

# 2019 Mercy

International Association

Trustees' Annual Report  
and Financial Statements

Registered in Ireland  
Certificate Number 194263.  
Company Limited by Guarantee

11 Adelaide Road, Dublin D02 EH21  
Registered Charity no CHY 10078



The Trustees present their Annual Report together with the audited Financial Statements of Mercy International Association (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2019. The Trustees confirm that the Trustees' Report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing documents and the provisions of the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102 (effective 1 January 2015).





# 34 Renovated Sacred Garden

04	Company Details
06	Board Chair's Message
08	CEO's Message
10	Our Vision
14	Our Values
23	2019 Targets
24	Heritage and Spirituality

38	Global Action
56	Organisation and Administration
08	Future Directions
66	Governance and Staffing
83	Future Directions
92	Independent Auditor's Report
107	List of Abbreviations

---

# Company Details

---

## Members

Colette Cronin rsm, Institute Leader, The Institute of Our Lady of Mercy (United Kingdom)

Eveline Crotty rsm, Institute Leader, Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia & Papua New Guinea

Elizabeth Davis rsm, Congregational Leader, Sisters of Mercy of Newfoundland

Katrina Fabish rsm, Congregational Leader, Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand (resigned 12 Dec 2019) and replaced by Susan France rsm of the same congregation

Angela Vergara rsm, Superior General, Religious Sisters of Mercy, Philippines

Patricia McDermott rsm, Institute President, Sisters of Mercy of the Americas

Marie Louise White rsm, Congregational Leader, Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy (Ireland)

## Associate Members

Philomena Bowers rsm, Congregational Leader, Sisters of Mercy of the Union of Great Britain

Aelred Carlin rsm, Federation President (resigned 18 October 2019) and replaced by Paula Thomas The Federation of the Sisters of Mercy (United Kingdom)

Loreto Conroy rsm, Congregational Leader, Sisters of Mercy North Sydney Congregation

Mary-Louise Petro rsm, Congregational Leader, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta Congregation

Catherine Reuter rsm, Congregational Leader, Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Congregation

## Trustees Of The Charity and Directors Of The Board

Denise Fox rsm  
Chair - resigned 12 May 2019

Ron Ashworth  
Vice-Chair; Chair - appointed 14 May 2019

Sheila Carney rsm  
Vice-Chair - appointed 14 May 2019

Colette Cronin rsm

Susan Clarke

Mary Moorhead

Suzanne Ryder rsm

Marie Louise White rsm

Maria Lawton rsm  
Appointed 14 May 2019

## Beneficial Ownership

The assets of Mercy International Association (MIA) are held for charitable purposes; the Board Directors and CEO are deemed to be the Beneficial Owners in compliance with the EU regulation 4AMLD (2015).

## Board Sub-Committees

### **Finance**

Ron Ashworth (Chair), Colette Cronin rsm,  
Kevin Hoy, Mary Reynolds rsm, Peter Burnett,  
Bill Roche, Margaret Scroope rsm

### **Good Governance**

Kevin Hoy, Mary Moorhead, Mary Reynolds rsm

### **Global Action**

Sheila Carney rsm, Kevin Hoy, Angela Reed rsm,  
Mary Reynolds rsm

## Executive Leadership Team

Mary Reynolds rsm  
Chief Executive Officer

Denise Boyle fmdm  
Leader Global Action - retired 28 February 2019

Anna Nicholls rsm  
Leader Heritage & Spirituality

Angela Reed rsm  
Leader Global Action - appointed 12 May 2019

Margaret Scroope rsm  
Leader Administration and Finance

## Registered Office

Address:  
11 Adelaide Road Dublin D02 TR79

Business Address:  
Mercy International Centre (MIC)  
64A Lower Baggot Street  
Dublin D02 EH21

## Company Details

Company limited by guarantee not having a share capital

Company Number 194263; CHY Number 10078;  
Charity Registered Number 2002547

## Independent Auditors

Robert J. Kidney & Co 11 Adelaide Road,  
Dublin D02 TR79

## Principal Banks

Bank of Ireland, Miesan Plaza, 50-58 Lower Baggot  
Street, Dublin D02 Y754

## Investment Manager

Goodbody Stockbrokers  
2 Ballsbridge Park, Merrion Rd, Dublin D04 YW83

## Solicitor

Mason Hayes & Curran Ltd  
Southbank House, Barrow St, Dublin D04 TR29



---

# Board Chair's Message

---

**2019 marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of Mercy International Centre and provided an opportunity for review and celebration.**

During the celebrations, the founding intentions of Mercy International Centre were revisited, to:

- preserve Mercy Heritage;
- continue the rich tradition of Mercy hospitality;
- link all branches of Mercy worldwide and promote global identity;
- birth a future where all members of the Mercy family can be globally interconnected;
- create opportunities for multicultural forums in which an action/reflection model is used to consider global justice needs;
- connect Sisters in indigenous cultures with their Mercy roots.

Furthermore, MIA celebrated that:

- close to 7,000 people now visit Mercy International Centre annually for programmes, tours and events;
- 6000 Sisters, 5000 Associates and nearly half a million partners in Mercy are interconnected as members of the Mercy global family;
- the Mercyworld.org website and the weekly Mercy e-News that develop and nourish Mercy identity continue to attract growing numbers of visitors and subscribers;

- the recent *Mercy International Reflection Process* attracted more than 150 groups from around the world that engaged in action/reflection forums to listen contemplatively to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor today and to identify responses;
- the younger Sisters of Mercy, many from indigenous cultures, meet regularly via digital means to pray and share on what being a follower of Catherine McAuley means in today's world.

A new Vision Statement was launched in 2019 in which we stated that MIA would respond to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor by working for the globalisation of compassion. MIA committed to do this by standing with the displaced, modelling a world of welcome and inclusion and by being actively engaged in the protection of our common home. The 2019 implementation of our five-year Strategic Plan detailed the specific activities aimed at doing this, and this Annual report shares details on some of these activities.

The Board pays close attention to its Governance role. This year the Board:

- organised a training session for Members and Directors on governance responsibilities and relationships;
- engaged with the Charities Governance Code toolkit to ensure that MIA meets the core standards outlined in the code;
- reviewed a number of policies and practices, including risk management and data protection;
- reviewed the Constitution of the organisation to ensure that it is reflective of current legislation and good practice. Proposed changes to the Constitution will be presented to the Members at the Annual General Meeting in May 2020.

Stewarding the resources of MIA is a core function of the Board's work. This is made possible through the generous contribution of many people. I take this opportunity to thank our Members, Directors, Leadership Team, Staff and Volunteers for their generous and unstinting commitment.

In March, the Dublin and New York Global Action offices were consolidated into one office, based in New York. Global Action

staff, Denise Boyle fmdm, Betty Lacey and Catherine Gibbons rsm (volunteer) completed their ministry with MIA at this time. MIA is grateful for the significant contributions they made to the global action area. The Board looks forward to the continued development of these contributions by the staff at the consolidated office.

Denise Fox rsm, having completed nine years as a Director and three as the Board Chair, retired in May. I wish to thank her for her leadership during a time of significant change and growth. The Board welcomed Maria Lawton rsm to the Board as a Director in October 2019.

After 11 years, Mary Reynolds rsm, who has led MIA as CEO through a time of challenge and change, is retiring. Mary has served MIA with distinction and has positioned MIA well to continue serving and bringing together the Mercy global family. I wish to thank Mary for her exceptional leadership of MIA. In 2019, the Board undertook an extensive search for a new CEO and we look forward to welcoming Berneice Loch rsm in early 2020. Berneice is from the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea and most recently served as its Institute Leader.

Ensuring the sustainability of MIA into the future, is of major importance. To this end, MIA embarked on a fundraising drive in 2014 to create an Endowment Fund of 20 million euro and the target was achieved in June 2019. The Endowment Fund is an extraordinary achievement in the space of five years and MIA acknowledges the many generous donors in Australia, Canada, England, Ireland, New Zealand and the United States. Without these donors, the work of MIA could not continue. As part of financial stewardship, MIA has developed a reserve policy and adopted the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) which sets out how charities should prepare annual accounts and report on finances.

MIA is privileged to own the house which was built by Catherine McAuley in 1827 and which preserves the historical, architectural and aesthetic character, as well as the heritage of the founding community of Mercy. This house helps to provide a sense of place and continuity, and it offers an opportunity for the celebration of

community history and continuing Mercy response to need.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the House becoming Mercy International Centre in 1994, the Sacred Garden, which holds the tomb of Catherine McAuley, was upgraded. Three different areas were created: a remembrance space, a reflection space and a teaching space. With specially designed sculptures, water feature, artistic instalments and varied plant species, the renovated garden is a significant addition to the inspirational aspects of Mercy International Centre.

At the start of a new decade, the Board is aware of many challenges and opportunities. Our vowed membership of MIA continues to decline yet the partners in Mercy are growing in number and enthusiasm each year. The challenge is to safeguard Mercy values so that they continue to inspire the work MIA does in responding to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor. Of fundamental importance to this are the formational programmes offered, the resources provided both at Mercy International Centre and on the Mercy website, and the Global Action programme which aims to connect the local and the global. Since much of the global action work is focused on root causes, it demands considerable interaction with high-level policymakers. MIA aims to ensure that Governments' commitments at these levels are enacted at the local level and that our Mercy ministries on the ground benefit. Measuring impact in this regard is an ongoing challenge.

As we face a new decade, let our Vision Statement inspire us:

*Through the work of the Association and the longings and efforts of the entire Mercy family, we will strive for the globalisation of compassion and the recognition of God's Mercy as present and active in our world.*



**Ron Ashworth**



---

# CEO's Message

---

**2019 was a truly remarkable milestone for MIA as 25 years since the opening of Mercy International Centre in 1994 was marked.**



What began as the establishment of a house of hospitality and heritage has evolved over the years into an organisation linking a Mercy global family of approximately half a million members in more than 40 countries around the world. Highlights of the year included the promulgation of our new Vision Statement, the enhancement of the Centre by the opening of a newly upgraded Sacred Garden, a heritage display honouring the 25 years and the launch of a two-year online formation programme - Mercy Global Presence – aimed at shaping a new language, new spirituality and new theology to underpin a response to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor today.

We set ourselves several targets for 2019. In the Heritage & Spirituality area, we began to

digitise our heritage collection so that this unique collection can be made available online. We offered a new programme that explored Mercy Global Presence. It was a particular joy to have some of the participants of the first Youth Conferences return as presenters, confirming for us that a new generation of people are ready and willing to take up the task of forming others in Mercy values.

A significant move during the year was the merging of the Global Action offices in Dublin and New York in order to respond better to many critical junctures in the life of Mercy Global Action (MGA). One of these was the innovative response called for in response to Displaced Persons and Degradation of Earth - two intersecting themes identified by the 2016 Mercy International Reflection Project (MIRP). A consultative process accompanied the consolidation of the offices on how best to operationalise MGA's mandate to continue to build a solid Mercy Global action unit. The recommendations of the consultative process will significantly shape the work of MGA in 2020 and beyond.

We believe that the involvement of younger people in our projects is of crucial importance. It was

this belief that motivated us to establish a MGA one-year programme, the goal of which is to provide a transformational experience for emerging women leaders who are passionate for advancing Mercy and Justice. It is a fellowship programme aimed at extending Mercy Women's sphere of influence. It provides an opportunity for fellows to establish strong links and networking across the Mercy world through international encounters, webinars and modules, mentorship and more. The programme has been designed to stimulate creative and critical thinking, promote collaborative leadership and personal reflection leading to a compassionate and communal response to current concerns in our world. Building on the success and uptake of this programme in 2019, it will be offered again in 2020.

It is satisfying to know that fundraising efforts have resulted in assuring the future sustainability of MIA. A huge debt of gratitude is owed to our donors, and to the faith and efforts of those who believed, against all the odds,



that it was possible to achieve an Endowment Fund target of €20 million. Reaching that target in mid-2019 was a day of grand celebration.

MIA is committed to excellence in the management of the Centre and to continue this, a professional facilities management company was employed in 2019 to focus on the efficient and effective delivery of support services.

While the MIA story is very positive, there are also challenges:

- a changing demographic and clientele mean that the Heritage and Spirituality programme must be kept continuously under review for both relevance and sustainability;
- Mercy International Centre is a treasured asset and a core element of pilgrimage to the founding House of Mercy, but as an almost 200-year-old building, it requires continuous maintenance and heritage conservation;
- the global action work on the devastation of Earth and displacement of peoples often encounters political apathy and sometimes opposition;
- NGOs pursuing a rights-based approach to development and gender justice are coming under threat from some countries;
- the financial viability of MIA depends increasingly on investment performance and fundraising. These, in turn, are subject to volatility in the investment environment and increased competition in the fundraising environment.

In February 2020, I will retire from MIA, having held the role of Executive Director/CEO for eleven years. In this, my last report as CEO, I pay tribute to the Members, Directors, Team members, Staff and Volunteers, with whom I have had the privilege of sharing this journey. Their vision, dedication and commitment have inspired me and their friendship has sustained me. I also thank all our supporters, the users of our services and those who have networked and collaborated with us over the years.

Sr Berneice Loch, who will lead MIA over the coming years, will inherit a strong and dynamic team of people to support her in the new challenges and opportunities that the future will bring. I welcome her warmly and wish her every blessing.

*Mary Reynolds*

**Sr Mary Reynolds rsm**



In 2016, MIA offered a worldwide reflection process for the Year of Mercy for Sisters of Mercy and partners in Mercy to discern together globally a shared response to the 'cry of the Earth and the cry of the Poor' in our world today.

Out of this discernment arose the concept of Mercy Global Presence expressed as follows: In a global world, there will be a Mercy Global Presence. In a world of displacement, Mercy Global Presence will champion inclusion. In a world of degradation of the environment, Mercy Global Presence will realise its oneness in the sacred communion of all creation.

To honour this call, the 2006 Vision was reviewed by the MIA Members and Board Directors in 2018 and the following Vision Statement was adopted by the Members in November 2018 and launched by the Board as the Silver Jubilee year 2019 got underway.

In addition to placing Mercy Global Presence at the heart of the Vision, there is an emphasis on the place of all members of the Mercy Family – Sisters, Associates, Colleagues and partners in Mercy in creating this reality.

The Vision is presented in eight languages: English, Irish, Spanish, Maori, Samoan, Tok Pisin, Tagalog and Tongan, honouring Mercy's presence throughout the world.

# Our



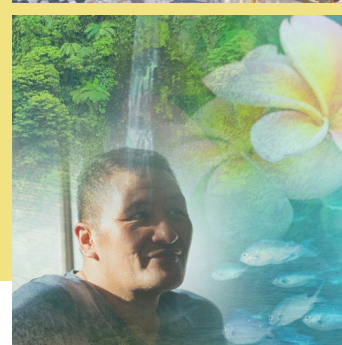
Deeply rooted in the Gospel and the legacy of Catherine McAuley, MIA seeks to gather the inspiration and energies of the Sisters of Mercy, our associates, colleagues and partners worldwide toward the creation of a Mercy Global Presence.

