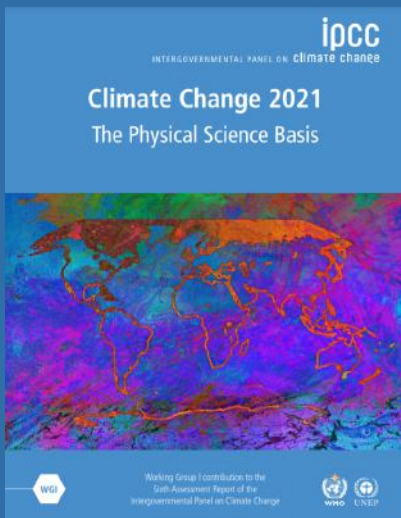
Read more at [mercyworld.org](https://mercyworld.org).





# “USEFUL RESOURCES

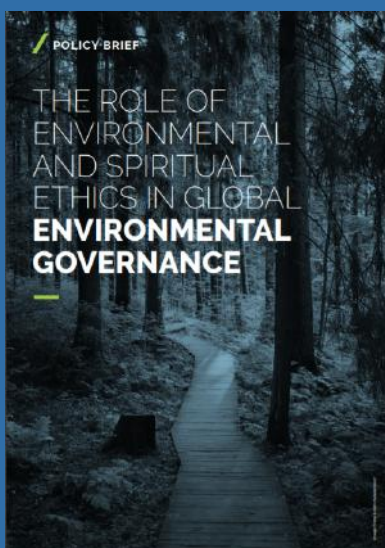
## IPCC Report 2021



## UNICEF The Climate Crisis is a Child's Rights Crisis



## The Role of Environmental and Spiritual Ethics in Global Environmental Governance



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 05 Sep - International Day of Charity
- 07 Sep - International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies
- 08 Sep - International Literacy Day
- 09 Sep International Day to Protect Education from Attack
- 15 Sep International Day of Democracy
- 16 Sep International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
- 18 Sep Equal Pay Day
- 21 Sep International Day of Peace
- 23 Sep International Day of Sign Languages
- 26 Sep International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- 27 Sep World Tourism Day
- 29 Sep International Day of Awareness of Food Loss and Waste
- 30 Sep World Maritime Day
- 30 Sep International Translation Day

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# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 8



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

### INSIDE THE UN: THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES

### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, LEAH SCHIFFMAN AND  
COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

### • Welcome to MGA Intern Leah Schiffman!!

Hello! My name is Leah Schiffman and I'm the new MGA Intern. I'm thrilled to be part of an organization that promotes justice and human rights around the world. I am a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota with a double major in Political Science and Global Studies. Throughout my educational career, I have discovered the importance of international human rights and the actors that make it possible, like Mercy Global Action. In this position I hope to learn more about policy and human rights work and to contribute to MGA's mission.



As a native of Chicago, I have grown up appreciating the significance of community and community building. While international work is undeniably crucial to change in our world, I think some of the most important work has come from local, grassroots organizations. My love of my own Chicago neighborhood inspired me to create an Instagram photo journalism page called "Residents of Rogers Park." This photo series, and the people I interviewed for it, enabled me to realize that we aren't divided by our differences but by our lack of conversation and understanding. Through its mission and its past work, Mercy clearly understands the importance of not only working on the global level but of working with and for the communities it is trying to promote and protect.



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

- *World Homelessness Day*

October 10 marks World Homeless Day. The MIA- Global Action office continues to advocate for all those experiencing homelessness through its participation in the [UN Working Group to End Homelessness \(WGEH\)](#). The WGEH collaborates with the United Nations, global platforms to end homelessness, and academic centers such as the Institute for Global Homelessness at DePaul University. The current focus of this working group is to 1. End Street Homelessness 2. Address systems and structural inequalities together to address Street Sleepers and Hidden Homelessness (disproportionately affecting women and children. Targets include: Addressing all structural and personal drivers of homelessness inter alia; alleviating domestic and family violence; upgrading slums; preventing evictions; increasing social protections; promoting measurement, counts, and disaggregated data regarding persons experiencing homelessness; and building communities' resources to address housing insecurity and inadequacy. 3. Identifying and highlighting good practices including: support services; leading organizations, technological opportunities; measurement tools. 4. Reviewing Research regarding COVID-19, and framing recommendations within the current global pandemic and prospects for a 'post COVID-19 world'. We can respond in numerous ways to the issue of homelessness.

