DAY ONE: 25th November

‘International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women’.

Grooming leading to Violence....

Within days of getting engaged to her wonderful fiancé John, Susan a bright university student, was on her way to a new life in his country. Waking up on her first morning, Susan discovered she was alone, locked in the apartment and her passport was gone. That evening John brought home some friends, one of whom followed her into the bedroom and violently raped her. Later a cold, indifferent John told her they needed money and this was the quickest way to earn it...

(As told to writer, names changed for anonymity)

Question:
What is my reaction to this true story?

https://pixabay.com/en/fear-woman-stop-1131143

Global Facts re Violence Against Women

➢ One in Three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence.
➢ Sexual violence includes rape, unwanted sexual advances, forced marriage or cohabitation.
➢ 700 million women were married as children
➢ 200 million women/girls have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM)
➢ 2 out of 3 children trafficked are female
➢ Most unsafe place for women is in the home, because of partner violence.

http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence

Gender-based violence knows no religion, age, nationality, culture, or socio-economic class.

http://brightredtriangle.co.uk/introducing-2017-campaign
Ref: www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/multimedia/

Laudato Si - Pope Francis’ encyclical to the world in 2015, highlights link between: ‘Cry of the Earth and Cry of the Poor’.

“.... each human being is a subject who can never be reduced to the status of an object” (Paragraph 81)

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) most of these reference Women particularly SDG # 5:

Achieve gender equality and empower all Women and Girls

Make your voices heard – every voice counts!

CEDAW

(Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)

Adopted in 1979 with the aim of:
✓ Reducing feminized poverty and exclusion
✓ Ending violence against women
✓ Achieving gender equality during peace and war

Suggest reading CEDAW during the 16 Days www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

UDHR

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 5: No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, degrading treatment.

Action to promote respect and equality:
1. Teach children to respect one another irrespective of gender.
2. Support organisations that look after women who have been abused.

Prepared by ‘Future We Need’ (FWN) a faith-based group with members from the Columbans, Franciscans, Josephites, Mercy, Presentation and Salesians.

(Updated November 2109)
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN is a systematic and widespread human rights violation. It cuts across age, socio-economic, educational and geographic boundaries...

www.google.ie/search?q=images+of+orange+the+world+for+free

49 Countries have no laws to protect women from domestic violence.  

"GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC ... endangers the life of women & girls with negative consequences not only for them, but also for their children & communities. Ending this scourge is integral to the development of women’s human capital & unleashing their contribution to economic growth.”  
(Feb. 2018 - World Bank study)  

CHILD MARRIAGE....

www.google.ie/search?q=Photos+of+child+brides+pixabay

New data (2018) confirm that practice of child marriage has continued to decline around the world, with accelerated progress in the last 10 years. However, 12 MILLION GIRLS are still married in childhood each year.  
(UNICEF 2018).
DAY TWO: 26th November:

Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation

FGM also known as female genital cutting and female circumcision, is the ritual cutting or removal of some or all, of the external female genitalia. The practice is rooted in gender inequality, attempts to control women’s sexuality, and ideas about purity.

Fatima’s story

Fatima lives in Somalia with her family where she attends a school nearby. Her mother is a seamstress. Fatima, at 6 years of age, had a visit from her grandmother. All was pre-arranged and Fatima didn’t know what was happening. ‘They held my shoulders and knees, and I started crying and trying to close my legs. It was very terrible. I can never forget that. I was at home for seven days with acute pain in the area they cut. Don’t do this to your daughters.’ (Source: www.unicef.org/somalia)

Question:

What is my reaction to this true story?

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Global Facts

- 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone FGM
- 3 million girls are at risk of undergoing FGM annually
- Girls 14 and younger represent 44 million of those who have been cut, with the highest prevalence of FGM occurring in Africa.

(Laudato Si - Pope Francis: ‘Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor’)

‘Each human being is a subject who can never be reduced to the status of an object’

Beijing+20 2015 reaffirmed a major obstacle to ending violence against women, is the persistence of discriminatory attitudes and social norms that normalize and permit violence. Victim blaming attitudes are widespread across all countries.

UNICEF with UNFPA (UN Population Fund) co-leads the global programme towards the elimination of FGM. It works with governments, communities, religious leaders and other partners to end the practice.

UN Sustainable Development Goals

SDG 5.3: ‘Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.’ This target reflects the international community’s commitment to ending FGM by 2030.

CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination & all forms of Discrimination against Women)

Suggest reading this during the 16 Days http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

No. 14 - That States parties take appropriate and effective measures with a view to eradicating the practice of female circumcision.