Standing with the displaced, we will model a world of welcome and inclusion.

Actively engaged in the protection of our Common Home, we will witness to the sacredness of all creation.

Through the work of the Association and through the longings and efforts of the entire Mercy family, we will strive for the globalisation of compassion and the recognition of God's Mercy as present and active in our world.

This vision keeps alive the Founding Spirit of Catherine among people of the World most in need of God's compassion and Mercy.



# Vision



# About Mercy Internatio

In 1827 Catherine McAuley, an heiress of considerable wealth, used her inheritance to provide a building and a ministry to address poverty and suffering in the Dublin of her time. Four years later she founded the Sisters of Mercy to serve those in need through education, health care and social services, firstly in Dublin, then throughout Ireland and later overseas. The House of Mercy that Catherine McAuley established opened the door of Mercy to those in need. It provided a home both for those who were poor

and those who were committed to an emerging Mercy spirituality.

## **Growth**

For 188 years, Sisters of Mercy have established foundations across the world.

Today, Mercy ministry is a fruitful collaboration between the Sisters of Mercy and hundreds of thousands of lay women and men serving together. MIA was incorporated on 12 October 1992 as a company limited by guarantee registered in the Republic of

Ireland and recognised as having charitable status. MIA links the Mercy Institutes, Congregations and Federations throughout the world. While MIA shares a bond with all Mercy organisations, it is separate and autonomous from the governance structures and responsibilities of these organisations.




# nal Association

## **MIA was established:**

- to foster unity among these groups and to increase awareness and experience of their interdependence;
- to facilitate collaboration among them in addressing root causes of needs and injustices experienced locally but with global causation;
- to encourage and nurture Mercy values among those who seek to live out these values and to promote the flourishing of the Mercy charism in services operated in the name of Mercy;
- to restore and maintain the founding House of Mercy, now known as Mercy International Centre (MIC) which was reopened in 1994 as a Heritage Centre.







**W**e ground our work in scripture, theology and the Mercy story: We are inspired by the scripture invitation to be merciful; the theology that calls us to act lovingly and justly; and by the Mercy tradition of responding to need.

**We are pro-active in identifying and addressing global poverty:** Mercy responds locally to need in 30+ countries in which Mercy is present. Through Mercy International, we advocate regarding the root causes underpinning these needs.

**We promote hospitality:** We aim to make the founding House of Mercy a home space for the Mercy global family - a place of welcome, hospitality, pilgrimage and renewal.

**We use our resources for Mission:** Sisters of Mercy through MIA use their resources (human, spiritual, social and financial) to respond to issues of global poverty, demonstrated in the massive displacement of persons worldwide.

**We foster collaboration and networking:** We challenge our membership to consider what we can do better together, than any of us can do apart.

**We value interconnection and communication:** We develop communication resources (website, weekly newsletter and network structures) to promote effective communication and interconnection.



# Our Core VALUES



**We are attentive to the multicultural, multilingual, international dimension of our membership:** Where possible we provide English and other language versions of materials we produce, and we showcase the cultures of the countries in which Mercy operates.

**We are committed to professional relationships and practices:** Directors, management, employees, contractors and volunteers are expected to adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour and to put the principles of integrity, accountability and transparency into practice.

**We are open to challenges and new directions:** We engage in strategic thinking and planning. We consciously embrace change management, adapting to change and leading others in the organisation to be open to change.

The Board of MIA is responsible for determining the specific values and standards for the organisation, building on the core values. Individual directors are expected to show leadership by promoting these values and standards.

# The ENVIRONMENT in which WE WORK

Several elements create a context in which we work

The trusteeship and management, as well as the staffing of our Mercy ministries around the world are increasingly being undertaken by our lay partners in Mercy. While this is to some degree conditioned by the demographics of the vowed membership, who are older and fewer than formerly, it is mainly the result of the strategic planning by the religious congregations over the last two decades regarding succession and transition of trusteeship and management to lay partners.

This has created a demand for training and formation in Mercy tradition and values at all levels, leadership, management, staff and clients. MIA plays an integral

part in meeting this demand and in ensuring that the legacy of Mercy is passed on to a new generation of practitioners and clients.

The core of Mercy's mission has always been outreach to the poor and needy – both at the level of responding to immediate need but also at the systemic level of addressing underlying causes of need. Following its global research in 2016, MIA has identified two main causes to which it is committed to helping to alleviate – Devastation of Earth and Displacement of Peoples. In its response MIA is informed and influenced by *Laudato Si'* and by the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In *Laudato Si'*, an encyclical letter on Care of our

Common Home, published in 2015, Pope Francis critiques consumerism and irresponsible development, laments environmental degradation and global warming, and calls all people of the world to take 'swift and unified global action'.

In 2016, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — adopted by world leaders in September 2015 at a historic UN Summit — officially came into force.

The Sustainable Development Goals are the blueprint for achieving a better and more



## Challenges

sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including those related to poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, climate change, peace and justice. The 17 Goals are all interconnected, and in order to leave no one behind, it is important that we achieve them all by 2030.

Mercy's mission in the world today is named as Mercy Global Presence (MGP). It is described as an organic entity and a countercultural sign in a globalised world which has made more extreme the displacement of persons and degradation of Earth. MGP links Congregations/

institutes, individual Sisters of Mercy and Associates, partners in Mercy, and MIA in creative and energising ways. This is the context in which the communications element of MIA operates – linking people into this entity and transmitting its message to a wide audience.

MIA is particularly conscious of the need for Good Governance and Financial Management. Among the compliance parameters in which it operates are Company Law, Charity Law, Child and Vulnerable Adult directives, Fundraising Principles, Regulation of Lobbying and Data Protection.

A major challenge is to ensure that our programmes are relevant, inclusive and accessible. Expanding theological understandings, varied religious practice, changing social realities and needs are some of the complexities that call us to adjust and update regularly. Our membership extends over many countries – this presents challenges and difficulties in regard to inclusivity, particularly in the area of language and even digital communication. Accessing our programmes onsite can be out of the reach of many as travel expenses can be prohibitive. While some programmes are made available online, these can also be difficult to access in areas where there are variable internet connections.



# WHAT we do

MIA is a public benefit entity. The benefit it provides is the advancement of religion through the promotion of Mercy values, the relief of poverty, and other charitable purposes which are of benefit to the community. The objectives of MIA today are:

- to enable Sisters of Mercy, their associates and partners in Mercy to develop a global sense of identity and interconnection in their Mercy activities;
- to share the richness of the Mercy heritage as a basis for formation, education and justice actions;
- to respond to issues of global poverty and environmental degradation.



# HOW we work



We make Mercy International Centre a home space of welcome and hospitality and a place of nourishment in Mercy heritage, spirituality, charism and ethos to all who wish to explore or experience the significance of Mercy in their lives.



We extend the resources of Mercy International Centre beyond the home space by the use of technological and digital means.



We respond to the cry of our 'common home', particularly the degradation of the environment by promoting sustainability and a realisation of our oneness in the sacred communion of all creation.



We champion inclusion, belonging and the security of a home in a world of displacement and homelessness.



We develop interconnection, support and global family identity and promote the mission and ministry of MIA through an effective communications strategy and network.



We support the mission of MIA with an organisational structure that provides good governance, effective management and efficient operations.



We steward the resources of MIA (charism, human, financial, heritage, environmental) so that the vision can continue to be implemented.



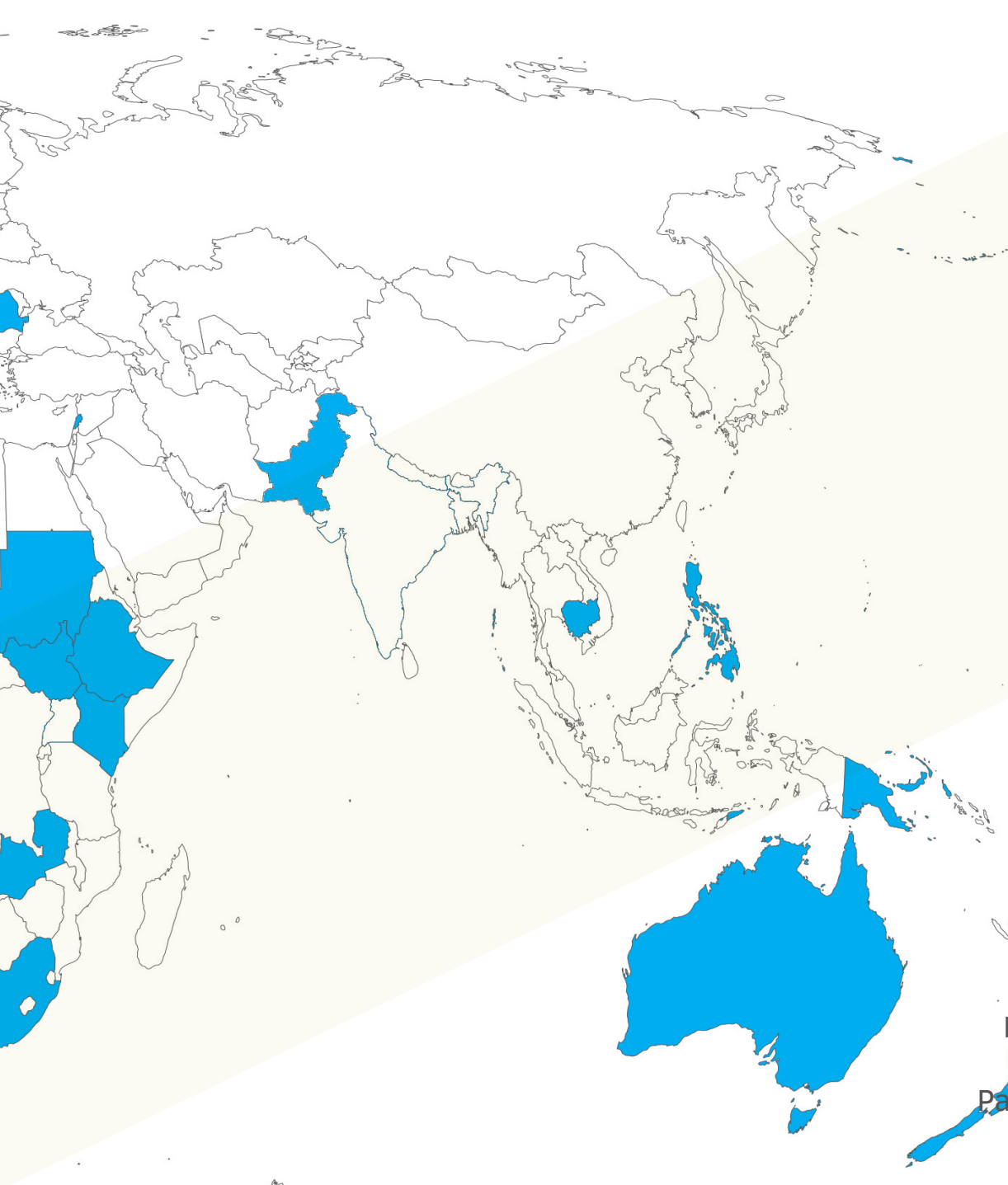


“

Sisters of Mercy, are in over 30 countries, serving in a multitude of ministries including education, health, social services and ministries that further social, political, economic and spiritual wellbeing. We work with an ever-growing group of Associates, volunteers and partners in Mercy, all continuing in the spirit of Catherine McAuley.







Argentina  
Australia  
Belize  
Cambodia  
Canada  
Channel Islands  
Chile  
England  
Guam  
Guyana  
Honduras  
Ireland  
Jamaica  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
New Zealand  
Nigeria  
Northern Ireland  
Panama  
Papua New Guinea  
Peru  
Philippines  
Poland  
Romania  
Samoa  
Scotland  
South Africa  
South Sudan  
Timor Leste  
Tonga  
United States of America  
Vietnam  
Wales  
Zambia

# Where We Work

# Strategic Directions

The strategic directions cover four main areas:

Heritage & Spirituality; Global Action; Organisation & Administration; Future Directions.

We welcome the opportunity to share with our stakeholders and readers our goals and outcomes in these four areas during the past year. We thank you for your support and collaboration in the mission and work of MIA.





# Targets for 2019:

- diversify our formation programmes by adding at least one new programme;
- upskill a team member in digitising MIA's unique heritage collection;
- merge the Dublin and New York Global Action offices and conduct a review on how the consolidated office can best be a catalyst for MIA's global justice activities;
- establish a year-long global justice training programme for women;
- enhance pilgrimage experience by upgrading the Sacred Garden;
- develop an online programme to promote the outcomes of the MIRP research;
- celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Mercy International Centre;
- apply SORP to the 2019 Audit;
- develop a Reserves Policy;
- prepare MIA for compliance with the *Charities Governance Code* and establish a Beneficial Ownership Register.







### Sacred Garden Redevelopment

The substantial increase in the restricted donations was the result of fundraising to redevelop the Sacred Garden. The Sacred Garden was rededicated in September and has been utilised already by many groups.



# Heritage and Spirituality

**Mercy International Centre continues to be a desired place of pilgrimage for our Mercy Global Family. The programmes are providing experiences that nourish pilgrims in their Mercy journey.**

The increasing diversity of the global Mercy family and the different experiences they bring to their ministry roles continue to inspire the development of new programmes to immerse participants in the Mercy story. Extensive work has been undertaken to extend the stories that are shared in the house to include those of the early women and men who, alongside Catherine McAuley enabled Mercy ministry to flourish.

Mercy International Centre is a key element in the telling of the Mercy story. It provides a home space and a place of pilgrimage for renewal and nourishment of Mercy charism and ethos.

Formation programmes for partners in Mercy and Sisters of Mercy are conducted throughout the year, and in 2019 we welcomed people from





Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Canada, the United States, Kenya, Jamaica, Guyana, the Philippines, United Kingdom and Ireland to these programmes.

Recognising the importance of young people in the future of Mercy, a Young Mercy Leaders programme is conducted each year. This provides secondary school and college students from across the globe with the opportunity to come to Mercy International Centre to experience together the riches of the Mercy story before returning to daily life better equipped to be leaders in their schools, colleges and world. This year a participant in the 2018 programme was invited to facilitate the 2019 programme.

---

# Goals and Outcomes

---

Goal 1. To provide programmes that inspire commitment to Mercy values

Outcome 1: Mercy International Centre continues to be a desired place of pilgrimage for our Mercy global family.

Outcome 2: The programmes are providing experiences that nourish pilgrims in their Mercy journey.