Here are some ideas:

- Educate people about homeless issues
- Celebrate and support local good works
- Highlight local issues in the media
- Donate to local service providers
- Volunteer and provide hands on help

The Mercy World supports and works with people experiencing homelessness around the world. Services include providing for basic needs, providing accommodation and care and advocating for those who are homeless. Some ministries that MGA has recently featured include an interview with the [Head of Strategic Planning Carol Vale, from McAuley Community Services for Women in Melbourne, Australia](#). Also an interview with [Sr Libby Fernandez, Founder and Executive Director of Mercy Pedalers, Sacramento, California](#). In MGA's publication, "[Hope In a Time of Pandemic- Responding to COVID 19 through a Mercy Lens](#)" the issue of housing and homelessness is raised in relation to the COVID 19 pandemic. Issues covered include housing and 'stay at home orders', the right to adequate housing, health and wellbeing, evictions and loss of livelihoods.





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

- *Our Christian Call to Safeguard Creation: Migration and the Hidden Losses of Climate Change*

During this Season of Creation, as we reflect on the theme “A Home for All? Renewing the Oikos of God,” we remember that for an increasing number of people, the failure to safeguard and care for all of creation leads to a loss of home.

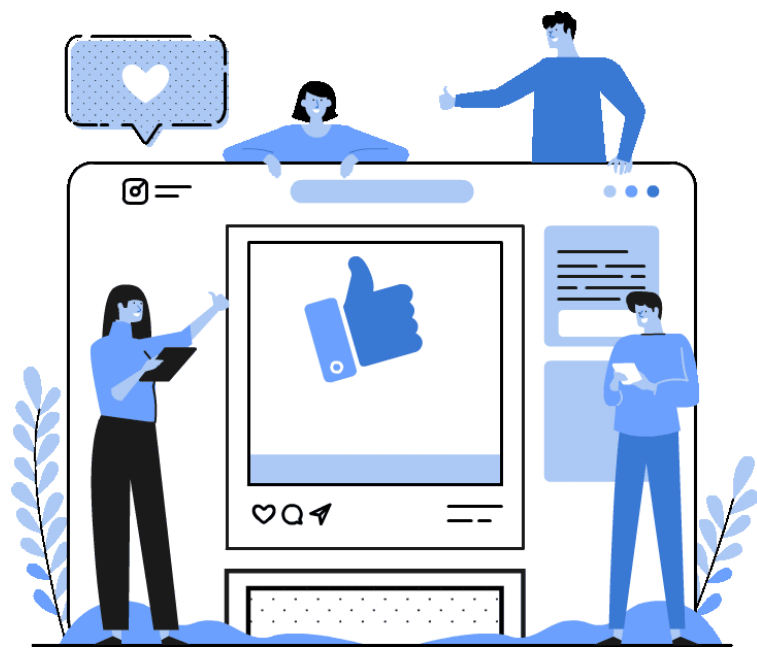
When we listen to the experiences of people who have migrated or been displaced due to the effects of extreme weather events or environmental degradation, it is clear that the impacts of climate change are not simply economic. While the loss of land and loss of resources are important, there are also impacts that are more difficult to quantify. These impacts often go unnoticed by the outside world, such as the loss of traditional ways of living, cultural heritage, and biodiversity. These include the ability to live on ancestral land; guardianship of sacred sites; coexistence with traditional animals, plants, and herbs; the practice of traditional medicine, folklore, song and dance, and religious rites; and cultural knowledge, including indigenous knowledge and practice.

Accounting for these non-economic losses changes the perspective: not only is arable land lost, but also landscapes. Not only are fisheries lost, but also traditions. When people relocate to new places, new ways of income generation are learned, but old ways of knowing and relating to the environment are lost. These losses are felt at both the individual and communal levels. Loss of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, or place identity may leave communities disconnected from their sense of self and each other. The task of adapting to new realities may cause social and psychological distress, a sense of loss, and disorientation. When a community of fishermen and farmers is dislocated from the sea and their lands, what happens to their identity? Their self-determination?