No. 12 –It requires States to eliminate discrimination against women in their access to health-care services throughout the life cycle

ACTION to promote respect and equality between all women and men:

- Promote the value of girls’ education
- Support organisations promoting children’s rights e.g. www.stopfgm.or.ke

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49 Countries have no laws to protect women from domestic violence. [Link to UNDP report]

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CHILD MARRIAGE....

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DAY THREE: 27th November

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature affecting the dignity of men and women which can include unwelcome physical, verbal and nonverbal conduct.

Aeberhard-Hodges 1996

Story from a member of the public

This woman’s evidence about her experiences is not uncommon:

_I have been sexually harassed and suffered physical assault too, many times over a 30-year period. The harassment ranges from whistles and ‘catcalls’, to my breasts, bottom, legs and groin being touched. These events have taken place on buses and trains, while walking or standing in public places during the day, in shops and bars - anywhere where men are present, in fact._

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/701/701.pdf

Question:
What is your reaction to this true story?

Global Facts:

- **Gender-based violence** knows no religion, age, nationality, culture, or socio-economic class.

- **A survey of almost 31,000 people** across 40 countries found that 32% of women (18–34 year olds) in Ireland have experienced some form of sexual harassment in the last 12 months - the second highest out of all 40 countries surveyed and the worst in Europe. Only Mexico fared worse at 43%. (March 2019)
  

- **A survey of 14–21 year olds** by Plan UK in 2018 found that 38% of girls experience verbal harassment including sexual comments in public places at least once a month, while 15% are being touched, groped or grabbed at least once a month.
  

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**Laudato Si**

In Pope Francis’ encyclical to the world in 2015, he clearly values creation and life

“Human life itself is a gift which must be defended from various forms of debasement” LS 15

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**UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

Many of the SDGs reference Women. Of significance are:

**SDG 5 - Targets 2:**
Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

**SDG 11 – Target 7:**
Provide universal access to safe, inclusive & accessible green & public spaces, in particular for women & children, older persons.

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**CEDAW**

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

(Suggest you read this during the 16 Days)

**CEDAW Article 16:** ’... provides men and women with "the same right to enter into marriage, the same right freely to choose a spouse..."’

**ACTION** I will take to promote respect and equality between all women and men....

1. Read more on the subject –
   
   http://endviolence.un.org/orangeday.shtml

2. Make a donation to UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women

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CHILD MARRIAGE....

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DAY FOUR: 28TH November:

Child Sexual Exploitation

Jennifer’s Story
Jennifer is fourteen years old, though she looks much older. She began her “dancing career” in a bar when she was ten years old. ‘My friend told me I could find work as a house help, I didn’t know I’d be working as a dancer’. Jennifer discovered at a very young age that she had no choice and had to go with her first customer. ‘I didn’t want to go with him. I was stripped of my clothes, and then he raped me’. This is sex tourism in the Philippines and it is not done covertly. It happens in broad daylight. (As told by the survivor)

Question:
What is my reaction to this true story?

Global Facts – Online Child Sexual Abuse
- The younger the victim, the more severe the abuse.
- 84% of images contained explicit sexual activity.
- More than 60% of unidentified victims were prepubescent, including infants and toddlers.
- 65% of unidentified victims were girls.
- Severe abuse images were likely to feature boys.
- 92% of visible offenders were male.


POPE FRANCIS: “The disorder that drives one person to take advantage of another, to treat others as mere objects, imposing forced labour on them... a kind of thinking that leads to the sexual exploitation of children.” LS 123

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
“States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. (Art.19)

Suggest reading CRC during the 16 Days
https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention

UN Committee on the Rights of the Child
There is concern that many States parties are failing to properly implement the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. A new set of Guidelines were drafted in order to give concrete advice on how to effectively protect children from sexual exploitation.


UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Goal 5 – Target 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

Goal 16 - Target 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

ACTIONS TO PROTECT CHILD RIGHTS
- Support organisations promoting the rights of children and working for their welfare. http://www.childrensrights.ie/sites
- Keep informed by visiting: http://www.ecpat.org/

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CHILD MARRIAGE....