---

# Activities to Achieve Goal 1

---

## Programmes

The following MIA programmes were offered:

- *Watering the Roots at the Wellspring of Mercy* – a month-long renewal programme for Sisters of Mercy;
- a programme for Sisters preparing to make their final profession as Sisters of Mercy – attended by Sisters from the United States, Kenya, Jamaica, Guyana and the Philippines;
- two *Mercy Ethos* leadership programmes for partners in Mercy;
- A *Mercy Pilgrimage* programme aimed particularly at educators in Mercy organisations;
- *Come Home to Catherine* – an immersion programme in the Mercy story;
- *Mercy to Earth* – a programme connecting ecological issues to Mercy;
- *Mercy Global Presence* – a programme that explores an evolving Mercy spirituality in the light of the new understanding of cosmology;
- *Young Mercy Leaders* – a programme catering for 16 – 18 year olds from around the world.

Individualised programmes were conducted for:

- Carlow University Pennsylvania Round Table Group
- Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
- Assumption High School, Louisville
- UK Catholic Archives
- Mercy Health, US
- St Xavier's University, US
- Retired Teachers from Longford
- St Thomas' School, Mareeba, Australia
- Sisters of Mercy, Castlebar
- Dignity Health System, US
- Bon Secours Mercy Health

## Tour Groups

Throughout each year we welcome a number of students from schools and universities, Mercy Associates and partners in Mercy from around the world for tours. It is very pleasing that the numbers from Irish schools have increased in recent years.



## In God Alone

A highlight for many groups this year has been the viewing of the film *In God Alone: The Story of Catherine McAuley* which was released online in March.

This film tells the story in a new and engaging way for the diverse range of people who come to the Centre and/or who watch it on the [www.Mercyworld.org](http://www.Mercyworld.org) website.

Resources to support the film include student worksheets for junior and senior levels, available in both English and Spanish.

The film has a Spanish subtitled version and is also available with closed captioning.



## Digital Presentations

Digital presentations extend the outreach of Mercy programmes. In 2019 they included:

- a videoed interview with Mary McAleese for the Australasian Mercy Secondary Education Conference;
- live-streaming of four presentations during the Jubilee celebrations;
- utilising the video conference system for the monthly prayer meetings of younger Sisters of Mercy;
- a live-streamed session from the Global Action Office in New York as a regular part of most in-house programmes.

## Liturgical Celebrations

Liturgies were planned and conducted with the Board and Members. There were Eucharistic celebrations during the *Young Mercy Leaders* Programme, on Mercy Day, at the Garden Rededication and for the closing Jubilee Ritual. The November Mass of Remembrance and the December celebration of Foundation Day are annual liturgical celebrations. Other rituals have been part of the programmes.

## Facilitation of other Groups

In 2019, three local schools, *Scoil Chaitríona*, *Catherine McAuley National School* and *St Declan's School* used the Chapel for Sacramental preparation and celebration. *We Are Church* hold monthly meetings, and the *St Vincent de Paul Society* meet weekly in the Centre. The organ in the chapel is used by local teachers and musicians. *CEIST* – the Mercy Education Trust Board – used Mercy International to host a leadership programme with students from a Mercy School.

## Programme Participants

In 2019 programme participants came from Ireland, USA, England, Australia, Philippines, New Zealand, Newfoundland, Kenya, South Africa, Jamaica, Guyana and Papua New Guinea.

The number of participants in programmes increased significantly. The *Mercy Ethos* programme which generally attracted 10-15 participants once a year was offered twice and had 50 participants in total over the two programmes. The new *Mercy Global Presence* programme attracted 32 participants and the numbers for the *Young Mercy Leaders* programme reached 100 students.

After a review, the *Wellsprings* programme ran for the last time. This month-long programme was for Sisters of Mercy only. The numbers attending have declined over recent years. A new programme, *Streams of Mercy*, has been developed for 2020 that is not exclusive to Sisters of Mercy and can be attended in one, two or three sections rather than the traditional four-week programme of *Wellsprings*.

The numbers already registered for *Streams of Mercy* are very promising for the ongoing viability of the programme and confirm that the content is attractive to participants.

The *Come Home to Catherine* programme also ran for a final time in 2019. Over the past 25 years this programme has given participants an opportunity to visit Catherine's places and hear more of the Mercy Story in a contemplative way. In recent years numbers have not proved viable to enable it to continue and much of the content has been incorporated into the *Mercy Ethos* programmes.



## Mercy Global Presence

Following the outcome of the research programme of 2016 on the 'Cry of the Earth and Cry of the Poor' Mercy International Association developed one further way to engage the Mercy world in the shaping of the new words, new language, new spirituality and new theology to underpin a ministry of Mercy Global Presence. Mercy Global Presence is defined as an organic entity and a countercultural sign in a globalised world which has made more extreme the displacement of persons and degradation of Earth.

A sixteen-month programme, over two years aims to engage Sisters of Mercy, partners in Mercy and anyone desiring to build the globalisation of compassion in our world. This engagement may take many forms: designated responders, comments or blogs on the website, gathering in small groups for reflection, and informal reporting of gatherings and learnings to MIA.

The programme is presented in four-month segments. The first segment provides an introduction to what is to come; in the second there is a focus

on 'global'; the focus of the third segment is "Mercy" and the fourth focus is on "presence". This is followed by integration and gathering of the fruits of the exploration. Each month brings its own rhythm: an opening video setting the context and inviting engagement; reflections from theologians, artists, grassroots ministers, Mercy global action and distinct voices from the Mercy world with opportunities for reflective prayer; and an invitation to engage in personal reflection, small group conversations, and blogs or comments on the website. Each Congregation is invited to use this exploration as a resource.

The goal of the programme is that an enriched and relevant Mercy theology and spirituality, with new language and new images, is developed. This will enable Mercy people to better live out the Vision statement: *Standing with the displaced, we will model a world of welcome and inclusion. Actively engaged in the protection of our Common Home, we will witness the sacredness of all creation.*



### Segment 1: Global | September 2019 - December 2019

The initial exploration of Mercy Global Presence centres on "Global," the context in which all mercying happens. Through the wisdom of many voices, new meanings of "global" will unfold over four months: cosmology as the communion of all God's creation, integral ecology as relationships among all Earth ecosystems, people and today's deep social change, and the living God incarnate in Cosmos and in the person of Jesus the Christ.

#### Themes



##### 1. Cosmos/Cosmology

SEP 2019

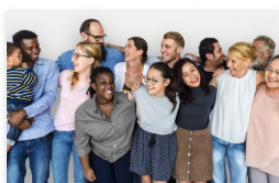
[View Resources](#) ▾



##### 2. Earth and Integral Ecology

OCT 2019

[View Resources](#) ▾



##### 3. People and Deep Social Change

NOV 2019

[View Resources](#) ▾



##### 4. Incarnate God in Cosmos and in Person of Jesus

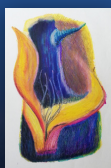
DEC 2019

[View Resources](#) ▾



'The Spirit of God has filled the universe with possibilities and, therefore, from the very heart of things, something new can always emerge.'

(Pope Francis, Laudato Si' #80)



'May the wisdom that inspired our ancestors of old to align their lives with the Sun and rhythms of Earth enable us to experience the radiance of harmony and delight in the oneness of all life.'

- Nellie McLaughlin rsm

Left: *Out of Wonder*, Oonagh Campbell rsm

'We know that God sustains the cosmos every moment of every day. We read in Lamentations (3:22-23), "The steadfast love of our God never ceases. God's mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning."

- Elizabeth Davis rsm

'What is too good for us to keep to ourselves?'

- Guiding Group

'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)



The Helix or "Eye of God" Nebula: NASA, WISE, NOAO, ESA, Hubble Helix Nebula Team, M. Meixner (STScI), & T. A. Rector (NRAD).

'Walking with people of faith seeking understanding and meaning today, as a catechist, I share in the creative work of God, leading people out of darkness into light, out of the slavery of literalism into the freedom of the daughters and sons of God, out of fear into wonder and awe.'

- Anne Walsh

'a flaring forth  
one infinite moment  
timing delicate, precise  
holding all that is to come  
a journey, epic ... begun  
God's self-revelation ... begun

encounters cataclysmic  
stars, galaxies, planets  
forming, re-forming  
expanding outward  
ever outward  
magnitude beyond imagining'

- Maree Hutchinson rsm

'We, this people,  
on this small and  
drifting planet...'

- Maya Angelou. Read by Janna Levin

'As we expand our identity as humans to embrace every other life form, each a unique manifestation of divine art, what will emerge? An overwhelming sense of the oneness of all life will transform us.'

- Nellie McLaughlin rsm

'God has "mercified"  
the universe into  
being.'

(Ibn al-Arabi)

'At the heart of the work of Mercy Global Action is a deep commitment to reflect on and understand the impact of our "worldview" on the way we respond to global injustice.'

- Angela Reed rsm

'Resonance ~ Resistance ~ Resilience'

- Guiding Group (Judy Cannato)



MERCY  
GLOBAL  
PRESENCE

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

## COSMOS/ COSMOLOGY

Voices, Quotes and Images from Theme 1, Segment 1: Global  
© 2020 Mercy International Association



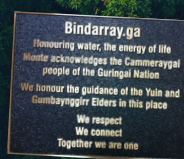
[www.mercyworld.org](http://www.mercyworld.org)

'Let us never desire more than enough.'

(Catherine McAuley)

'We respect. – We connect. – Together we are one.'

- Uncle Max Dulumunmun Harrison



'The call for all of us globally to let go of any illusion that we human beings are separate from the planet'

- Angela Reed rsm

'We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.'

(Laudato Si' #49)

'Living integral ecology through social and pastoral ministry, advocating for creation and human persons'

- Maryanne Kolkia rsm

'My own personal, intimate relationship with Earth – Where do my feet touch Earth in these days?'

- Elizabeth Davis rsm

'Presence of  
a God who  
dances in  
creation'

- Anne Curtis rsm

'Embrace an ecological conversion and grow into an "Enough Theology"'

- Mary Sullivan rsm

'How am I personally challenged in my care for Earth by Pope Francis, by the IPCC, by the Synod for the Amazon, by Greta Thunberg?'

- Guiding Group

"Ko te whenua te toto o te tangata,  
Land is the life-blood of the people"

Papatūānuku Mother Earth is the earth that we live upon.  
Not only is she the land we walk upon, she is also the life within the land.  
Everything is linked to the land...

(Warren Pohatu)

'I have a passion for deepening my understanding of the interconnectedness of all creation'

- Tara Egger

'We tune our ears to the wisdom of Earth. It is deep prayer, this listening to her cries'

(Bruce Sanguin)

'My relationship with God's creation is one of wonder, respect and comfort, and I never feel so alive as when I am interacting with the Earth.'

(Cate Kelly)

'Today Mercy is committed to preserving the integrity of creation, Papatūānuku – Mother Earth, seeing human beings as connected and dependent on all living species.'

- Margaret Milne rsm, Cheryl Connolly rsm, Teresa Anderson rsm

'Synod on the Amazon listening to indigenous voices everywhere'

- Guiding Group



'God speaks to us through two books. One is the little book, the book of scripture. The other is the big book, the book of creation.'

(John Scotus Eriugena)

Left: Getty Images/Andreas Solaro. Used under licence



MERCY  
GLOBAL  
PRESENCE

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

## EARTH AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Voices, Quotes and Images from Theme 2, Segment 1: Global  
© 2020 Mercy International Association



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





## Goal 2. To offer access to Mercy heritage resources

Outcome 1: The Mercy heritage collection and resources are providing inspiration for contemporary and future Mercy mission and ministry.

Mercy International Centre holds a precious collection of artefacts associated with Catherine McAuley. These include an extensive collection of her letters, many items of personal memorabilia and several gifts received by her from supportive friends and benefactors, as well as furniture and other goods which she brought with her to Baggot Street in 1827. Many exceptional items are on permanent loan to the Mercy International Centre, including Catherine's profession ring and her cincture.

The Centre also holds a collection of the illuminated art and calligraphy work of Clare Augustine Moore, a contemporary of Catherine McAuley, as well as the drawings of Clare Agnew who produced vivid artistic depictions of the early works of Mercy.

The Centre holds the International Register containing the name and some information about every Sister of Mercy from Catherine McAuley to the present day. The Register holds over 50,000 names.

The Mercy International Centre library has three main sections: biographies of Catherine McAuley and some of the early founding Sisters; a selection of spiritual books from the 19th Century and a collection of books written by or about Sisters of Mercy and Mercy ministries.

---

# Activities to Achieve Goal 2

---

Special exhibitions were organised this year, one to mark the first foundation of Mercy Sisters from Dublin to the United States 175 years ago and another to mark 165 years since the Sisters of Mercy went to the Crimea to nurse there during the war. The third exhibition related to the opening of Mercy International Centre 25 years ago, and the events marking that. These exhibitions were of particular interest to pilgrims and visitors to the centre during the year.

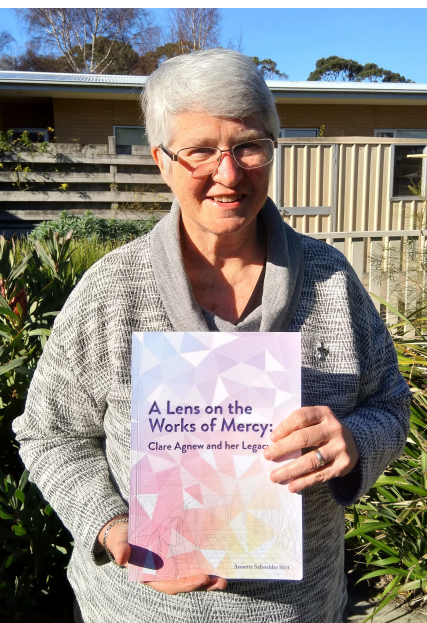
The celebration of the Silver Jubilee of Mercy International Centre was an occasion to highlight a number of its heritage treasures. Of particular significance were the stained glass windows and the Telford Organ. Professor Michael Earley, a direct descendant of the Earley family who owned the studio that created the beautiful windows in the centre, gave a fascinating background to their construction and traced the historical and artistic context of the time in which they were manufactured.

Margaret Daly-Denton, a liturgical musician and an internationally published church composer, whose first music teacher was a Sister of Mercy, gave a recital on the Telford organ, playing a selection composed for organs during the period that the organ was built.

The Jubilee time was also an occasion to honour the early women who surrounded Catherine. Special banners, depicting significant aspects of their lives were created to highlight them. These banners are now used in many programme presentations.

Banners were also created to capture important developments over the past 25 years in the work and programmes of the Centre and a photo display was a nostalgic reminder of many of the people who had worked, visited and supported the Centre over these years.





## Research

The publication of '*A Lens on the Works of Mercy: Clare Agnew and her Legacy*' is the culmination of a research project undertaken over three months from January to April, at Mercy International Centre by Annette Schneider rsm. Annette studied Clare Agnew's illustrations of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy created in the 1830s. The research provides some background context to the scenarios represented in the illustrations. A *Teaching and Study Guide* was produced to accompany this publication.