As we approach this year’s UN Climate Summit (COP26), where governments report on their responsibilities under the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) and the Paris Agreement, it will be important to pay attention to the work of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage and to ensure that this framework will adequately address issues related to migration and displacement, and in particular loss of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and social networks. While it may be difficult to measure these losses due to the absence of a market price, they are still valuable to individuals, families, and communities, and it is clear that their effect on human welfare is no less important. Read full article at [mercyworld.org](http://mercyworld.org)

# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



- *You Can Help Close the Digital Divide for Girls: 11 Days of Action*

This year, the United Nations celebrates the 10th anniversary of the General Assembly resolution which declared October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child, to recognize girls' rights and the unique challenges girls face around the world.

The International Day of the Girl Child (IDG) focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfillment of their human rights. This year's celebration of the IDG demands a continued innovative approach to building connection while emphasizing the inclusion of voices often left out of these digital spaces.

Without equal access to technology and the internet, girls are not able to equally participate in our ever more digital societies. Holding back girls in this area affects every aspect of their lives, including their ability to speak out and campaign on issues that affect them. Technology can be a powerful tool for girls to become activists and lead change on issues that affect them. Social media platforms, for instance, allow activists to reach a wide audience and organize action towards common causes.

Each year, the Working Group on Girls, a coalition of over 40 NGOs with representation at the United Nations, organizes the "Girls Speak Out" event, to put girls at the forefront to share their experiences, to listen to girls to hear what they need, and to partner with them in finding sustainable solutions to issues that they face. This year, they will be exploring the theme "Closing the Digital Divide to Accelerate Change" through their daily conversations on social media during the 11 Days of Action ahead of the IDG (1-11 October) and during the "Girls Speak Out" event. Read full article at [mercyworld.org](https://mercyworld.org)

Follow them to stay updated on #IDG2021 #11DaysofAction: Twitter: @IDG\_Summit Facebook: @DayoftheGirlSummit Instagram: @IDG\_Summit

- *MGA Signs Letter by the UN NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security*

Mercy Global Action invites the Mercy World to read and reflect upon an open letter by the UN NGO working Group on Women, Peace and Security to Member States of the United Nations. MIA-Global Action signed on to this letter along with many other faith based organisations.

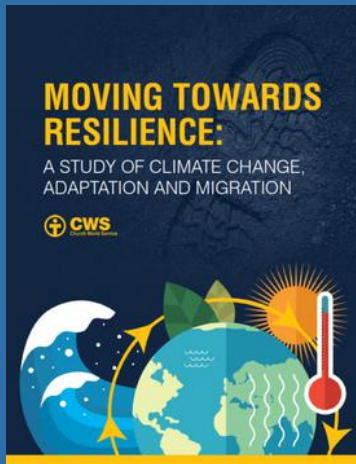
In summary, the key recommendations to Members States are calling on them to :

- Immediately stop intimidation, attacks, or reprisals against all human rights defenders;
- Prevent threats and violence against women human rights defenders, peacebuilders, and civil society leaders;
- Call on Secretary- General Antonio Guterres to ensure that the UN provides all necessary protection and support to those at risk or who have faced reprisals; and
- Ensure women civil society representatives regularly brief the Security Council.

<https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/resource/open-letter-un-wps-whrds-october-2021/>

# “USEFUL RESOURCES

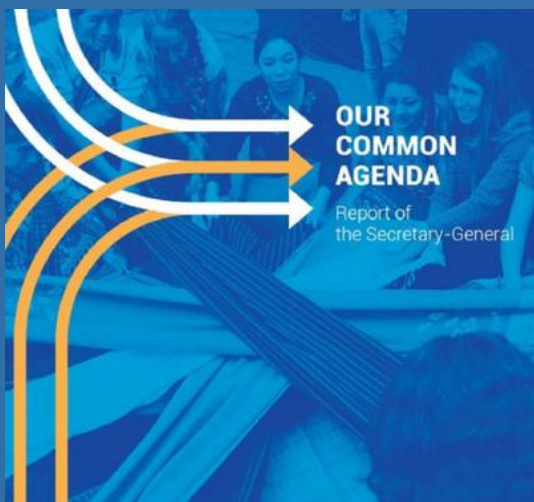
CWS Study on Climate Change,  
Adaptation and Migration