New data (2018) confirm that practice of child marriage has continued to decline around the world, with accelerated progress in the last 10 years. However, **12 MILLION GIRLS** are still married in childhood each year ([UNICEF 2018](https://www.unicef.org/).
DAY FIVE: NOVEMBER 29th

Cyber Bullying

Flora’s Story
Flora’s cousin, who had been harassing her with threats of physical violence if she did not consent to marry him, pinned her down, taking compromising photos which he stored on a USB drive. Despite his threats of physical violence, Flora filed a legal case against him for intimidation. He threatened to circulate the illicit photos via mobile phone to his friends if she did not drop the battle. He carried through on his threat when she continued to push her case. (guardian.com - Aug. 2017)

In Flora’s country, there are few avenues for women like her to seek support. Violence against women is increasingly connected to online forms of abuse that include blackmail.

Questions:
- What is your initial reaction to this true story?
- How can cyber bullying be tackled?

Global Facts
- Since 2014 when the Beijing Platform for Action was last reviewed, the threat on civic space and rights is on the increase.
- 20% of young women in the European Union have experienced cyber sexual harassment and 14% of women have experienced cyber stalking since the age of 15.
- Girls are more likely than boys to be both victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying. 15% of teen girls compared with 6% of boys.
- 83% of young people believe social media companies should be doing more to tackle cyberbullying on their platforms.

Pope Francis: "The spread of ever more extreme pornography and other improper uses of the net, not only causes disorders, dependencies and grave harm among adults, but also has a real impact on the way we view love and relations between the sexes.” Rome, October 4, 2017

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Most of the SDGs reference Women. Of significance are:

**Goal 5 Target 5b:** “Enhance the use of technology, in particular, information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women.”

**Goal 5c:** “Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.”

CEDAW
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
[www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CEDAW)
(Suggest you read this during the 16 Days)

ACTION I will take to promote respect and equality between all women and men....

1. Read UN Women’s global data base for your country’s profile - [http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries#I](http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries#I)

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49 Countries have no laws to protect women from domestic violence. [49 Countries have no laws to protect women from domestic violence.](http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/violence-against-women-cause-and-consequence-inequality)

“GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC ... endangers the life of women & girls with negative consequences not only for them, but also for their children & communities. Ending this scourge is integral to the development of women’s human capital & unleashing their contribution to economic growth.” (Feb. 2018 - World Bank study) [“GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC ... endangers the life of women & girls with negative consequences not only for them, but also for their children & communities. Ending this scourge is integral to the development of women’s human capital & unleashing their contribution to economic growth.” (Feb. 2018 - World Bank study)](https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/02/01/more-than-1-billion-women-lack-legal-protection)

CHILD MARRIAGE....


New data (2018) confirm that practice of child marriage has continued to decline around the world, with accelerated progress in the last 10 years. However, **12 MILLION GIRLS** are still married in childhood each year ([UNICEF 2018](https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/02/01/more-than-1-billion-women-lack-legal-protection)).
DAY SIX: Nov. 30th

CHILD BRIDES

Each year 15 million girls are married as children.

The Story of a Child Bride

On her wedding day as an 11-year-old bride, Noora remembers her childish delight at receiving gifts and being thrilled because friends and family gathered for a three day party in her honour. Noora didn't realise that dressing up as an adult and putting on jewellery meant she was now the bride of a distant cousin. He was three times her age, and saw marriage as a means to act like a depraved animal. (Source: www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013)

Question:
What is my reaction to this true story?

.....................................................

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), most of these reference Women, and children, particularly SDG # 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all Women and Girls

Target 5.3: Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

UN Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) Article 4: Governments have a responsibility to ensure children’s rights are respected and protected.

CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) Adopted 1979 with the aim of:
- Reducing feminized poverty and exclusion
- Ending violence against women
- Achieving gender equality during peace and war

Suggest reading this during 16 Days http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

ACTION I will take to protect children:
- See what you could do by reading: https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/take-action/
- Offer support to organisations working to protect and look after children’s welfare.
- Campaign to ensure all children receive their basic rights in my country.

‘Girls Not Brides’ is a campaign of ‘The Elders’, a group of former leaders that has become a global partnership of 800 civil society organisations. They are committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. www.girlsnotbrides.org/

POPE FRANCIS has pledged: “..To work strenuously for the protection of minors and their dignity, including online” He said a coordinated, international approach is needed, to protect children from the "corruption of their minds and violence against their bodies". 

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D
AY 7: December 1st

Harassment and Violence in the Work Place

Sarah’s Story
“I work in an office. The good days are those when other employees ask you if you’re single and why "a pretty girl like you should be alone". The not so good days are the ones where they feel free to touch you, a hand on your arm, an unwanted hug, a pat on the bum.” (Irish Independent Nov.4, 2017)

Women and men experience violence and harassment in the world of work, but unequal status and power relations in society and at work often result in women being far more exposed to such treatment.