## Sacred Garden Renovations

One of the main reasons people come on pilgrimage to Mercy International Centre is to visit the grave of Catherine McAuley. The Church has officially recognised Catherine as being on the first step to sainthood. She was declared Venerable by Pope John Paul II on 9 April 1990. Catherine's grave is an integral part of the Mercy International Centre and amongst the memorabilia associated with Catherine are several items that have first, second and third-class relic attributes.

The most significant project to mark the Jubilee year was the renovation of the Sacred Garden. Works enabled three aspects of the garden to be highlighted:

**Yesterday** - where those who have died, especially Catherine McAuley and the Sisters buried in the Sacred Garden, are remembered.

**Today** - where a new sculpture of Catherine invites pilgrims to "come sit a while" and contemplate their experiences of Mercy today.

**Tomorrow** - a dramatic sculpture depicting Mercy Global Presence begins the flow of water along the rill to the lower section of the garden where a learning space has been created for groups who come to explore how they can live Mercy into the future.



On 25 September, the 25th Jubilee was marked by the rededication of the newly upgraded Sacred Garden. Mercy International Association is grateful to the many benefactors who made this restoration possible.

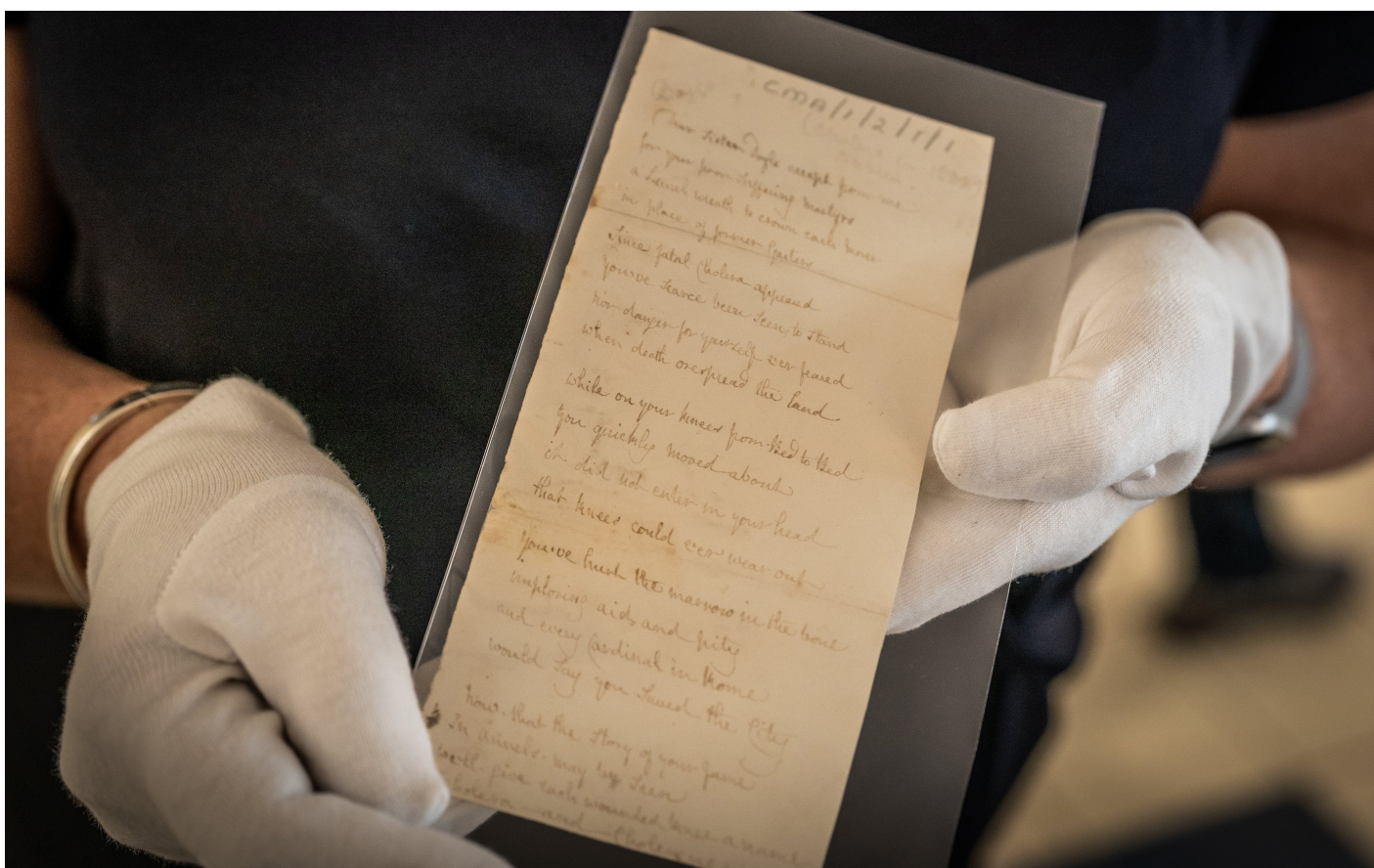


## Preservica

Of significant importance to Mercy International Centre is the preservation of its archival collection. Because of this it was decided to digitise the archive to ensure that it is both preserved and can be easily accessed. Mercy International has invested in the Preservica system to do this. Available in the cloud and onsite, this is an active digital preservation software that has been developed to tackle the unique challenges of ensuring digital information remains accessible. The Leader of Heritage & Spirituality is undertaking on-going training in the use of the system and some of the heritage resources are already populating the archive. A further advantage to the establishment of this digital site will be the possibility it will create for researchers who wish to access primary Mercy sources.

## Heritage Shop

A range of products relating to heritage has been developed and these products are available in the shop at the Centre.





# MIA's Impact



The impact of the programmes and resources is best expressed by those who visited in 2019 and gave feedback.

- *The lived experience of the pilgrimage is worth travelling across the world for. The connection to Catherine McAuley's story and the ongoing work of the Mercy Sisters and Mercy Ministries is inspiring and motivating. I can now more authentically lead my community in the way of Mercy.*
- *You can never underestimate the power of story and when the story is told in the places where it happened the power is indescribable. Listening to the stories of so many inspirational women made me wish I was just starting my Mercy education journey again so that my impact would be so much more depth-ed in Mercy.*
- *I believe that this course would be most valuable to leaders early in their roles as a sensational aspect of their formation."*
- *Congratulations!, It was thrilling to watch In God Alone, a fresh, engaging, rendition of Catherine's story. The voice of Catherine speaking to us throughout gives such a sense of intimacy and inspiration. YML - Make it longer I loved it!*
- *The YML pilgrimage far exceeded all my expectations and just want to say a massive thank you to everyone involved!*
- *I came away from Baggot Street feeling well "mercied"! Not only had I been immersed in the Mercy story in a new and more profound way through the quality of the input received from program presenters and the experiential aspects of the program with visits to significant sites in Dublin and beyond- but I saw Mercy lived in the extraordinary warmth and hospitality of those who work in Catherine's house. Along with others I was the recipient of this loving kindness which made my time at MIC truly blessed and has re-animated me as I return to my ministry so I am grateful for having had this precious opportunity.*

# Progress

The celebration of the 25th jubilee was a unique opportunity to focus on some of the heritage gems of the Centre – the stained glass and organ in particular, and to highlight resources in the collection.

A further element of progress was the development of the Sacred Garden. This now includes a specially designed outdoor teaching space where the story of Catherine and the heritage of Mercy can be presented to pilgrims and visitors to the Centre.

## Planning for the Future

A number of the Centre's areas will be upgraded to provide a richer experience of the heritage resources. In particular the Heritage Room itself, which holds many of the resources will be upgraded to provide touch screen access to precious documents and to expand on the Mercy story and history. While the International Room has been recently updated to include the Mercy education story, the Doyle room awaits a similar update to tell the Mercy health story.



## UN Engagement

New York, Geneva,  
and Vienna



## Human Rights

Research and  
Analysis



## Relationship

Networking  
and  
participation at  
global events



# GLOBAL ACTION

€270,338

## Reflection

Theological  
reflection  
materials



## Advocacy

Hands-on relief  
and advocacy



## Leadership

Development  
and education



## Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship

Mercy Global Action launched the Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship this fiscal year. Ten inaugural fellows were chosen to complete this one year programme which includes leadership training, research projects, and in-person development opportunities in Cambodia, the United Nations in New York, and Mercy International Centre in Dublin.





---

# Global Action

---

Mercy International Association is committed to addressing injustice

A dedicated team, Mercy Global Action (MGA), leads MIA's response to the '*cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor*' in our world today. This is achieved by focusing on two main issues: Degradation of Earth and Displacement of Peoples - themes which were highlighted in the 2016 *Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP)*. Several issues emerged from these two themes to direct our response.

The MIA Reflection Process affirmed our understanding that, as Pope Francis articulates, '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.' (*Pope Francis, Laudato Si'*)

---

## Degradation of Earth

- Environmental Devastation
- Fracking
- Garbage/Pollution
- Sustainable living
- Water

## Displacement of Peoples

- Dementia
- Homelessness
- Human Trafficking
- Poverty
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- Violence/Domestic Violence

---

MGA operates from an office in New York and uses a variety of approaches in its work. The New York location facilitates ease of interaction with the UN system.

As MGA is an international religious organisation, there is a moral and an urgent need for us to act, by working to transform global systems of oppression into systems of justice, active compassion and global solidarity. MGA seeks to interact and work with Mercy grassroots ministries and at the policy level at the UN. The justice

concerns with which we engage are critiqued and informed by Mercy charism, Mercy justice approach, Mercy International Reflection Process, Catholic Social Teaching, *Laudato Si'* and other relevant materials. In working for global justice, MGA seeks an alternative vision to patriarchy, unsustainable models of development, racism, gendered violence, neoliberalism, anthropocentrism, sexism, and other systems that result in people being excluded and/or exploited.



---

# What **we** do

---



## Networking

Key to the work of MGA is networking, coordination and animation, which require working in partnership with others responding to justice issues, in particular, Mercy congregations, institutes and federations. Other networks include faith-based justice organisations and civil society organisations at local, national, regional and international level.

## Communications & Technology

Technology enables communication across the Mercy world in numerous ways, most significantly through Mercy E-News. MGA also has a monthly newsletter specifically focused on its particular work. Communication with Mercy membership is mostly dependent on the use of technology.



## Education/Awareness Raising

At this time in history, and indeed in this time of global vulnerability, MIA is committed to building a solid Mercy Global Action unit. MGA has an agenda that positions itself as a change maker for global justice, not only at the UN, but through its work in local communities, nations and regions throughout the world. Grounded in the spirit of Mercy, MGA's justice work seeks to analyse root causes and engage in theological, ethical, social, political, economic, gendered and human rights analysis. MGA is in a critical position to influence policy makers and governments at national and international level and to 'harness the energy that was created world-wide' through the Mercy International Reflection Process.

MGA is committed to participatory education resulting in new insights, ideas and action for justice. MGA welcomes several groups, particularly from schools and universities, wanting to familiarise themselves with the work of MGA and to get a first-hand understanding of the UN system and how it operates.

Personnel from the office visit schools and colleges to raise awareness on MGA issues and to encourage involvement in addressing these issues. They make contributions via video conferencing to programmes conducted at Mercy International Centre, Dublin and participate in the Young Mercy Leaders programme.

Field visits provide mutually beneficial experiences for education and awareness-raising. This year, field visits were made to Samoa, Peru and Australia.

## Theological Reflection

Theological reflection is at the heart of our Mercy justice activism. The most recent example of global theological reflection is the online Mercy Global Presence exploration that commenced in September.

## Leadership Development of Women

At the heart of our Mercy charism is the education, empowerment and encouragement of women. The contribution of women to MGA is both a gift and an opportunity, providing mutual benefits to the women and also to the advancement of work at MGA.

## UN Engagement

The Sisters of Mercy have special consultative status with the *Economic and Social Council* (ECOSOC) of the UN. This status affords MGA an opportunity to influence political decisions and to lobby for change at international, national and local levels.

## Research

MGA Research agenda is focused on identifying ways in which MIA can effectively intervene in public policy and service response. Policy analysis must always be informed by grassroots experience and service delivery. There has been increasing interest from university students seeking to undertake research. Research strategies include; literature and policy reviews, participatory action research, qualitative and quantitative research and evaluation research.

Our global justice work is inspired by a rights-based approach. Human rights analysis requires familiarity with human rights instruments and mechanisms. This is largely made up of conventions and their review mechanisms. A significant part of the work of MGA is to undertake human rights analysis and to inform grassroots of how rights can be realised. A further focus is to document circumstances in which the Mercy world identifies the denial of human rights and to seek redress.

---

# Goals and Outcomes

---

Goal 1. To network, educate and raise awareness on Mercy International key theme 'Degradation of Earth'.

Outcome 1: Awareness is raised on critical social and environmental injustice at local and international levels.

Outcome 2: Networking is facilitated as an effective response and support for those actively addressing environmental justice issues.

Outcome 3: Our work has contributed to effective change in relation to vulnerable Earth.



---

# Activities to Achieve Goal 1

---

## General Activities

During *Earth Week* MGA was involved in presentations and activities at Salve Regina University highlighting environmental justice as a work of Mercy.

Workshops were delivered at the *Young Mercy Leaders Pilgrimage* in Dublin.

To celebrate the Season of Creation, MIA hosted a *Mercy to Earth Programme* in Dublin at which speakers from around the Mercy world, including MGA staff, gave input on their experiences in caring for our common home. Activities to celebrate Mercy Day were combined with acknowledging the International Day of Peace, with climate action as the theme.

## Efforts to ban fracking

An extractivist mindset, driven by modern lifestyles, has resulted in drilling, mining, and agro-industrial operations that contribute to the devastation of Earth. An example of one such incident was the Vale SA dam collapse in January where a tailings dam burst at the Feijao iron mine in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. Over 300 people died, and 12 million cubic metres of toxic waste were released.

MGA co-signed a statement to stand in solidarity with the victims and to demand justice and an end to impunity. The statement argued that ‘socio-environmental crime is not an accident’ and it also pointed out the responsibility of the State, which grants licenses to extractive projects, to monitor projects and ‘ensure safety and dignified life of the communities and the environment.’

Transnational corporations exercise significant power over the mining industry and frequently have little regard for the way their commercial activities impact on vulnerable people.

During the 40th Session at the *Human Rights Council* in Geneva, MGA contributed to a statement focusing on prevention, protection, and accountability. MGA promotion points included an encouragement to states to strengthen and incorporate into their domestic laws clear provisions and obligations to enforce corporate human rights, due diligence policies, including within supply chains, subsidiaries and private investors. The establishment of a forum where those most affected, in particular women, can testify, safely and privately, in regards to injustices was promoted. The statement also called for the integration of preventative mechanisms and recommended that regulations mandate human and environmental impact assessments that are ongoing and regular.