Pope Francis on Faith and Science



Secretary General of the United Nations  
"Our Common Agenda"



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- 13 Oct - International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
- 15 Oct - International Day of Rural Women
- 16 Oct - World Food Day
- 17 Oct - International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
- 24 Oct - Global Media and Information Literacy Week
- 24 Oct - United Nations Day
- 24 Oct - Disarmament Week
- 31 Oct - World Cities Day
- 05 Nov - World Tsunami Awareness Day
- 06 Nov - International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
- 09 Nov - International Week of Science and Peace

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# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 9



## IN THIS ISSUE

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### USEFUL RESOURCES

### UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, LEAH SCHIFFMAN AND  
COLLEEN SWAIN

## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

### MERCY DELEGATION IS IN GLASGOW FOR COP 26

In August of 2021, the MGA Task Force on Climate and Water came together to raise a voice about climate change and water ahead of COP26. The purpose was to provide direction and leadership to the Mercy World on justice issues related to the impact of climate change and water, and recommendations moving forward. We have been called together to evaluate: where we are, where we want to go, and how do we get there?

The MGA Task Force on Climate and Water consists of members of the Mercy World from Argentina, Australia, Cambodia, Ireland, Kenya, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, and The United States

### MERCY DELEGATION

Mercy is present in Glasgow with a delegation from Mercy International Association. Delegates include: Cecilie Kern (MGA), Leah Schiffman (MGA), and Siobhan Golden (MIC). Likewise, Mercy will be working closely with partners and allies of faith-based organizations and more around the world.



# THEMATIC AREAS

## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION IS OFFERING THE THIRD OF THREE VIRTUAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS ON NOVEMBER 23.

**TOPIC:** Gender-Based Violence

**DATE & TIME:**

**Session One** - November 23rd, 6:00am NY/11:00am IRE/10:00pm AU

**Session Two** - November 23rd, 5:00pm NY/10:00pm IRE/9:00am AU (24th November).

**\*\* It is expected that participants will attend both morning and evening sessions as it is formative in the advocacy and workshop process.**

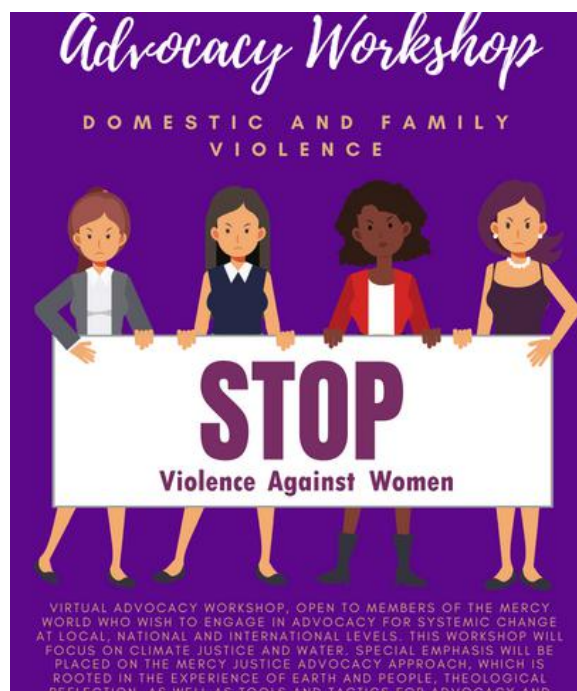
**LOCATION:** This workshop will be facilitated via Zoom video conferencing. A link to the zoom meeting will be sent via email to all registered participants.

**WHO IS THIS FOR?:** The workshop is open to all involved in the Mercy World who wish to engage in advocacy for systemic change at local, national, and international levels.