High Risk Groups
1. Migrant workers: More than half are women, but they comprise 98% of sex-trafficked victims. Often, they are in isolated and invisible "women's work" with higher violence risk.
2. Domestic workers: are usually female, often doing informal work, without a support system. They can undergo physical or psychological violence, including sexual harassment and rape.
3. Health services and social assistance sector, where 80-90% are women. They face more workplace violence here than in any other sector. (www.osha.gov/SLTC/healthcarefacilities/index.html)

Women in Management: It has been proved that women who reach executive positions, are not immune to sexual harassment. http://www.nbcnews.com/id/32476564/ns/business-careers/t/female-

Global Fact: 235 million women work in countries where there is no legal protection against workplace harassment. In these situations, women are more vulnerable if there is a male dominated management unless there is a clear, legal framework.
http://www.unwomen.org/

2017 COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (CSW) 'Women’s Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work’
Agreed conclusions:

‘The Commission strongly condemns violence against women and girls in public and private places, including harassment in the work place. ...these forms of violence are major impediments ... hampering women’s ability to enter... and remain in the labour market and to make contributions that fulfil their potential.’

The Beijing Platform for Action recognizes sexual harassment as a form of violence against women. It calls on employers, unions, and civil society, to ensure governments enact and enforce laws on sexual harassment and that employers develop anti-harassment policies and prevention strategies. (para. 178c)

International Labour Organization (ILO)
is the United Nations agency dealing with labour standards


ACTION to promote equality:
1. Actively support the rights of women in the work place to ensure protection and equality.
2. Encourage women to seek equality and justice when negotiating new employment.

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CHILD MARRIAGE....

www.google.ie/search?q=Photos+of+child+brides+pixabay

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Day 8: December 2nd...

*Girls Deprived of Education*

Education is a human right regardless of your gender. According to UNICEF, “When we educate a girl, we not only give her the tools and knowledge to make her own decisions and shape her own future, we also help raise the standard of living of her family and her community.”

**Anya’s Story**

Anya had worked in a factory for two years when she heard that she could learn to read and write. The literacy programme was very freeing. Anya no longer felt ashamed because she had never gone to school. Anya tried to hide this from her companions at work. The literacy programme was very freeing. Anya no longer felt ashamed because now she could read and write and could join in with her companions at work. *(As told to the writer)*

**Question:**

What are your thoughts as you read Anya’s story?

**Global Facts on Education:**

- According to the latest UN reports, the number of out-of-school girls at primary level grew from 32 million in 2015 to 34 million in 2016. [www.bridgeinternationalacademies.com](http://www.bridgeinternationalacademies.com) – Sept. 2018
- Barriers to educating girls: unfavourable school environments, discriminatory social and cultural factors, early marriage and school-related violence. *(GPE analysis of 42 education sector plans, 2015)*
- Educated women are less likely to die in childbirth: If all mothers completed primary education, maternal deaths would be reduced by two-thirds, saving 98,000 lives. *(UNESCO Education for All Monitoring Report – factsheet, 2013)*
- 9 million girls of primary school age will never set foot in a classroom, compared to about 3 million boys. *(UNESCO Statistics, 2018)*

**Pope Francis:** “Education is the indispensable means for enabling girls to grow into active and responsible women . . .” *(NBC News Video)*

The act of pursuing an education can sometimes be life threatening for girls in situations of political turmoil, as the 2012 attack against Malala Yousafzai revealed. [https://www.google.ie/search?q=google+free+images++girls%27+education&rlz=1C1CHBD](https://www.google.ie/search?q=google+free+images++girls%27+education&rlz=1C1CHBD)

**UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**

**CRC Article 6:** ‘Every child has the right to life, survival and development.’

This year (2019) is the 30th anniversary of the signing of the CRC by most countries, but it is still not fully implemented by many of them.

Suggest you read the CRC during the 16 Days: [www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/UNCRCEnglish](http://www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/UNCRCEnglish)

**UN Sustainable Development Goals**

Many of the SDGs reference Women and Girls particularly -

**SDG 4.5** ‘By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations’

**SDG 5:** ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.’

**Actions to ensure Girls are educated:**

1. Promote equal educational opportunities for girls and boys so that both can develop their potential.
2. Avoid stereo-typing so that children feel free to express themselves, according to their gifts.