Leading up to the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly an open letter, to which MIA became a signatory, was addressed to Secretary-General António Guterres calling on him to publicly demand a global fracking ban. An excerpt states: *'As you are aware, manmade climate change is the biggest and most comprehensive existential threat humanity has ever faced – apart from a nuclear war. Scientists confirm that we have maximum 10-30 years left to phase-out all fossil-fuels (including fossil gas) if we want to avoid overshooting significant climate tipping-points. Scientific evidence shows that methane emissions from gas extraction and from shale gas, in particular, are a significant driver of global warming and climate change.'*

The letter further highlighted a call to action regarding the 1) negative climate impacts of fossil gas; 2) Environmental and public health implications of fracking; 3) Fracking supports polluting plastics industry and; 4) Fracking impacts human rights



## Campaigning on Climate Change

In June, MIA co-sponsored an event *'We, the Climate Generation'*. This event was held in preparation for the annual UN Climate Change Summit. The presenters, who were teenagers, adults, and grandparents, came from different faith, education and national backgrounds, as well as different professional specialities and activist organisations. The event ended in a call to action from more than 150 youth activists, faith-based organisations, UN Delegates and more, to continue to protect our planet.

The Climate Summit took place in September and was attended by world leaders of all 193 Member States. The theme of the Summit was *'A Race We Can Win. A Race We Must Win'*. The Climate Summit sought to challenge states, cities, companies, and citizens to increase ambitions and actions towards climate change. MGA attended this summit. Held simultaneously as the Climate Change Summit was a gathering of faith-based organisations on the climate emergency. The meeting gathered Episcopalians, Lutherans, Roman Catholics, United Methodists, Muslims, Buddhists and Baha'is representing some 48 organisations to strategise ways faith-based organisations can address climate change by filling the gaps left by governments concerning climate change. This gathering resulted in a commitment by faith-based leaders to maintain momentum for an action-oriented movement on climate change. Conclusions and recommendations from the faith-based organisations were drafted into a formal statement and circulated among organisations and beyond.

## Convention on Climate Change COP 25

MGA representatives attended the 25th Session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) in December. MGA was anxious to bring the voices of those from Latin America and the Amazon to COP25. They advocated on behalf of local and indigenous communities who have been impacted by extractive industries (such as oil and gas drilling), hydroelectric dams, transnational corporate agriculture, mineral and

coal mining, and more. They also represented voices from the *Asia Pacific Mercy Gathering* which emphasised that climate change is human-made and exacerbates loss and damage of biodiversity, sea-level rise and rise of carbon emissions, waste management, pollution of the earth, sea, and food, displacement of peoples, water scarcity and erosion. These two sets of voices strongly influenced MGA's lobbying points for COP25. They also included and emphasised that solutions be human rights-based and gender-just and incorporates local knowledge of the peoples in various communities.

MIA also signed onto the 2018 *Peoples Demands for Climate Justice* which continues to be used for justice promotion.

### Responding to the Amazonian Crisis

MGA co-sponsored an event titled '*Towards an Integral Ecology: responding to the Urgent Cries and Horizons of the Amazon*' during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The event took place in preparation for the upcoming *Synod on the Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for an Integral Ecology*, held at the Vatican in October. An indigenous participant stated:

*'Often when we defend our land and culture, we are blamed for preventing progress, but we cannot have progress equal to destruction. Progress needs to be defending humanity, not destroying it.'*

The synod was a compelling testimony to the hope offered to this vulnerable region. Because of the very hope the synod offered, the presidential administration of Brazil, which has overseen the near doubling of illegal deforestation and a sharp rise in attacks on indigenous communities, opposed the synod but across the Amazon, the synod was welcomed as a light that offers a way out of the darkness.

MGA co-sponsored events with the *Amazonian Ecclesial Network* (REPAM) and the *NGO Committee on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples on the rights of nature*.



Goal 2: To research, network, educate and raise awareness on Mercy key theme 'Displacement of Persons'

Outcome 1: Awareness is raised on critical social injustices at local and international levels and contributes to effective change, especially for the most vulnerable.

Outcome 2: Policies and strategies are developed that direct our justice work and the development of a more equitable society.

## Displacement of People

Sisters of Mercy, Associates and partners in Mercy have been working with and advocating on behalf of refugees and asylum seekers for many years. According to the *UN High Commission for Refugees* (UNHCR) 2018 report on the state of forced displacement, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million in 2018 - the highest level that UNHCR has seen in its almost 70 years. Some of the critical issues MGA has been committed to responding to are: human rights, human trafficking, violence against women and girls and homelessness.



---

# Activities

## to Achieve Goal 2

---

### Human Rights

The ongoing work to uphold human rights across the world is crucial to the work of MIA.

Corporations, especially those which operate transnationally, are often the cause of poor working and living conditions, and environmental degradation. These issues frequently affect women and children disproportionately due to their increased vulnerability and lack of fundamental rights in some societies.

In 2018, the *Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group* (OEIGWG) drafted a treaty concerning human rights and transnational corporations. During October, they again met to further their efforts. This has been a challenge because of the structure of international corporations which often operate in many countries through subsidiaries, thus allowing for corporate impunity.

Several groups from civil society, including MGA, urged OEIGWG to keep true to the original spirit of the working group and defend the scope and accountability structures of the treaty. In a letter to the OEIGWG, MGA (with several other groups) expressed the necessity for stronger language so that transnational corporations

will be held accountable for violations of human rights. The letter denounced limiting the treaty to state obligation. Furthermore, they demanded the treaty include all transnational corporations in order to prevent them from continuing to circumvent accountability structures. As the OEIGWG's work on this treaty continues it will be important that MGA campaigns to ensure structures for transnational corporations are in place so these companies can be held accountable for their actions.



## Youth and Human Rights

During the 57th UN Commission on Social Development, MGA staff were involved in organising a youth-led side-event '*Youth Empowered! Enabling youth through social protection: Education, Employment, Environment*'. The UN event explored the impact that lack of access to social protection has on the capability of young people to respond to environmental challenges.

Many of the panellists highlighted youth's lack of access to decent employment opportunities. According to the *International Labour Organization* (ILO), 77% of young workers (97 % in developing countries) are in informal employment. Youth's high participation in informal employment is one reason their access to contributory social protection schemes, for example, unemployment insurance and health insurance, is limited. This, in turn, puts youth at a higher risk for falling into extreme poverty. Through discussions, the event provided examples of good practices for addressing the exclusion of marginalised youth from employment opportunities. Panellists called on governments to partner with youth and to implement social protection policies that address the specific needs of youth, a vital step towards enabling youth to reach their full potential and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

In April MGA staff, along with nearly 1,000 youth advocates from around the world, were selected to participate in the 8th Annual Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum. The Forum focused on ways to empower, include and ensure equal opportunities for young people. This was primarily done through discussions on empowerment and engagement of youth in the 2030 Agenda and interactive round-tables on youth, peace and security.

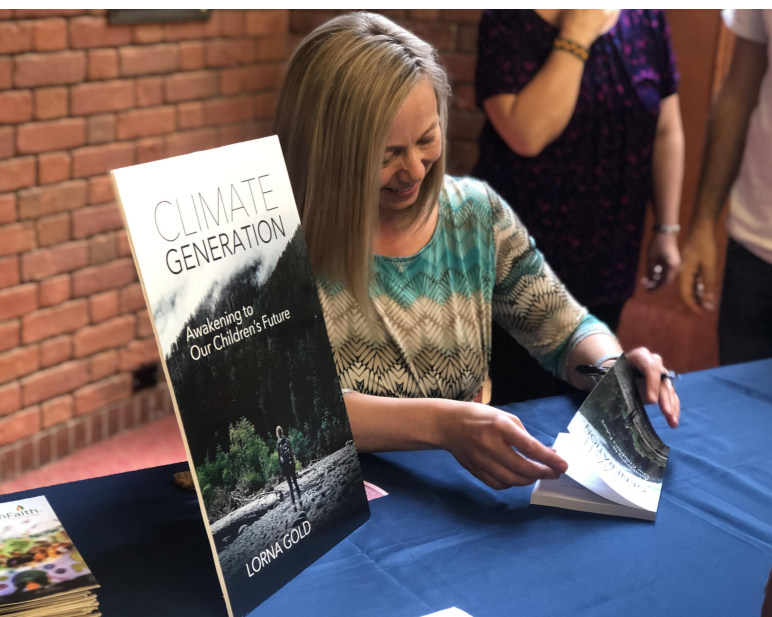
## Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a global scourge affecting the most vulnerable. Due to gender inequalities and the vulnerability of children, traffickers disproportionately target and exploit women and girls. *Inherent Dignity*, a guidebook developed by MGA, views the impact of trafficking and sexual exploitation through the lens of human rights and focuses on how these issues have specifically affected vulnerable populations. By taking on this complex issue from the paradigm of human rights, activists and agencies can see trafficking in its global context, which is inseparable from socio-economics, migration, corruption and crime.

Among the activities undertaken by MGA in its efforts to address human trafficking were the following:

*Inherent Dignity Webinar:* MGA launched a three-session interactive webinar series to take a closer look at MIA's guidebook '*Inherent Dignity*'. The webinars engaged participants with the significant elements of the guide and explored the following questions; What is the human-rights based approach to preventing trafficking? Why is it important to listen to survivors and ensure their participation in the work of prevention? What are governments' legal obligations to preventing trafficking? What can governments, organisations and individuals do to prevent trafficking?

100 people from across the world registered to participate in the webinar sessions. The countries represented included, Mauritius, Macedonia, United Kingdom, Kenya, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Australia,



New Zealand, India, Albania, Malta, Romania, South Africa, Nigeria, Poland, Zambia, United States, Canada, Ecuador and Papua New Guinea. This first session, *'Introducing the Human Rights-Based Approach to Trafficking Prevention'* explored seven paradigms for considering trafficking, presented quantitative data from the recently published UNODC Trafficking in Persons Report, and examined how survivor stories and international human rights law interact in prevention work. During the presentation, the limitations of quantitative data were pointed out while the most significant data is the data that is gained from survivors' accounts. A guest speaker - a trafficking survivor advocate - shared her compelling story, providing insights into the human rights violations she experienced as a young girl that made her vulnerable to being trafficked for sexual exploitation. This story highlighted the need for trafficking prevention that is centred on realising the human rights of women and girls.

The second session dealt with governments' obligation to prevent trafficking under key human rights instruments. This session explored the typical patterns of human rights violations that take place during the trafficking experience .

At the third session entitled *'Prevention of Trafficking: What Organisations and Individuals Can Do'*, anti-trafficking advocates from Canada, Ireland, United States and Australia presented on their advocacy efforts.

### **Presentation at an International Conference**

At an International Conference on Trafficking, convened by the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Vatican's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, MGA presented a paper entitled *'Responding to Survivors of Human Trafficking'*. Focused on the newly published *'Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking'*, the conference brought together 200 service providers, academics, policymakers and pastoral agents. At the heart of the conference was the aim of sharing the best pastoral practice concerning working on the issue of human trafficking and with survivors.

### **Training event for Indigenous women on Human Trafficking**

MGA co-sponsored an event entitled *'Grandmother Council: Anishnabe Training Bundle for Sharing Knowledge on Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation'* during the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII). The event highlighted how indigenous women and girls are disproportionately impacted by human trafficking and the significance of a culture-based response to trafficking.

### **Engaged as a panellist on Trafficking**

MIA was represented on a panel on human trafficking and its challenges today at the ten-year commemoration and Assembly of Talitha Kum. *Talitha Kum* is a project of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG). The meeting was attended by the UN special rapporteur on trafficking in persons. The presentation pointed to patriarchy, sexual violence, colonialism and racism as the root causes of trafficking, and emphasised the need for governments to step up and uphold the rights of individuals, their human rights in every way within their nation-states.

### **Campaigned for the Protection of Children from Abuse and Exploitation**

MGA along with members of the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking In Persons (CSTIP) developed a one-page action guide for Sustainable Development Goal 16, Target 16.2: 'End Abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.' The guide was distributed to the UN Member States at official sessions, side events and Voluntary National Review presentations during the 2019 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).



## Homelessness

Homelessness was one of the issues identified during the Mercy International Reflection Process (MIRP) and therefore it is a focus for MGA. In 2018, MGA joined the UN NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH) to bolster its efforts for the eradication of homelessness and the realisation of the human right to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all.

Steps MGA has taken to promote the eradication of homelessness:

### **Submission to the 57th Commission on Social Development (CSocD57)**

As a member of the WGEH, MGA was a signatory to a statement for the 57th Commission on Social Development (CSocD57). The statement urged the Commission to address the multifaceted problem of housing exclusion and street homelessness.

In addition, MGA helped organise WGEH side-event *'Homelessness: A prominent Sign of Social inequalities'* during CSocD57 with the Permanent Mission of Ireland to the UN and Institute of Global Homelessness as co-sponsors. The event brought together advocates, researchers, policymakers and people living on the streets to explore the structural causes of homelessness and advocate for a human rights-based response to homelessness.

MGA participated in a two-day conference to discuss opportunities for coordinating existing efforts to end homelessness and develop strategies for effective representation at the UN. The conference brought together representatives of WGEH, Institute for Global Homelessness (IGH), National Alliance to End Homelessness, De Paul International, Community Solutions, and FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless. Discussions focused on concrete actions in the areas of research, education and engagement. Some of the agreed initial strategies included: raise the global profile of homelessness, push for a global measurement of homelessness, and achieve agreement on global goals related to homelessness.

### **Make homelessness a priority theme for the 58th meeting of CSocD in 2020**

MGA, along with members of the WGEH, effectively mobilised support among UN Member States to vote for homelessness as the priority theme for the 58th meeting of the UN Commission on Social Development (CSocD58). *'Affordable Housing and Social Protection for All to Address Homelessness'* was named as the theme, the first time global homelessness has been on the UN Agenda. MGA then identified policy recommendations to promote and influence the Draft resolution for the Commission meeting.

MGA is encouraged by this critical step that the UN has taken to recognise homelessness as a global issue and will continue to ensure that the grassroots experiences of Sisters of Mercy and affiliates across the Mercy world influence global policies on homelessness.

The forum brought together various stakeholders, including representatives from MGA, the UN Working Group to End Homelessness, the Vincentian Family Homeless Alliance, the Institute for Global Homelessness, Member States, Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the New York office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The forum created a strategy for mobilising political will among UN Member States and relevant stakeholders to address the multifaceted issue of homelessness. Discussions focused on the need to implement a global definition of homelessness in order to measure and disaggregate data on homelessness.

Additionally, participants called for a recognition of access to adequate housing as a human right, and therefore homelessness as a systemic breach of this right, which leads to violations of other rights. MGA highlighted the significance of changing the current dominant narrative that views homelessness as a personal failure instead of a consequence of systemic inequality.

MGA commemorated the UN *International Day for the Eradication of Poverty* by moderating the Women's Homelessness Symposium sponsored by UNANIMA International. MGA also hosted David Haas for a musical event emphasising justice themes through his music.