**HOW TO REGISTER:**

To RSVP for this event, please complete the Google Form found [here](#). Questions can be directed to the MGA team at [leadershipadvocacy@mercyinternational.ie](mailto:leadershipadvocacy@mercyinternational.ie)



**WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:**

1. Build capacity and skills for critical thinking, analysis, and advocacy
2. Learn about MGA's strategy for advocacy and how to participate in advocacy on our key justice priorities.
3. Introduce core documents in relation to gender-based violence in 2021.
4. Identify allies/networks in relation to gender-based violence.
5. For participants to create their own advocacy pitch for 16 Days of Activism on Gender-Based Violence (using Twitter).
6. Encourage participants to seek out ways to engage in gender-based violence advocacy in their region
7. Instill curiosity and explore the theological dimension of gender-based violence.





# THEMATIC AREAS

## DEGRADATION OF EARTH

### MERCY GLOBAL ACTION AT COP26: WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

This year's Conference of Parties (COP 26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place in Glasgow, Scotland from 31 October to 12 of November. The conference will be of crucial importance as it is expected to finalise the Paris Agreement. In August, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sent an alarming message with the release of its Report on Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis, strongly highlighting that every degree of warming matters and that they can have irreversible consequences especially on the most vulnerable communities. Beyond the negotiations, the 26th Conference of Parties provides the opportunity for civil society, including faith based organizations, to bring the voices of the most affected communities of climate change into the global debate on climate justice.



### WHY IS MERCY PRESENT AT COP26?



In our reflection on the issues of climate and water, it is evident that we are extracting and using the Earth and its resources as if they are infinite. Pope Francis states in Laudato Si' that we are "faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature." Addressing climate change is the greatest moral imperative of our time. Climate justice must be realized.

As we approach COP 26 in November, Mercy Global Action continues to support and urge nations to significantly boost climate ambition in line with the Paris Agreement.



# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...



## INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY – 17 OCTOBER, 2021

The International Day for The Eradication of Poverty was commemorated on 17 October 2021. What once was a singular protest in 1987 at the Trocadero in Paris became an international day where we represent and uplift those who suffer from extreme poverty, violence, and hunger.

The theme for this year is “Building Forward Together: Ending Persistent Poverty, Respecting All People and Our Planet.” The concept of “building forward” arose as the consequences and harsh realities of the COVID-19 pandemic were revealed. Due to the pandemic’s economic repercussions, there are 71 to 100 million people living in poverty (World Bank). Although this number is alarming, this is just a small fraction of the 1.3 billion people experiencing poverty across the world.

Mercy Global Action recognizes the work of Mercy grassroots ministries around the world that seek to create sustainable livelihoods and accompany those overcoming poverty. We also acknowledge the importance of the International Day for The Eradication of Poverty as an opportunity to uplift the voices of those experiencing poverty and marginalization as key stakeholders in global policymaking. Our findings in “Hope In A Time of Pandemic” reveal the effects that COVID-19 has had on poverty and exacerbating inequalities. Beyond those negative consequences of the pandemic, our social, political, and economic systems often place profit over people, which not only perpetuate socio-economic inequalities but also perpetuate the degradation of Earth, both of which keep people in poverty. “It is up to us to work together to challenge these systems, to work for transformative change, to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized, and to uphold the rights and dignity of people and the planet” (Hope In A Time of Pandemic).

To read the full article, click [here](#)

### *Mercy Global Action Signs Glasgow Multi-Faith Declaration for COP26*

Mercy Global Action Signed the Glasgow Multi-Faith Declaration for COP26 ahead of sending three delegates to the UN climate conference in November.

The statement begins, “Our faith communities are united in caring for human life and the natural world. We share a belief in a hopeful future, as well as an obligation to be responsible in caring for our common home, the Earth.

We recognise the opportunities that COP26 brings in addressing the urgent need for action in limiting the effects of climate change and the critical importance of decisions made in this conference to take forward the agreement made in Paris in 2015.

People have exploited the planet, causing climate change. We recognise that the burden of loss and damage falls most heavily on people living in poverty, especially women and children.

We acknowledge the commitments made through the Lambeth Declaration in 2015. Now, because of the gravity of our situation, the impact of climate change around the world, and the inequality of its effects we seek to strengthen those commitments.”