*Prepared by 'Future We Need’ (FWN), a faith-based group with members from the Columbans, Franciscans, Josephites, Mercy, Presentation and Salesians.*

*(Updated November 2019)*
DAY NINE, December 3rd:

Human Trafficking

“Human trafficking is all around us, in all regions of the world... in practices as forced labour, sexual servitude, recruitment of child soldiers and other forms of exploitation.” Mr. Guterres, UN Secretary General
www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/blog/2017/09

Mara’s Story
Mara lived in Moldova where it was difficult to find work. She heard there were great opportunities in Western Europe so jumped at the offer of a job in a bar. Mara quickly realised that she had been deceived and was now a victim of trafficking. She was bought and sold by traffickers who took her through Albania, Italy, France and England before she arrived in Ireland. Passport and papers were taken from her and destroyed and she was put to work in a brothel. Mara had to work all day and frequently into the night, receiving only food and shelter. If she did not obey, Mara was told her family in Moldova would be killed. Mara managed to escape and got help. (Shared with permission)

Question:
What is my reaction to this true story?

...----------------------------------------------------------

Global Facts about Human Trafficking:

1. People are trafficked for sexual exploitation, cheap labour and organ transplants. Numbers globally are 24.9 million, 71% women and girls and 29% men and boys. Almost 20% of all trafficking victims are children. www.humanrightsfirst.org/resource

2. Human Trafficking (HT) is the 2nd most lucrative criminal activity after illegal sale of arms and all countries are a source, transit or destination for traffickers.

3. The most common form of human trafficking (79%) is sexual exploitation, the victims of which are predominantly women and girls. https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html

Pope Francis’ describes HT as ‘Ugly, cruel and criminal...an aberrant plague and a modern form of slavery’. He is asking for a global commitment to end the practice.
Rome, 30/07/2017

UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration - Fifth Informal Thematic Session focussed on: "Smuggling of Migrants, Trafficking in Persons and Contemporary Forms of Slavery." This includes identification, protection and assistance to migrants and trafficking victims." (UN, NY 5th Sept 2017) www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Goal 8, Target 8.7: calls for nations to, “Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking...recruitment and use of child soldiers...” www.unicefusa.org

CEDAW: (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)

Article 6: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

Action to prevent human trafficking:

1. Raise awareness about HT. Often victims are working in beauty salons, car washes and picking fruit. etc.

2. If you see anything suspicious report it to the police or an NGO working to eliminate HT.

3. Pray for victims who have been trafficked and those keeping them in slavery.

...----------------------------------------------------------

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www.google.ie/search?q=images+of+orange+the+world+for+free


"GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - A GLOBAL EPIDEMIC... endangers the life of women & girls with negative consequences not only for them, but also for their children & communities. Ending this scourge is integral to the development of women’s human capital & unleashing their contribution to economic growth.”  (Feb. 2018 - World Bank study)  https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2018/02/01/more-than-1-billion-women-lack-legal-protection

CHILD MARRIAGE....

www.google.ie/search?q=Images+of+child+brides+pixabay

New data (2018) confirm that practice of child marriage has continued to decline around the world, with accelerated progress in the last 10 years. However, 12 MILLION GIRLS are still married in childhood each year.  (UNICEF 2018).
DAY TEN: 4th DECEMBER :
‘Rape as a Weapon of War’

At the end of the war in Kosovo in June 1999, women and girls, who - as they fled to safety – were dragged by Serbian police, paramilitaries or soldiers from the columns of refugees fleeing Kosovo and raped, sometimes repeatedly, before they were sent on their journey. In the aftermath of war, another phase of enforced disappearances, murders and rapes began as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) embarked on revenge attacks against Kosovo Serb and Romani civilians. Many survivors have never even spoken about what happened to them. Some, counselled by NGOs, are able to talk about their experience but few have spoken publicly about what they endured. They have been silenced by the deeply entrenched social stigma, which still overshadows wartime rape.

Rape and sexual violence is used as a deliberate weapon of war in the same way that guns and tanks are, to terrorise civilian populations, to humiliate, scar and destroy whole ethnic groups or religious or political opponents, cheaply, silently and devastatingly.

William Hague, UK Foreign Secretary (2012)

CEDAW
(Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)

Adopted 1979 with the aim of:
✓ Ending violence against women
✓ Achieving gender equality during peace and war

Suggest you read the Convention during the 16 Days www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

SDG 16 Target 16.2: ‘End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.’

UNHCR 16. a: ‘Strengthen relevant national institutions, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.’


ACTION
✓ Support any campaign to eliminate weapons of war.
✓ Befriend an asylum seeker from a conflict zone who may have suffered greatly.