### Sustainable Development Goals

MGA promotes ending homelessness through the Sustainable Development Goals. As a member of the UN Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH), MGA participated in campaigning efforts during the 2019 UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) to mobilise more support for addressing global homelessness. MGA and other members of the WGEH highlighted the interconnectedness between homelessness and the Sustainable Development Goals.



# MIA's Impact

- MGA has successfully championed a human rights approach. This approach recommends that those who are affected by a human rights issue are directly involved in the analysis and suitable solutions. In all proposals for change, a particular effort has been made to ensure that the participation of people from the Global South is facilitated.
- MGA is successful in raising awareness on priority justice themes – *Devastation of Earth* and *Displacement of People* – throughout the Mercy world and beyond.
- Women from diverse backgrounds are being trained and upskilled in global justice advocacy through the Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship.
- Mercy is known and respected for work on trafficking, water issues and climate change and MGA's efforts give Mercy a strong sense of who we are in the world as advocates for justice.
- MGA's privileged status at the UN is leveraged for impact on the development of and respect for international standards on Mercy priority justice concerns.



# Progress

Three new developments highlight progress made in 2019.

## 1. Consolidation of the Global Action office in Dublin with the Global Action office in New York

For many years MIA operated two offices – one in New York and one in Dublin.

While this structure was constructed initially to optimise integration, new developments and staffing led to a position where this organisational arrangement was not reflecting needs. Having two offices meant resources were spread and resulted in both offices being challenged in terms of capacity for output and maximum effectiveness. Neither office had the leverage or the impact necessary for complete international engagement. It was considered that a single office, in which resources could be centrally pooled and personnel suitably tasked, would be more effective both in terms of financial commitment and global advocacy for justice. In March, the Dublin and New York offices combined as one office in New York.

While MGA works globally on issues relating to the displacement of peoples and degradation of Earth, it is strategic for MGA to be located near the UN. MIA's role at the UN brings the grassroots Mercy experience, to the only international governmental negotiation table, representing our distinct concerns and mission through a global Mercy lens.



## 2. A consultative study on MGA's future as Mercy's catalyst for Global Justice

Following the consolidation of the offices in New York, a consultative study was undertaken. This consultation engaged the questions: How can MGA be an even more effective advocacy unit for the Mercy world? What should MGA keep doing – what works well? Where should MGA adjust course?

Seven recommendations emerged for MGA's future work:

1. MGA should concentrate its work on a maximum of three priority justice issues;
2. The current MGA-facilitated justice networks that serve an information-sharing goal should be dissolved and new structures for advocacy established;
3. MGA's networked justice efforts may benefit from making national-level change a higher priority;
4. Agreed systems for coordination between MGA office in New York with MIA headquarters in Dublin would help to bridge the geographical gap and enable staff to work under one virtual roof;
5. Adjustments to MGA team structure and current work programme appear advisable;
6. Enhanced presence in digital media, especially social media will be important;
7. Monitoring and evaluation of MGA goals is good practice.



### 3. The establishment of MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship (MELF)

Women's positive responses to immersion in the MGA ministry and their valuable contribution to the ongoing mission of MGA were the impetus for developing a fuller and more formal leadership programme through which young women can have the opportunity to share their knowledge and further develop their understandings of Global Justice.

The programme provides a transformational experience for women who are passionate about advancing Mercy and Justice. This international leadership program is unique in how it provides an opportunity for fellows to establish strong links and networking across the Mercy world through international encounters, webinars and modules, mentorship and more. The fellowship programme has been designed to stimulate creative and critical thinking, promote collaborative leadership and personal reflection leading to a compassionate and communal response to current concerns of our world.

MELF seeks to develop the capacities of women and provide them with practical tools so that they may be agents of change in their communities and in society at large. This involves critical thinking and ethical discernment, looking at the world through a Mercy lens, and challenging oppressive systems in order to advance justice.

The Fellowship runs for 12 months and consists of six components:

**1) Three 10-day International Encounters:** Induction programme in Siem Reap, Cambodia; Rights Training and attendance at the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York, US; Formation and graduation at Mercy International Centre, Dublin.

**2) Individual Research Project:** Each fellow is required to choose a pertinent justice issue related to the Degradation of Earth and/or the Displacement of Peoples and undertake a project that educates, informs and provides specific actions for justice concerning this issue.

**3) Reading Modules:** A core component of the fellowship is the reading modules. A reading package is assigned to each fellow and comprises of literature related to Mercy spirituality, justice, leadership, advocacy, human rights and other relevant topics.

**4) Mentorship Programme:** During the 12-month programme, each fellow is supported by a Mercy mentor. This involves a monthly engagement in which the fellow can explore aspects of their reflections and insights into the programme.

**5) Grassroots Mercy Justice Engagement:** Fellows are required to engage with local and regional Mercy justice networks and are supported to make the relevant links with the MGA Network.

**6) Webinars and online engagement:** Fellows are required to connect regularly online for facilitated discussions. A monthly webinar covering leadership, advocacy and Mercy spirituality forms part of the programme.

The programme is proving to be a great success as is evident from the following responses:

*'We are still at the beginning of our journey, but the first couple of months of the MGA Emerging Leaders Fellowship have been challenging and compelling. We have been confronted with painful realities - poverty, trafficking, statelessness, oppression and environmental degradation - and while I have struggled at times to confront or 'be present' with these realities, I know that my struggle in merely being confronted with them is nothing compared to the struggle of those who experience these realities every day.'*

*'I knew this fellowship was not going to be easy, but I already feel like it is going to be one of the most significant learning curves of my life. Moreover, we know that genuine leadership always has to begin with learning and discomfort.'*

*'For me, the greatest strength of our Fellowship lies in our group. We have an incredible group of women who come from many walks of life and bring their own experiences, wisdom and sense of humour. We have become a tight-knit group that is buoyed by the encouragement and patience we share.'*

*'Together, in Cambodia, or on our webinars and weekly discussions, we often find ourselves saying 'I never thought of it that way', or 'What can be done about this?'*

*It has enabled and engaged us to link social justice issues which are affecting the earth community, beginning with the various countries from which we all have come. Our passion for justice for all individuals has united us in journeying together on this fellowship.*

*We join with other justice women in the world crying and longing for a just world that allows each individual to be respected and enable them to live life to the fullest.'*









## Mercy Global Presence

Mercy International Association launched a 16-month online exploration to engage and link the Mercy world in global contemplation.



---

# Organisation and **Administration**

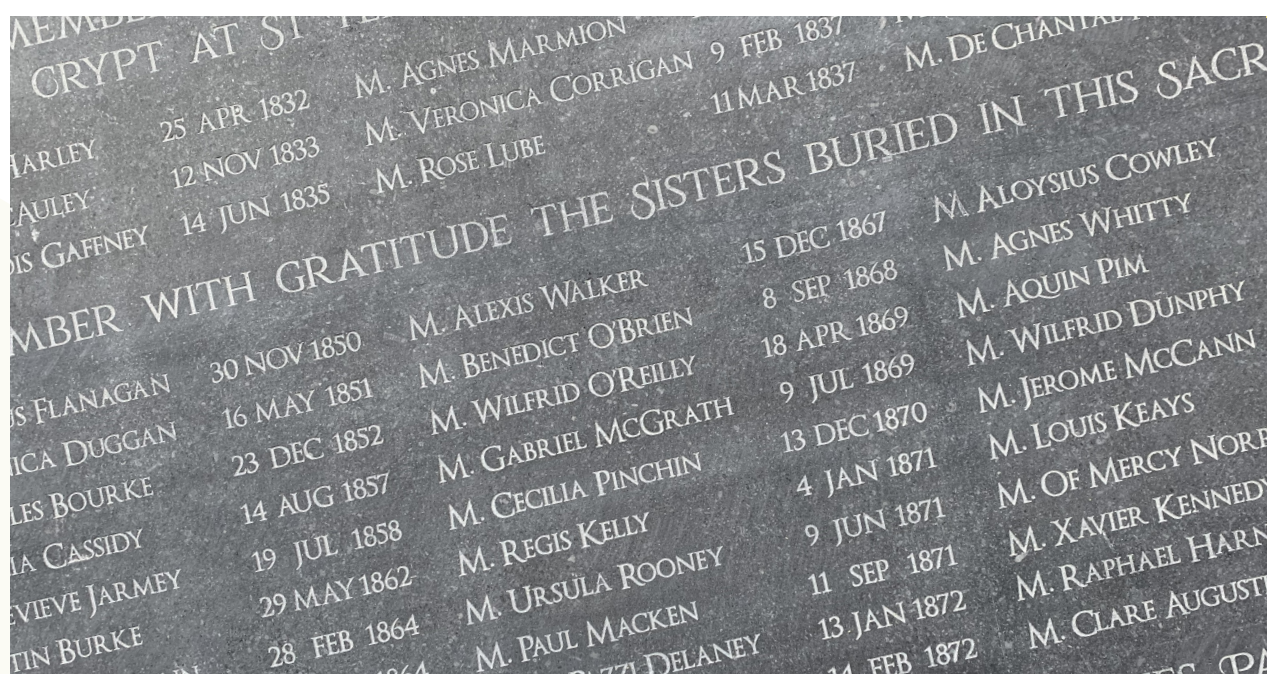
---

Attend to the management, administration and upkeep of MIA

Administration and Organisation of MIA serves the work of the organisation. Comprehensive administration of the Centre, its staff and its functions ensure that the service offered to the Mercy world and those it serves is more easily facilitated. Good organisation requires that communications are clear, lines of delegation are known to all, finances are kept in accordance with the Charity Regulator Guidelines and future development can be planned and supported.

The administration of Mercy International Centre (MIC) involves the preservation, conservation and protection of the building and its artefacts which are of Mercy, historical and inspirational significance and which afford opportunities for ongoing Mercy mission. It also includes the financial administration of MIA.





Sound administration attends to the preservation of both the unique character and heritage of MIC and the founding community of Mercy. The celebration of community history and the continuing of the Mercy response to need are important functions of MIC. In fact, the house is the 'stage' where the rich history and stories are told through daily tours, programmes and to the untold numbers of 'drop-in' visitors.

The house offers the opportunity to experience the immediacy of its contents which link to the early women of Mercy who lived here and from here took the message of Mercy to the people of Dublin, of Ireland and, in a very short space of time, to the rest of the world.

The house represents considerable investment of physical, spiritual, natural and intellectual resources. It behoves the present custodians of this treasure to ensure it is well maintained so that such a vibrant cultural, social, religious, and historical place continues well into the future.

MIC consists of a heritage display room, a chapel, library, conference room, three memorial rooms, accommodation facilities for 15 guests, eight administrative offices, a heritage shop, kitchen, dining room and laundry. A feature of the Centre is the Sacred Garden and cemetery where Catherine McAuley and some of the early Sisters are buried.

---

# Goals and **Outcomes**

---

Goal 1: To attend to the management, administration and upkeep of Mercy International Centre.

Outcome 1: Visitors and guests to MIC are welcomed and hosted in the spirit of Mercy hospitality.

Outcome 2: There is a positive work environment, compliant with employment legislation and other regulatory requirements.

---

# Activities

## to Achieve Goal 1

---

### House and Maintenance Upgrades



During 2019 the following maintenance was carried out:

- plumbing, including the repairs to drainage in the back garden area as well as under the kitchen area;
- the kitchen dishwasher required significant maintenance;
- purpose-made curtains designed to diminish the damaging effects of sunlight on some heritage areas were purchased;
- windows in the administration area facing the garden were repaired;
- the International room was re-carpeted;
- ‘Vox’ headsets were purchased to be used on tours both in the house and on the Dublin walking tour.





## Sacred Garden Upgrade

The Sacred Garden project, planned for completion in time for the Silver Jubilee celebrations was a significant undertaking in 2019. Under the architectural direction of Blackwood & Associates, Lisadell contractors were engaged to carry out the upgrade. The project involved on-going meetings and negotiations with many stakeholders including the architect, builders, sculptors and artists. Much organisational time was spent in meetings and negotiations to ensure that the ministry works of the Centre continued with as little interruption as possible from the building works as well as to ensure that the work was done to the planned specifications. In 2020 there will be a small number of minor works to be completed in the garden.

Mercy International is grateful for the generous donations from the many Irish and international donors without whom the project could not have been undertaken.

Reports and photographs of the Silver Jubilee and the rededication ritual of the Sacred Garden are recorded above and elsewhere in this report.

# Staffing

## Remuneration

Employees' wages/salaries are determined by a review of an employee's specific job role, the need to preserve an acceptable level of internal pay equity across employees within the organisation, and the need to provide a competitive basic salary compared to other organisations in the marketplace in our sector and location. An employees' base salary is increased at intervals in line with the cost of living increases. There are seven members of staff. Four members of staff have opted to join the defined benefit pension scheme managed by INVESCO.

## Salary Bands

€20,000 - 40,000 – 5 employees

€40,000 - 60,000 – 2 employees

The CEO and Executive Team are religious sisters and members of the Sisters of Mercy. They are not paid a salary but receive a stipend. In 2019 the CEO received a stipend of €80,000.

## Inservice Training

Inservice training is regularly offered to support employees performance. In 2019 training in the following areas was organised: GDPR, SAGE, Preservica.

## Community Service

At least two volunteers assist in Mercy International Centre at any time. Volunteers are unpaid, but board and vouched incidental expenses are provided. In 2019 over 50 volunteers provided 1,000+ hours of volunteer service.

## Facilities Management Company

In November, MIA engaged the services of Neylons Facilities Management firm to manage the Centre's facilities. This contract includes the managing of facilities staff, contractors for the provision of some services, as well as staff training in the use of food handling, first aid and manual handling. MIC's contract was signed late in 2019 and further work will be carried out in 2020 to establish a firm and productive working relationship with Neylons.

---

# Goals and **Outcomes**

---

Goal 2: To promote and model Ecological responsibility.

Outcome 1: An Ecological Responsibility policy is in place.





---

# Activities

## to Achieve Goal 2

---

Elsewhere in this report, there is an explanation of ‘Mercy Global Presence’ - the initiative launched by MIA in 2019. This is being accessed and supported by the world-wide Mercy family through the MIA website and through some Programmes organised by the Heritage and Spirituality Leader as well as through the Global Action team. One of the key aspects of this initiative is to promote action to stem degradation of the earth.

At Mercy International Centre, every effort is being made to change the mind-set of all staff and volunteers so that the daily practice of ecological responsibility is everyone’s concern.

Care was taken to purchase heritage shop items that are made from environmentally responsible materials; bio-degradable disposable cups are used to give tea/coffee to homeless callers and for the large pilgrimage groups; cleaning materials containing non-environmentally harmful chemicals are being introduced on a needs basis; e light continues to support the efforts to reduce MIC’s carbon footprint; where possible all printing orders are placed with a company using recycled paper; there has been a water tank installed in the up-graded garden and the water system in the garden rill uses recycled water. A review of the drinking water provided for meetings was completed and measures were established to reduce waste. Environmental Awareness training, scheduled for the staff in 2019 was not possible but in conjunction with Neylons, this initiative will be developed further in 2020.

