

# MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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## GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

### • Welcome to our new MGA interns!

Meet Izzy Salter and Eleanor Moreland, our two interns for 2023-2024!

Izzy has come to us all the way from Adelaide, South Australia. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Advanced, majoring in Politics and International Relations as well as Chinese Studies. For the past year, she’s been working as a Program Support Coordinator at Young Mercy Links SA, a youth-led social justice group supported by ISMAPNG that has a particular involvement South Australia’s refugee and asylum seeker community. Prior to this, Izzy worked as a Student Services Officer at a high school, where she provided curriculum support to students living with disabilities.

Izzy writes, “Through this role, I’m hoping to take my advocacy work to a global level and learn about the power of grassroots experiences in shaping international policy. I’m also looking forward to forming new connections within the Mercy World, identifying new areas of professional interest, and learning from the dedicated women who make up the Mercy Global Action team.” Reflecting on her first week in New York, Izzy writes, “Fortunately, being part of the global Mercy community has meant that I’ve already found a wonderful ‘home away from home’ here.”



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- **Meet the new MGA interns, cont.**



Eleanor is originally from Brisbane, Australia, but has spent the last 4 years at Trinity College Dublin, leaving with a degree in Politics, Philosophy, Economics, and Sociology – and a sometimes very ambiguous accent! She writes: “My education has illuminated the moral dimensions of practical injustice, giving me tools and language that I hope will serve MGA well as we advocate for a better world. I have a passion for public discourse and how it can shape our thinking on social justice issues. Indeed, my time leading Trinity’s major debating and public speaking society was

very much oriented to those ends; seeking diverse, critical perspectives, thinking structurally, and being imaginative about solving big, scary problems.”

Eleanor’s journey with Mercy values properly started at All Hallows’ School. She writes: “I am so grateful to be able to continue that journey in an environment where social justice is equally front-of-mind, and to engage with other organisations seeking to make the world safe, fulfilling, and nurturing for all. I’m very happily unsure of what exactly to expect from my time at MGA, and fundamentally am just excited to continue learning!”

- ***Cohort 3 of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship Began in Cambodia***

Cohort 3 of the Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders Fellowship (MELF) had their first international immersion in Siem Reap, Cambodia from August 21st - 30th, 2023.

The ten days were both busy and fulfilling, consisting of workshops on Mercy, justice and leadership, grassroots engagement, and advocacy trainings on issues related to the degradation of Earth and Displacement of People.



The Cambodia Immersion was opened by a beautiful and meaningful ritual with the theme “Journey to Peace and Reconciliation” where Fellows were invited to prayer, song, and reflection. It concluded with the sharing of individual symbols brought from each individual home country from around the world. The day concluded with sharing the stories of survival, suffering, hope, and resilience among the Cambodian people and a tour around Metta Karuna Reflection Centre led by Sr. Denise Coghlan rsm.





Throughout the immersion, Fellows had the opportunity to visit to a primary school and a local market, garden with a local community of women with disabilities, reflect at a dam where the Pol Pot regime committed acts of genocide, explore a floating village, and interact with Bishop Enrique Figueredo, fondly known as the ‘Bishop of Wheelchairs.’ Aside from the grassroots visits, Fellows were exposed to the history and local culture by visiting Angkor Wat and surrounding Temples, as well as attending a Cambodian Circus depicting the day-to-day traditions and experiences of the local community.

All of these exposures were aimed to stimulate Fellows’ creative and critical thinking and ethical discernment while they explored the world through a Mercy lens which seeks to challenge oppressive systems.

These exposures promote personal reflection and collaborative leadership amongst the group leading to a compassionate and communal response to current concerns of our world in order to advance justice.



## Reflections from Fellows...

*“MELF has given me a golden opportunity to become a great leader in my already existing culture which is very different from what others are. I personally believe I have to recognize the blessings in my life and be thankful. I will therefore be able to show mercy to those that truly need it”.*

**-Dinah Mwendwa**

*“So much has happened to me before and during this immersion that it will take many weeks to process. However, I have never been more certain of both the urgency and the necessity of initiatives such as the Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship. The old leadership paradigms have failed us time and time again, and we find ourselves in a world desperately in need of new leaders who are driven first by care and compassion for people. I am truly grateful to have been invited to be on this journey”.*

**-Alexis Stephens**

*“While the day was busy, we found the opportunity for quiet prayer and meditation within the sacred spaces of the temples. We walk with gratitude for the hospitality and inspiration from the commitment to faith, reconciliation, and interconnectedness to one another, Earth, and the Divine.”*

**-Andrea Haller**





- *Mercy Global Action due to launch the Mercy Justice Advocacy Guide!!*

Mercy Global Action will launch its flagship Mercy Justice Advocacy Guide on 24th September 2023 (Mercy Day). This Guide is a culmination of years of learning, research and experience working with grassroots organisations as well as institutional players at the United Nations. The Guide is aimed at anyone interested or engaged in justice advocacy, particularly those working through a Mercy lens. It is appropriate for a wide viewership, including ministries and congregations, activists and students.