Read: http://www.stoprapenow.org/take-action/
 https://nobelwomensinitiative.org/

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DAY ELEVEN: December 5th

Widows and Property

Some traditional cultures ignore a widow’s human rights. In practice, especially in some rural areas, it is widely assumed that only men should own or inherit land, that widowhood terminates a woman’s social legitimacy. It is common for widows to be isolated and banned from participation in community activities.

Michelle’s Story

When Michelle, 57, was widowed in 2012, she lost more than her husband. Shortly after his death, her in-laws took over the fields she had tilled for decades. They also stole fruit from the trees in her kitchen garden and sold the harvest, leaving her without any livelihood. They further intimidated and insulted her by surrounding her and attempting to chase her away.

Michelle’s neighbours advised her that the Legal Resources Foundation could help her to protect her inheritance. When this legal aid organisation took the matter to court and Michelle obtained restraining orders against her in-laws, she was able to go back to tilling her fields. But her in-laws continue to threaten her, so she still worries about the future: “I am fearful and my heart is unsettled.”

(Source: Human Rights Watch)

Question

What is your reaction to this true story?

LAUDATO SI - Pope Francis in his letter to the world in 2015, decries the situation with various relationships today -

”... with all its destructive power ... various forms of abuse, the abandonment of the most vulnerable ...“ LS 66

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Most of the SDGs reference Women. Of significance is:

SDG 5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

CEDAW

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Article 15 1.2: States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men .... they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property

Article 16 1.h: The same rights for both spouses in respect of ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property ...

(Source: Human Rights Watch during 16 Days)

UN DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Article 12: Everyone has the right to own property alone and in association with others.

Article 17: No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of (his) (her) property.

ACTION:

1. Visit the following website -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=IvADol8COak - ‘Women’s Land Rights: giving women the opportunity to change the world.’

2. Actions to end abuses of women’s property rights:
http://pantheon.hrw.org/legacy/campaigns/women/property/action.htm

Global Facts

- One in seven widows globally - 38 million, lives in extreme poverty.
- A significant number of girls are widowed in childhood - a reflection of the prevalence of child marriage and the custom of marrying off young girls to much older men.  (Source: World Widows 2015 Report published by the Loomba Foundation)
- Advocates cite the baffling omission of widows’ welfare from the U.N. SDGs as evidence of a critical blind spot in aid efforts.

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49 Countries have no laws to protect women from domestic violence.

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DAY TWELVE: December 6th

**Women’s Vulnerability to Climate Change**

Leading Academics warn that “A new obstacle has emerged in the battle for female equality, in the form of climate change. Global warming will inflict far more suffering on women than men, because they are more vulnerable to the floods, droughts and diseases that are expected to increase as the climate changes”. (Tom Bawden, Env. Editor, Independent.co.uk – Nov. 2015)

**Aregash’s Story**

"A woman’s life is hard, and climate change is making it harder,” says Aregash, a 32-year-old Ethiopian woman who lives with her six children in a small farming community. “Because of changing rainfall patterns, crop yields are suffering, and my family doesn’t have enough food. We used to get 500 to 600 kilos per harvest, but now we can barely get 100. It has never been like this. The only way we can raise our kids is from the land and if it fails to produce, there isn’t enough to feed them…”

(adapted from ‘Weathering Change’ Population International: Healthy Families, Healthy Planet)

**Questions**

What are your thoughts as you read this story?

In what ways might your lifestyle be contributing to climate change?

-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Global Facts**

- By 2050, the number of people fleeing the impacts of climate change could reach 150 million. 80% of climate refugees will be women and children.
  

- Five times more women die from natural disasters than men. Cultural constraints on women’s mobility and lack of assets put them at a financial disadvantage and more vulnerable to disasters. (Ghalia Fayad blog, Greenpeace 2017)

- In South Sudan – one of the world’s fastest-warming countries – droughts and flooding have forced girls and women to walk farther to gather firewood and obtain water, a time-consuming and potentially dangerous change.
  

**Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

The UN acknowledges the link between achieving **Gender Equality** and implementing the SDGs, especially #13: "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.”

**Target: 13. b** Promote mechanisms for .... effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries.... including focusing on women, youth....and marginalised communities.

**Laudato Si:** “Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it." LS 23

**NOW!**

Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

[tracts4free.wordpress.com](http://tracts4free.wordpress.com)

**Action:**

**Read about** the link between climate change and conflict [https://ejfoundation.org/secure-international-protection-for-climate-refugees-1](https://ejfoundation.org/secure-international-protection-for-climate-refugees-1)


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Day THIRTEEN: December 7th

Femicide

Femicide, a global problem, is a sex-based, hate crime term, broadly defined as "the intentional killing of women or girls because they are females."

