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)

**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.

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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.
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.

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.”
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.

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.
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.

'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.
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

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
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