---

# Goals and **Outcomes**

---

Goal 3: To have a communications plan to enhance the living, telling and supporting of the work of MIA.

Outcome 1: The work of MIA is communicated through a variety of methods that connects stakeholders to Mercy mission



---

# Activities

## to Achieve Goal 3

---

The 2018 Annual Report presented a full account of the new website developed for MIA. 'Together Digital' continues to be the supporting company for the site. There has been a marked improvement in the quality, quantity and variety of resources available through the website.

The hosting of this MIA website is the primary means of facilitating communication throughout the Mercy world. A weekly newsletter is published and all programmes, meetings and special functions are advertised through the site. Heritage items for sale are also listed and on-line shopping for these items has become more popular over the year. A virtual tour of the Centre is facilitated through the website as well. In these ways, communication has allowed MIA to have a virtual presence throughout the world.

Through Mercy eNews and the newly revised Mercyworld.org website, an eighteen-month global exploration of Mercy Global Presence will unfold, inviting the engagement of Sisters of Mercy and partners in Mercy worldwide. A fuller report on this initiative is found elsewhere in the Annual Report but it is obvious that such an initiative could not be so immediately and easily

shared without the use of the website.

An exciting feature of the website was the online release of *In God Alone: The Story of Catherine McAuley* in March. This is now freely available to anyone who accesses the website. This film was also nominated for three Emmy awards and was the winner in the category for Best Original Score.

Video conferencing provided by MIA facilitates a monthly gathering of the younger Sisters of Mercy for prayer and reflection that promotes an intercultural understanding. The video conferencing is also used in the support of programmes, enabling speakers to link in when they are unable to be present in person.

All of these aspects of modern communication used by MIA contribute to the aim of enhancing the living, telling and supporting of the work of MIA.



---

# Governance and Staffing

---

**MIA aims at ensuring that its mission is promoted by highly committed and skilled people at leadership, management and operational levels. The MIA Constitution is the organisation's founding document. It sets out the Governance Structure concerning Members and Board Trustees, detailing their method of appointment, roles and responsibilities.**

## Company Members

The 12 Members of MIA are the Leaders of the Mercy Congregations and Institutes throughout the world. Members appoint a Board of Directors to direct and manage the business of Mercy International Association.

There are some powers reserved to the Members:

- appointment and removal of the CEO;
- appointment and removal of the Board of Trustees;
- ratification of the appointment of Chair for the MIA Board of Trustees;
- ratification of Strategic Plan and Annual Budget for MIA;
- consideration of Financial Statements of MIA at the Annual General Meeting;
- consideration of the Auditor's Report for MIA at the Annual General Meeting;
- review of the affairs of MIA at the Annual General Meeting;
- appointment of Auditors at the Annual General Meeting;
- the winding-up of MIA.

# Company Members



Elizabeth Davis rsm  
Sisters of Mercy of Newfoundland



Colette Cronin rsm  
The Institute of Our Lady of Mercy, United Kingdom



Katrina Fabish rsm  
Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand, resigned 12 Dec 2019



Mary Angela Vergara rsm  
Religious Sisters of Mercy, Philippines



Patricia McDermott rsm  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas



Loreto Conroy rsm  
Sisters of Mercy North Sydney Congregation



Philomena Bowers rsm  
Sisters of Mercy of the Union of Great Britain



Marie Louise White  
Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, Ireland



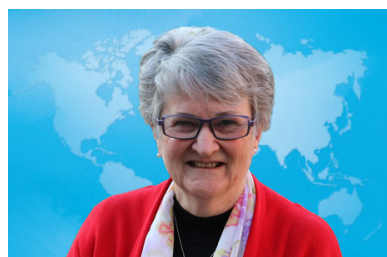
Catherine Reuter rsm  
Sisters of Mercy Brisbane Congregation



Mary-Louise Petro rsm  
Sisters of Mercy Parramatta Congregation



Aelred Carlin rsm  
The Federation of the Sisters of Mercy, United Kingdom, resigned October 2019



Eveline Crotty rsm  
Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia & Papua New Guinea



Susan France rsm  
Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand, from December 2019



Paula Thomas rsm  
The Federation of the Sisters of Mercy, United Kingdom, from October 2019

# Board of Directors



Ron Ashworth

## **Ron Ashworth (USA)**

Ron is currently serving as Chair of the Board of MIA and is a member of the Finance Committee. He previously served as the President/CEO of Mercy Health System based in St. Louis, Missouri and also subsequently served as Chair of the Mercy Health System Board of Directors. He spent the majority of his professional career serving in the health care industry, which included approximately ten years of service as the national health care director of KPMG.



Sheila Carney rsm

## **Sheila Carney rsm (USA)**

Sheila Carney is a member of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas. She brings extensive experience of the life and activities of Mercy in the Americas. She has led several pilgrimages of Youth and partners- in-Ministry to MIC and is very familiar with the priorities and expectations of these groups. Sheila is Special Assistant to the President, Mercy Heritage and Service at Carlow University, Pittsburgh.



Maria Lawton rsm

## **Maria Lawton rsm (AUS)**

Maria is Vicar and Bursar of the Sisters of Mercy Parramatta Congregation, Australia. She brings the experience of life and activities in Mercy in Australia, including ministering in a variety of settings in clinical and education roles in her Nursing ministry. She has served in leadership and governance roles on Boards for the Parramatta congregation and other organisations.



Marie Louise White rsm

## **Marie Louise White rsm (IRL)**

Marie Louise White rsm is Congregational Leader of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, Ireland. She brings extensive experience of life and activities of Mercy in Ireland and Africa. She has served in education roles and in the provision of programmes for younger members of the congregation.



Mary Moorhead

## **Mary Moorhead (IRL)**

Born in Tanzania and brought up in the Lebanon, Mary Moorhead is Chief Executive of the Mater Foundation, Dublin (Fundraising). Trained in marketing, she has experience in the not-for-profit sector in England and experience of NGO work in Africa. Mary has worked across Africa from Somalia to Swaziland, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa. She brings the experience and skills acquired in these roles and in particular her experience and skills in fundraising.





Susan Clarke

### **Susan Clarke (GBR)**

Susan brings the experience of working as a laywoman in a Mercy ministry in England. As well as her skills in School Leadership and Management, she brings the experience of formation work with Staff and Students in Mercy ethos. In this role, she has led adults and young people to programmes run by MIA. Sue is currently Head Teacher at Broughton Hall Catholic High School in Liverpool.



Suzanne Ryder rsm

### **Suzanne Ryder rsm (IRL)**

Suzanne Ryder is a member of the Irish Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. She has wide-ranging experience of Mercy worldwide from her time in mission in Perú and her ministry as Justice Coordinator for the Congregation. Currently, she is Communications Coordinator for her Province (Western). She also ministers as a Spiritual Companion and practices Centering Prayer.



Colette Cronin rsm

### **Colette Cronin rsm (GBR)**

Colette is Institute Leader of the Institute of Our Lady of Mercy (GB). She brings extensive experience of life and activities of Mercy in Great Britain. She has served in Leadership and Governance roles in a variety of organisations and has experience in administrative and financial matters.



Denise Fox rsm (resigned May 2019)

### **Denise Fox rsm (NZL) (resigned May 2019)**

Denise is a member of Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa Sisters of Mercy New Zealand. She brings extensive experience of the life and activities of Mercy in New Zealand and is currently CEO of McAuley Ministries in Sydney, Australia. She has held leadership roles in her Congregation and in education and has extensive governance experience, having served as a member of boards of healthcare, finance, education, communication, and housing ministries.

---

# Board of Directors

---

The MIA Members appoint the Directors. As specified by the MIA Constitutions, the Board comprises of up to nine Directors - five Sisters of Mercy and four others. Employees are not eligible to be Board Directors. The Board is responsible for the governance of the Company. Directors ensure that the mission of MIA is safeguarded and carried out and are responsible for determining the specific values and standards for the organisation, building on the core values. The Directors are collectively responsible for the business of MIA and are the trustees of its assets. They are also responsible for ensuring that the funds of MIA are applied for the purposes for which they have been provided. Individual Directors are expected to show leadership by promoting the values and standards of the organisation. The Directors, all of whom are non-executive, perform their roles voluntarily. They cannot, under the organisation's constitution, receive remuneration for services to MIA and may only be reimbursed for incidental expenses claimed, which for overseas Directors includes travel and accommodation for six days of Board meetings over three weekends and one day for the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## Selection of Board Members

The Board must continue to be vibrant and productive in leading MIA forward. It needs to be able to draw on an appropriate balance of skills - gender, competency, qualities, backgrounds and interests. Therefore, the Directors regularly re-evaluate the mix of skills required and when new appointments are due to be made, Members are advised of the desired skills. Among the skills identified by the Directors as necessary to the Board are leadership and management experience and skills in Mercy ministries, legal, financial and fundraising skills, as well as commitment to social and environmental justice.

## Induction and on-going training

Directors are expected to act on an informed basis, in good faith, with due diligence and care, in the best interests of MIA. Directors' induction includes an overview of MIA's strategic objectives, the role of the Board and individual Directors, MIA's finances and its funding model. It also includes guidance on the Directors' duties.

A special induction pack is provided to each new Director, and the Company Secretary is responsible for overseeing the induction process. Ongoing development of the Board also takes place.

1. Each May, in conjunction with the AGM, Members and Board engage for approximately two days in Visioning, Strategic planning and communication regarding the life of the organisation.

2. The Directors are provided with 5 Newsletters annually (Board Matters) that provide informative articles on issues of Leadership & Governance. Each edition covers five main areas: Mission Delivery; Board Effectiveness; Fundraising and Donors; Workplace policies and practices; Recent Research on topics of interest.

3. Training sessions are organised periodically for Members and Board. In May 2019, an in-depth training on the role and responsibilities of Members and Board Trustees was provided by Mason Hayes & Curran (MHC), Advisers in Corporate Governance & Charity Law, to all MIA Members and Directors. Ongoing support was provided throughout the year by MHC on Charity Law, the Companies Act 2014 and compliance with regulatory obligations, especially to the chairperson and company secretary. MHC provides a pro bono service of a legal adviser to each Board and Finance meeting.



4. All Directors visited the UN in October to gain a better understanding of how MIA interacts with the UN in its justice work and to evaluate how this relationship can be used to best effect. They also received a consultant's report, which they had commissioned on the work of Mercy Global Action, and considered recommendations on how to maximise the impact of this work.

5. Directors avail of Financial and Investment expertise at all Board and Finance meetings.

## Tenure

The Directors are initially appointed for three years. At every AGM of MIA, one-third of the Directors retire from office. A retiring Director is eligible for re-appointment. Any Director who has served more than nine consecutive years must retire at the AGM following his or her ninth year in office but is eligible for re-appointment after not less than one year following the date of his/her retirement.



## Attendance at Board Meetings

Because of the wide geographical dispersion of the Board, it generally meets in Mercy International Centre, Baggot St. Dublin for six days each year over three weekends and for one day to attend the AGM. The October meeting was held in the MIA office in New York.

Attendance of Directors was as follows and represents a 92% attendance

Director	Feb May Oct	% Attendance in 2019
Denise Fox rsm	Yes Yes N/A	2 of 3, 100%
Ron Ashworth	Yes Yes Yes	3 of 3, 100%
Marie Louise White rsm	Yes Yes Yes	3 of 3, 100%
Colette Cronin rsm	Yes Yes Yes	3 of 3, 100%
Mary Moorhead	Yes Yes Yes	3 of 3, 100%
Suzanne Ryder rsm	Yes Yes Yes	3 of 3, 100%
Sheila Carney rsm	Yes No Yes	2 of 3, 66%
Susan Clarke	Yes No Yes	2 of 3, 66%
Maria Lawton rsm	N/A N/A Yes	1 of 1, 100%

Having completed nine years on the Board, Denise Fox rsm retired from the Board on 12 May 2019.

Maria Lawton rsm was appointed to the Board on 13 May and attended her first meeting on 18 October 2019.

## Chairperson

The Board elects the Chairperson of the Board from among its number. The appointment is for one year, and at the end of that year, the Chairperson can be re-elected for successive terms. The Chairperson oversees the orderly operation of the Board and its interaction with management. The Members ratify the election of the Chairperson and the Chairperson's re-election. The chair of the Board and the chair of the Finance Committee maintain regular contact with management between meetings concerning the affairs of the company. The chair also keeps the Members updated on relevant issues.

Following the retirement of Denise Fox rsm on 12 May 2019, Ron Ashworth was elected Chair by the Board and ratified by the Members at AGM on 13 May 2019.

## Vice-Chairperson

The Board elects the Vice-Chairperson from among its number for a one-year term. The Vice-Chairperson assists the Chairperson and may be re-elected for successive terms.

## Company Secretary

The Directors appoint the Company Secretary. They ensure that the person appointed has the skills necessary to perform the statutory and legal duties of the Company Secretary and such other duties as may be delegated to the Company Secretary by the Directors. As in previous years, the Directors reviewed the current practice of the same person filling the role of CEO and the role of Company Secretary. It was decided to continue with this arrangement.

## CEO

The CEO is responsible for the day-to-day management of MIA and the implementation of MIA's long and short-term plans. The CEO presents a comprehensive report at each Board meeting, covering ongoing activities, financial and administrative affairs, communication updates and future planning. At the beginning of each year, management presents to the Board an implementation plan for the five-year strategic direction and at year-end reports on the implementation of the plan. The CEO acts as a direct liaison between the Board and management. The CEO also communicates on behalf of MIA to employees, other stakeholders and the public. Duties and responsibilities delegated to the CEO include the following: Strategic Plan implementation, staffing and operations, public relations, liaison with Board.

## Conflicts

MIA has a comprehensive Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Loyalty policy that applies to Directors, Staff and Volunteers. It is standard practice at the beginning of each Board meeting to request each Director to indicate if he/she has a conflict of interest or loyalty concerning any agenda item. Procedures are in place for dealing with the conduct of Directors in this regard and the Minutes of the meeting must record the issue and the Director involved.





# Committees

The Board is responsible for overseeing the work of MIA's CEO and Management Team. To function efficiently and effectively, the Board has devised and agreed on procedures for productively running the enterprise. To do this, it has 3 Committees - a Finance committee, a Governance Committee and a Global Action Committee, each of which has written terms of reference approved by the Board and reviewed annually. The committee system allows the Trustees to make the most effective use of their time and also allows appropriate time to be devoted to considering particular financial, governance and operational issues.