Ana Clara’s Story
Ana Clara was thirty and lived on the periphery of Porto Alegre, Brazil. She was in a relationship with a partner for six years and had one daughter. The relationship was very unstable and there was a lot of conflict and violence which resulted in repeated break-ups. On New Year's Eve 2007, Ana Clara was stabbed to death by her partner. (Femicide: Narratives of Gender Crimes: SN Meneghel - 2013)

What is my reaction to this true story?
---------------------------------------------

Global Facts

- **BBC Monitoring** followed press coverage of women killed by another person on 1 October 2018 around the world. Their regional specialists counted 47 women reported killed that day apparently for gender-related reasons, in 21 different countries. [http://femicide-watch.org/products/47-women-killed-one-day-around-world-because-their-gender-bbc-news](http://femicide-watch.org/products/47-women-killed-one-day-around-world-because-their-gender-bbc-news)

- The highest number of Femicides occurs in South Africa, South America and Central America. [https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis](https://www.insightcrime.org/news/analysis)

- In 2017, intentional homicide took the lives of a total of 87,000 women. More than half, 50,000 (58%) were killed by intimate partners or family members. [https://www.unodc.org/gsh/](https://www.unodc.org/gsh/) (Source: 2019 Study on Global Homicide: Gender-related killings of women and girls | UNODC)

In ‘Laudato Si’ Pope Francis states:

'It is clearly inconsistent to combat trafficking in endangered species, while remaining completely indifferent to human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor, or undertaking to destroy another human being... (91)

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

**Goal 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

**Goal 16** Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

3 - Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security.
5 - No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment
7 - All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to protection of the law.

**CEDAW** (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)

Articles 1-16 outline what governments must do to end discrimination against girls and women. It also lists specific areas where discrimination against girls and women must end i.e. in law, marriage, education, health care, and employment.

“States shall recognise, encourage and support the work of relevant NGOs and of civil society active in combating violence against women and establish effective co-operation.” (Article 9: Council of Europe’s Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women.)

[https://rm.coe.int/168008482e](https://rm.coe.int/168008482e)

**ACTION**

**Raise awareness** of Femicide and lobby for justice wherever this occurs.


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DAY FOURTEEN: DECEMBER 8th

Objectification of Women

Women frequently face sexual objectification in daily interpersonal interactions and through the active and passive consumption of multimedia. This can lead to internalization of society’s scrutiny, resulting in habitual body monitoring and self-consciousness. In turn it can increase feelings of body shame and appearance anxiety. (Emma Rooney 2016 - steinhardt.nyu.edu)

Laura’s story

‘I was the victim of a crime as a teenager, at the hands of a man who sexually abused me for several years. When I eventually told people about the abuse, some who were close to the abuser chose not to believe me. "Why didn’t you fight him?" they asked. "Why didn’t you scream? You’ve always been so outspoken - if it really happened you would have told us earlier!" I was branded a liar, labelled mentally unstable, and told I had got it all wrong. This blame left me feeling broken’. (Jessica Valenti-Guardian Columnist)

What is my reaction to this true story?

...........................................................

Global Facts

- Some social media sites exhibit prejudiced themes through their photo and video posts. A photo on College Nationwide Instagram shows young women on the beach with their backs to the camera. The women have on thong bikinis. The caption underneath reads, "Line 'em up & rate 'em," encouraging male followers to rate the women’s bodies, specifically their buttocks. This photo gained over 1300 likes and up to 70 comments where male commenters ranked the women on a scale from 1 to 10. (July 2018, Stephanie E. Davis) https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/ftid/10.1177/2056305118786727

- An Australian study on a sample of 81 women found that over a week, each woman reported being targeted for objectification between 3 - 4 times on average and witnessing sexual objectification of other women 9 to 10 times on average. (Kellie, Blake & Brooks, Aug. 2019)

In ‘Laudato Si’ Pope Francis says:

‘Each human being as a subject can never be reduced to the status of an object.’ LS 81

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDG Goal #5 - Achieve Gender Equality

Target 5.c ‘Adopt and strengthen enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women / girls at all levels.