# “USEFUL RESOURCES

## COP26 RESOURCES



### A Joint Message for the Protection of Creation



Pope Francis, other faith leaders to present joint appeal to COP26 climate summit



### The Climate Pod (Podcast)



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- **19 Nov - World Toilet Day**
- **20 Nov - World Children's Day**
- **25 Nov - International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**
  - **Beginning of the 16 Days of Activism**
- **29 Nov - International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People**
- **1 Dec - World AIDS Day**
- **2 Dec - International Day for the Abolition of Slavery**
- **3 Dec - International Day of Persons with Disabilities**
- **5 Dec - International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development**

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# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2021 | VOLUME 5 ISSUE 10



## IN THIS ISSUE

### THEMATIC AREAS

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### USEFUL RESOURCES

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CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE:  
ANGELA REED RSM, CECILIE  
KERN, LEAH SCHIFFMAN AND  
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## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

### CHRISTMAS GREETING FROM ANGELA REED & THE MGA OFFICE



Greetings and Sending Christmas Peace and Blessings from the Mercy Global Action Office. This final newsletter for 2021 gives me the opportunity to personally thank Colleen Swain who will be moving on from MGA this month. Colleen has provided exceptional leadership over the past five years and will be greatly missed. Thank you Colleen and many blessings for the future. As I reflect on this past year I am mindful that we still live with much uncertainty as we continue to live within a time of Pandemic. Many still continue to be separated from loved ones and yearn to be reunited. This year we have also witnessed unrest and violence in many countries. In particular, we remember those who have experienced violence and or displacement in Afghanistan, Haiti, Myanmar, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Yemen and many other hot spots in the world. Let us pray that this Christmas we will all experience some sense of Peace on Earth.



# THEMATIC AREAS

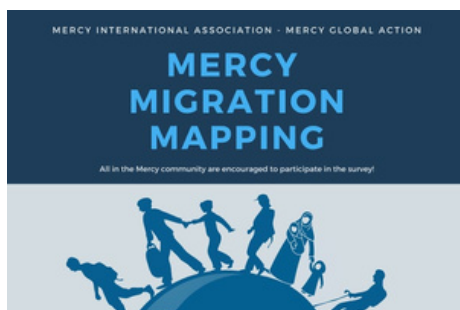
## DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS



### 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Mercy Global Action is marking the Global 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV) through the use of a Twitter campaign. The campaign began on November 25, the International Day to End Violence Against Women, and concludes on International Human Rights Day, December 10. We encourage the Mercy World to like and retweet our advocacy points which you can access through [@MIAGlobalAction](https://twitter.com/MIAGlobalAction).

To read more about our advocacy work and the 16 Days campaign, click [here](#)



## HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN MERCY'S MIGRATION MAPPING?

The MGA Task Force on Migration is launching a project to map our global presence and action for migrants, refugees, and all people on the move. We hope that the responses to this survey will help us to gain a greater understanding of the myriad of ways in which the Mercy world engages with people on the move. The data collected will also inform our advocacy and contributions to policymaking processes related to migrants and refugees.

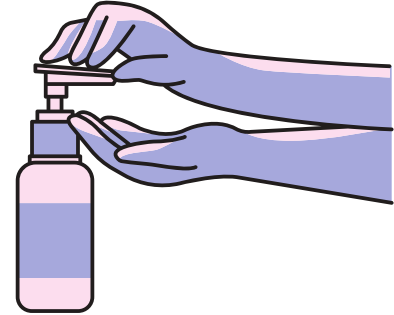
Many of us encounter refugees and migrants in small, interpersonal ways, some in larger projects, and some in advocacy at local, national, and/or global levels. We are requesting that as members of our larger Mercy network, you share this initiative with all individuals and ministries within your Mercy Congregation, Federation, or Institute who work in any capacity on issues related to human mobility. We are looking forward to learning from the results of this survey and to celebrating the amazing work the Mercy world is doing with and on behalf of migrants and refugees.

Complete the Survey: **Mercy Migration Mapping - EN**; **Mapeo de migración de la Misericordia - ES**. The deadline for the survey is Friday, 17 December 2021.



# THEMATIC AREAS

## WATER



### WORLD TOILET DAY

Every year on the 19 of November, Mercy International Association celebrates World Toilet Day. While it may seem odd to commemorate a piece of sanitary hardware, World Toilet Day acknowledges one of the largest inequalities in our world: access to clean and safe sanitation.