Importantly, the Guide includes interviews with a number of people from across Mercy World who hold tangible experience of advocating for social and environmental justice at different levels. There is a deep dive on the Mercy Justice Advocacy Framework created by Srs Angela Reed and Áine O'Connor, as well as plenty of practical tools, case studies, templates and evaluation methods.

Angela Read, Head of MGA, writes:

*I celebrate that this publication is a contribution that the Mercy World makes to the often hidden impact of advocacy work. It is, of course, not the final word on advocacy, but we can continue to celebrate our contribution to making our world a better place for earth and people.*

*In celebration then, I offer this publication in the hope that it may inspire others to recognise that they are indeed advocates whether working at the grassroots level to make changes at the local level or whether working on policy at the national or global level.*

Please look out for more details on this Guide as it is launched on [instagram \(@MIAGlobalAction\)](#), the [MGA newsletter](#) and the [Mercy World website!](#)





- *MGA Team 'out & about'*

MGA's Women's Leadership Development Associate, Jemima Welsh, recently attended the Australasian Mercy Secondary Schools Association (AMSSA) Staff Conference.

This conference represented the first in-person gathering since COVID-19 of school leaders, educators and board directors from Mercy high schools across Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

The theme for this year's staff conference was 'Mercy in Liminal Times'. Sr Berneice Loch, former CEO of Mercy International Association, spoke about the moments of liminal decision-making in the life of Catherine McAuley and the early Sisters of Mercy, and the lessons we can glean from their experiences. Esteemed journalist, Stan Grant, gave a heartfelt keynote on spaces of liminality and the meaning we bring to our relationships with each other. And our very own Jemima Welsh spoke about leading with Mercy in liminal times and the importance of 'paying attention'.

A big thank you to All Hallows' School in Brisbane, Australia, for hosting an uplifting and thought-provoking conference that inspired us to think anew about the value of Mercy in contemporary times

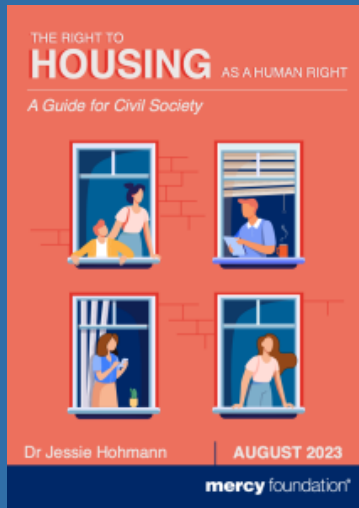
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During the next month, members of the MGA team have been invited to participate in a number of conferences, including:

- US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking Annual Conference from 28-30 September in Chicago. Theme is 'Breaking Barriers to End Human Trafficking'.
- 2023 Mercy Education Conference (run by Mercy Education System of the Americas) from 12-13 October in Jamaica. Theme is 'Earth Justice: Our Mercy Commitment to Care for Creation'.
- Mercy Ministry Companions Conference from 9-10 October in Melbourne, Australia. Theme is 'Mercy Companions: Claiming our Identity'.



# “USEFUL RESOURCES



[Mercy Foundation - “The right to housing: A guide for civil society”](#)



[JCoR - Guide to the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, 18-26 September 2023](#)



[Season of Creation 2023: Let Justice and Peace Flow](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS & INTERNATIONAL HOLIDAYS

- **15 September: International Day of Democracy**
- **18-19 September: SDG Summit 2023**
- **19-29 September: United Nations General Debate**
- **21 September: International Day of Peace**
- **24 September:**
  - **Mercy Day & Launch of Mercy Justice Advocacy Guide**
  - **World Day for Migrants and Refugees**
  - **World River Day**
- **29 September: Birthday of Catherine McAuley**
- **2 October: World Habitat Day & International Day of Nonviolence**
- **10 October: World Homelessness Day**
- **11 October: International Day of the Girl Child**



Mercy International Association (MIA) maintains a comprehensive and up to date website and produces an informative fortnightly 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: [\[Link\]](#)