(CEDAW (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women)
www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

‘States shall take all appropriate measures’ - To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women....to achieve the elimination of prejudices...and all other practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority, of either of the sexes Article 5 (a) To eliminate any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at every level and in all forms of education. Art. 10 (c)

Office of UN Human Rights Commissioner

There is an urgent need for clear and comprehensive guidance from the UN human rights mechanisms... on the scope and content of obligations to modify or transform harmful gender stereotypes and eliminate wrongful gender stereotyping. (OHCHR Commissioned Report 2013 - 'Gender Stereotyping as a Human Rights Violation')

ACTION

Affirm young people in who they are, with their unique gifts and talents.


Notice how women are portrayed in advertising. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTImho_RovY&feature=player_embedded

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DAY 15: December 9th

Does Patriarchy in the Church Play a Role in Abuse?

“Patriarchy is a system of society, in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.” (The Dominant Ideology of Patriarchy)

Survivors of Abuse share their experience...

“I hear similar themes repeated by victims, of church cultures that treated women’s bodies as inherently problematic and seductive....that questioned women’s ability to think rationally or make decisions without the leadership of men. ... blamed victims of sexual abuse for inviting the abuse... That effectively silenced victims by telling them that reporting the crime would reflect poorly on the church...These women describe an environment of fear...which made it hard to report, or even to acknowledge, the abuse...”

(Adapted from – Rachel Held Evans’ Blog - https://rachelheldevans.com/blog/patriarchy-abuse)

“God weeps for the sexual abuse of children,” Pope Francis said, after meeting with hundreds of bishops and seminarians, as well as privately with victims of clergy sexual abuse.

(USA. 2015)

http://mary-magdalene-church-s-molton.weebly.com

Global Realities

1. Feminism promotes women participating in decision-making that affects their lives...to enjoy full and equal civil rights, in and out of the Church.

(Adapted from Joan Chittister, osb, Oct 2013)


3. “The Church, in fidelity to the Gospel, must be open to the full and equal participation of women in all its ministries”

http://www.womensordination.org/

4. Manifesto for the Church which calls for women’s roles that “are coherent with our competences and capacities”, is circulating on social media. (February 2018)


Pope Francis

“...In communities still weighed down with patriarchal and chauvinistic customs, it is good to note that the Gospel begins by highlighting women who were influential and made history”.

Pope Francis Sep. 9th 2017, Colombia.


“History is burdened by the excesses of patriarchal cultures that considered women inferior.... We must “see in the women's movement the working of the Spirit for a clearer recognition of the dignity and rights of women.” (Pope Francis, ’Amoris Laetitia ’ 54)

CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)

Article 1: Discrimination against women includes any exclusion or restriction on the basis of sex...in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Article 5: States shall take appropriate measures to eliminate stereotyping, prejudices and discrimination.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) SDG #10

Target 10.2: Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex... religion, economic or other status

ACTION to promote respect and equality

Read more on the subject
Engage with your church community be available for election to the Parish Council
Support women and girls taking an active role in all church services.

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Day 16, December 10th:
UN International Human Rights Day

Human rights (HR) are inherent to each person regardless of sex, colour, class or creed. They are stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. (Ratified December 10, 1948)

A Gift, or an Abuse of Human Rights?

Whilst studying in a rural area of Zimbabwe, I was called to meet a tall, beautiful woman with a child on her back. She had a 20 litre tin of water on her head. As I approached, she elegantly took the tin from her head and placed it at my feet, indicating it was for me to wash whilst staying with my host family. Later I learnt that Sakhile had walked 4 kms to the pump, to bring me this precious gift of water!

Reflecting on this I began to get angry. Why should women and girls have to spend so many hours fetching water, because the government chooses to spend money on other things? The UN has confirmed that water is a basic human right for every person, yet access to it, is denied to millions in many countries...

Question:
What human rights abuse am I aware of?


Global Facts about Human Rights

Every country must promote and protect all HR regardless of political, economic and cultural systems. (Vienna World Conference on HR, 1993)

Respect for the three great bodies of international law, humanitarian law and refugee law were eroded in 2016. This was evident in many conflict areas, where millions of people were forced to leave their homes, to seek basic conditions for life elsewhere. (Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, UN High Commissioner of HR, 2016)

Pope Francis: “Human rights are not only violated by terrorism, repression or assassination, but also by unfair economic structures that creates huge inequalities.”

2018 marked 70 Years of the UDHR with the theme: ‘Let’s Make Human Rights a Fact and Not a Dream’

For many of the 68.5 million refugees and internally displaced worldwide, access to basic Human Rights remains a dream! https://adra.org › beyond-the-crisis-global-refugee-facts

Actions:
Read the UDHR at: www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-

What HR abuse are you most concerned about? How could you try to address it?

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