As of today, 3.6 billion people are living without access to toilets, meaning that nearly half of the world's population doesn't have safe and sanitary ways to dispose of and treat human waste, either on or off-site. Without the necessary equipment, water is contaminated and that affects drinking water, food crops, rivers, and beaches, leading to widespread disease and threats to the overall health of a community. The COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated the issues surrounding proper sanitation, when it became clear that proper sanitation services can save lives.

Furthermore, the lack of access to toilets contributes to climate change. According to Sanitation and Water for All (SWA), untreated sewage and human waste produce methane and nitrous oxide, which can cause harmful climate effects. The health, social, economic, and climate repercussions of unhygienic toilets, or the lack of any sanitation facilities, are real. In order to combat this problem, there needs to be international intervention where world leaders and policymakers come together to find sustainable, ethical, and safe ways to ensure that every person has access to a toilet.

Despite the urgency and relevance of this issue, there is still little push for change by world leaders. In fact, these issues were just discussed at COP26 where SWA called upon leaders to “ensure that marginalized groups, including women and children, gain access to running water, soap, and toilets for their health and dignity, which is a key part of building climate resilience.” As of yet, there have been no formal solutions agreed upon at COP that addresses this issue.

There needs to be a push for proper sanitation, starting with toilets. Despite the United Nations' commitments on paper to healthy and widely accessible hygiene, there have been no real, significant changes or policies enacted.

Mercy International Association urges governments and policymakers to increase funding, knowledge, and innovation towards sustainable and sanitary toilets. Through funding, knowledge, and innovation, more toilets can be made available, which not only leads to clean water but also positive changes in the environment and gender.

To read more about Mercy's perspective on water and sanitation, click [here](#).



# AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

## COP 26

Last month, Mercy delegates had the privilege to represent the Mercy World at COP26, the United Nations climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland. The days spent in Glasgow allowed the Mercy delegates to share and promote MIA advocacy points as well as learn and reflect on how Mercy International Association can contribute to the healing of Earth and ending the climate crisis. Although the outcome is disappointing and there is still much to be achieved, there is hope in the small movements taking place and there is a recognition that much more needs to be done in order to prevent catastrophic results.

COP26 promised to be one of the most vital conferences of our time and was highlighted by major announcements from world leaders. From over 100 countries agreeing to halt deforestation by 2030 to more than 40 countries pledging to steer away from coal, world leaders gathered in negotiation spaces making commitments to combat climate change. Despite commitments made by governments at COP, there was a noticeable prominence of coal, oil, and gas interests in Glasgow. These interest groups worked to eliminate commitments in the outcome document that would obligate countries to phase out fossil fuels. Also of concern was the lack of commitment from developed nations to provide financial support to assist developing countries in adapting to the effects of climate change.

To read more, click [here](#).



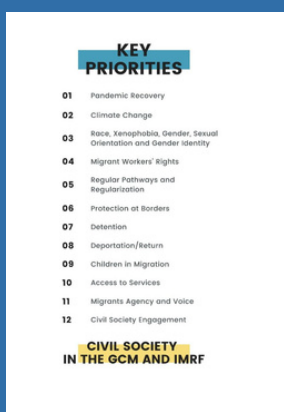
From left to right: Cecilie Kern, Siobhan Golden, Leah Schiffman

# “USEFUL RESOURCES

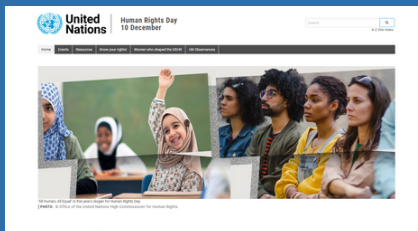
[16 Days of Activism - UN Women](#)



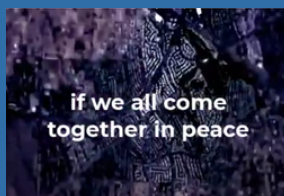
[Global Civil Society Priorities towards the 2022 International Migration Review Forum \(IMRF\)](#)



[Human Rights Day - UN Website](#)



[Together in Peace - Christmas Song](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

- **10 December - Human Rights Day**
- **18 December - International Migrants Day**
- **27 December - International Day of Epidemic Preparedness**
- **24 January - International Day of Education**
- **27 January - International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust**

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