## Finance Committee

In 2019 this committee consisted of two Directors - Ron Ashworth, (Chair), and Colette Cronin rsm, as well as the Leader Finance and Administration, Margaret Scroope rsm, Peter Burnett (GB Fundraising), Bill Roche (Finance support), Kevin Hoy (Legal Adviser) and the CEO Mary Reynolds rsm. The Committee meets three times yearly, and the Chair keeps regular contact with the finance personnel and CEO. The Finance Committee reviews the accounts every quarter. Committee Members liaise with the investment managers and oversee the ethical management of the investments. They monitor the fundraising projects and ensure that MIA complies with the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising of which MIA is a signatory. The Committee keeps abreast of Charity Law to ensure that the financial practices of MIA are in line with its directives. It monitors the employee Pension Scheme which is managed by Invesco as well as the Insurance policy of MIA.

MIA has an Internal Financial Control Policy and an Ethical Investment Policy in place.

## Governance Committee

The Governance Committee oversees all compliance issues following the Charities Governance Code. It comprises of Mary Moorhead (Director), the CEO, Mary Reynolds and Kevin Hoy (Legal Adviser). It reports to the Board and alerts it to any actions that need to be taken to remain fully compliant with the Good Governance Code and the Charities Governance Code. An area of special attention in 2019 was the Charities Governance Code and the Beneficial Ownership Register. MIA is registered as being fully compliant with the Good Governance Code and has over 2019 familiarised itself with the Charities Governance Code Toolkit. On reviewing the work of the committee and its recommendations, the Board is satisfied that it has taken the necessary steps to meet the core standards of the Code and it is ready to comply with the code. The Committee is also responsible for oversight of Risk Management.

## Global Action Committee

This Committee was established in 2019 to support the work of consolidating the Dublin and New York Global Action offices. It comprises of Sheila Carney rsm (Director), Kevin Hoy (Legal Adviser), Angela Reed (Leader Global Action) and Mary Reynolds (CEO). This committee advises and assists the Global Action Office in the administration and management of the Global Action Programme. Among its primary functions in 2019 was engagement with a consultation process regarding the future direction of the Global Action Office and with the recommendations that arose from the consultation.



## Decision Making

The Board of MIA is responsible for overseeing the proper management of MIA. It has a collective responsibility for:

- putting in place a transparent process of delegation to and accountability from the CEO;
- approval of annual budgets and ensuring the adequacy of internal financial control measures; ensuring effective systems are in place for identifying and managing risk;
- approval of annual reports and audited financial statements;
- development of Board Committee structures;
- ensuring that appropriate governance arrangements are in place;
- ensuring that MIA behaves ethically following the core values of the organisation (which values are set by the Board and senior management to ensure that ethical behaviours permeate all levels of the organisation);
- ensuring that a proper balance is achieved between the respective roles of Board and management;
- setting performance targets, including key financial targets and, in particular, approving and closely monitoring the budget;
- promoting the role of MIA in the Mercy global family and beyond by developing mechanisms for gathering the views of stakeholders and by keeping people informed in an open, accountable and responsible way.

## Lobbying Activity

As required under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, it is the practice at MIA to log any communications that are judged to be in this category. These are then included in the returns and submissions to the Standards in Public Office Commission office quarterly as required by the Act.



## Strategic Plan

The Board oversees the production of a strategic plan which is ratified by the Members. This plan is MIA's policy document setting out the aims of the organisation over the coming five years and which moves it strategically towards the achievement of its mission. 2019 marked the 2nd year of the 5-year Strategic Plan. The Management Team prepares and presents an annual implementation plan, based on the Strategic Plan, to the Board for approval and also presents an annual report on how the implementation plan was carried out. The implementation plan outlines the particular foci for the year, the priorities and proposed actions, the communications network to achieve each priority, the resources needed, the persons responsible, the success criteria and the expected outcome.

# Risk Management

## Process

MIA approaches Risk Management in a four-fold way: Identification of Risk; Assessment of Risk; Control of Risk; Review of Controls. This risk management process is an integral part of MIA's organisational governance system. Risk is regularly and thoroughly assessed at various levels in the organisation up to Board level, and persons responsible for this and for managing and mitigating the risk are identified. There is a risk register in place.

## Identification of Risk

The significant risks identified are in the following areas: Operational; Financial; Reputational and Technological.

### Operational Risks in the areas of Governance, Personnel and Operations

Major support in identifying risk in these areas was the scrutiny of these areas through the lens of the Good Governance Code, now the Charities Governance Code, and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Regulations, 2007. One significant operational risk is the tenure of key staff. Senior staff are seconded from member Congregations for fixed terms. The risk is that on the occasion of staff changeover, organisational memory and business expertise can be lost.

## Financial Risk

The financial risks are quite significant. The income for the running costs of MIA is derived from Congregational levies, fundraising and income from the investment of the Endowment Fund. The risk concerning Congregational levies (which was formerly the primary funding source of MIA) is that numbers of Sisters in these Congregations are declining and consequently the ability of the member Congregations to fund MIA is decreasing. To supplement the income, MIA engages in fundraising. The risks relating to fundraising include the fact that there is a small pool of donors and growing competition from other Charities. There are additional risks that derive from issues relating to investments (on which MIA now majorly depends for income) such as capital losses, increases in net income being less than inflation, unpredictable market conditions and exchange rates.

## Information Technology risks

Information Technology is used significantly as part of MIA's mission – especially in programme work via the website, in global communication and in several administrative and financial applications. MIA's risks in relation to cybersecurity include damage to its hardware, software or electronic data, cybercrime and hacking, as well as disruption of the services provided via the internet. GDPR has added a new dimension to these risks.

## Reputational Risk

Reputational risk can occur for MIA in a variety of ways, including every aspect of our work from the services we provide, employment issues, the expectation of stakeholders and donors, compliance with various legal and other obligations, financial stewardship and media exposure.

## Assessment of Risk

The assessment method MIA uses is to examine each identified risk and map how likely it is to occur and how severe its impact would be on MIA's ability to achieve its operational objectives if a breach did occur. The likelihood is measured from remote to highly probable and potential impact from insignificant to extreme, and the interaction of these two factors is recorded by a cumulative score which is registered on a risk heat map. This helps the Board identify and prioritise the risks associated with each of the identified areas.

## Control of Risks

Control of Risks is addressed by the establishment of Policies, Procedures and Practices, which include designated responsibility to personnel at various levels – staff, senior management and Board.

1. The recent Good Governance Code and the present Charities Governance Code are used to direct how MIA policies, processes and procedures are established and applied. MIA is compliant with both codes. MIA has a suite of policies in place to activate these codes.

2. The Board pays significant attention to succession planning, to robust transition processes and to a schedule of retirements that ensures that only one key staff member retires at one time.

3. Staff are provided with information and training regarding compliance with Health and Safety Regulations and a Health and Safety Officer is in place. There is particular attention paid to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Comprehensive policies, practices and procedures are in operation.

4. The services of an external HR company are contracted to advise on potential risks relating to employment.

5. Compliance with legislation is maintained, particularly in the areas of Company law, Employment Law, Charity Legislation, GDPR, Beneficial Ownership, Lobbying.

6. MIA has signed up to and implements the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising. A fundraising strategy, linked to MIA's organisational implementation plan, has been devised. This includes widening the pool of donors. In order to address growing competition, expanded ways of fundraising are being explored.

7. Several policies direct financial management: Investment Philosophy and Policy; Rules for Managing the Endowment; Internal Financial Control Policy.

8. The Board has set investment objectives with moderate risk appetite, medium-term time horizon and a balance between income and capital growth.

9. An IT company is engaged in monitoring all IT equipment and activity on an ongoing basis. This company maintains an offsite backup service to all MIA computer files. All computers and data are password protected. MIA holds an insurance policy that covers theft of, and damage to, IT hardware.

10. A professional PR company is engaged when advice is needed on engaging with the media or when an incident of public interest is in process.

## **B. Identification of Gaps and Exposures:**

This is addressed in the following ways:

1. The Board periodically reviews MIA operations, to identify gaps and risk exposures. These operations include the programmes and services provided, employment, the expectation of stakeholders and donors, compliance with various legal and other obligations, financial stewardship and media exposure.

2. The Board annually reviews adherence to the Good Governance Code and the Charities Governance Code, and at agreed intervals evaluates practice as directed by policies and procedures.

3. In addition to assessing compliance with the Good Governance/Charities Governance Code, the Compliance Committee notes potential risks in the relevant areas.

4. In emerging areas, such as GDPR, external expertise is engaged to evaluate current practice and to identify risk.

5. Financial consultants are engaged to advise on financial risk and the investment environment.

6. In 2019, an external review was conducted on the Global Action Programme.



## Relationship with Stakeholders

We have identified the following as our Stakeholders:

- The Leaders and membership of the 12 Mercy entities that comprise the Mercy Global family
- The Staff and Volunteers that undertake the work of MIA
- The participants in our pilgrimages and programmes
- Our donors and supporters
- Our online community
- Interested public.

In order to foster good relations with our stakeholders, we engage the following:

- We maintain a comprehensive and up to date website. This is a significant means of promoting interconnection among the Mercy global family, of providing educational and spiritual resources and a platform through which our membership and others can engage with issues of global concern with which MIA engages.
- The weekly newsletter is our primary means of on-going communication with our stakeholders. It reports weekly to its readers on various aspects of how the MIA vision is being accomplished. It provides a platform for stakeholders to report on matters of interest to them. It highlights the most recent resources that MIA is providing for educational and

formational purposes. It raises awareness of justice issues-particularly in areas of degradation of earth and displacement of peoples and it reports latest news items.

- Views of stakeholders are sought and valued. The Board meets with the Leaders of the 12 Mercy entities every year for the exchange of information and consultation and discussion on matters of relevance. All participants in programmes and pilgrimages are invited to evaluate their experience and provide recommendations. Reports from Team Members are received at each Board meeting, and it is common practice to have Team Members engage in relevant parts of the meeting. Staff are consulted on significant issues e.g. appointment of a new CEO. Volunteers are invited to evaluate and make recommendations about their placements.
- Regular contact is maintained with donors through updates and reports. In 2019, as part of Jubilee celebrations, a special donor appreciation event was organised. Donors are informed that MIA is fully committed to achieving the standards contained within the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.
- Several of our policies allow for stakeholders concerns to be presented. Among these are: Complaints procedures, Whistle-Blowers policy; Child Safeguarding policy. Our GDPR policies assure all our stakeholders about the way we handle the personal data they provide to us.

---

# Executive Leadership Team and Staff

---



*Mary Reynolds rsm*  
CEO



*Margaret Scroope rsm*  
Leader Administration and Finance



*Anna Nicholls rsm*  
Leader Heritage and Spirituality



*Denise Boyle fmdm*  
Leader Global Action (Retired Feb 2019)



*Angela Reed rsm*  
Leader Global Action (From May 2019)

## Dublin Staff

- Avril Tyrell: Facilities Manager
- Emma Horgan: Development Officer
- Madeleine Hanlon: Receptionist
- Angela Kane: Secretary
- Elizabeth O'Sullivan: Housekeeper
- Joseph Tomina: Caretaker and Cleaner
- Carita Irwin rsm: Tours/Hospitality (volunteer)
- Betty Lacey: Global Action Researcher (retired 28 Feb)
- Catherine Gibbons rsm: Global Action volunteer (retired 28 Feb)
- Síor Cosgrove rsm: Heritage Volunteer

## New York Staff

- Colleen Swain: Leadership Advocacy and Women's Development
- Marian Gardner: Intern (until Aug)
- Amanda Carrier rsm: Intern (from Sept)

## Contracted Staff

- Anne Walsh: Web Manager and eNews Editor
- Margaret Roche: Administration/Heritage
- Bill Roche: Finance support

## Volunteers

MIA is grateful to the many volunteers who support the work throughout the year.

# Financial

Our current funding model has four components:

1. Levies paid by Member congregations
2. Income generated by the Endowment Fund
3. Ongoing fundraising to build a Capital and Programmatic Fund
4. Income from activities provided by Mercy International Centre.

Mercy International Association receives no government grants.

## Levies

Until 2018, the Sisters of Mercy worldwide provided approximately 75% of the annual income of MIA. (€900,000 of €1,250,000). The remaining 25% was provided by a reserved fund which the Mercy Congregations established when Mercy International Fund was opened in 1994 to fund annual budget deficits, and by a small income from the proceeds of activities that take place in the Mercy International Centre. By 2011, it was evident that the reserved funds would be exhausted by 2016 and it was also acknowledged that the congregations were no longer in a position to continue funding at the current rate due to falling income and greater demands on them due to changing demographics. It was agreed that the annual funding of €900,000 per year in 2011 would drop over the coming ten years to €200,000 in 2021. Consequently, the idea of establishing an Endowment Fund was conceived.

## Endowment Fund

The fundraising campaign to establish the Endowment Fund took place in Ireland, Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States. A €20 million target was set with the hope that this would yield an annual sum approximate to what

the Congregations formerly paid. In 2019, the investment income from the Endowment Fund began to be utilised as a significant part of the financing of annual operations. Rules for managing this have been developed to help ensure that the fund will remain intact as it becomes the principal financing source for MIA operations. The Irish Revenue Commissioners have approved these Rules. The fundraising aim for 2019 was to reach the target of €20 million by 2019 and this goal was achieved.

In 2019 the projected investment income net of brokerage fees and commission was €490,000. This amount is added to the Endowment accounts as investment earnings accumulate. During the years 2019 and 2020, there is/will be a drawdown of €500,000 to replace discontinued support from the Congregations. From 2021, there will be a drawdown of €700,000 to replace the ongoing decrease in congregational support. By 2021 it is estimated that the Endowment Fund earnings can be approximately €550,000. The difference between the drawdown of €700,000 and the earnings of €550,000 or €150,000 is the amount by which the Endowment Fund could decline assuming no changes in market value. Because of this differential, it will be necessary to both maximise investment return and produce small increases in the market value of the Endowment securities to ensure no substantial decline in the endowment investment balance. Another option is to attempt to continue raising donor funds to assure the Endowment is kept intact.



## Programmatic and Capital Fund

A Phase 2 campaign was set up in the latter part of 2016. It was initiated because the campaign to create the endowment was designed to replace the existing financing of MIA operations. The MIA Endowment Fund is not sufficient to provide for further increases in capital needs and programme development. MIA has operated annually at break-even or most often at a small loss. No provision had been made for capital needed for future capital and programmatic needs. The Phase 2 campaign is intended to provide some funding for these needs, and the funding programme is being pursued in Ireland, England and the United States. The Phase 2 investment fund had accumulated € 1,712,925 resulting from donor receipts as of January 1, 2019 –€1,000,000 of this amount has been restricted to assist special projects responding to crises. During 2019, €247,653 were received. Of that amount, €146,733 were restricted and the remaining €100,920 were unrestricted.

The fund is projected to generate approximately €14,000 of investment income net of brokerage commissions for the year. The goal is to meet €9,000,000 in order to complete the campaign.

In addition to the above, a restricted grant of € 540,000 was received to finance three years of the Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship Program, which is run under the auspices of the MIA/MGA offices in New York .

## Income from Mercy Centre Activities

Income is received for the provision of programmes and services at Mercy International Centre and from a heritage shop run at the centre.

## Investment Philosophy

MIA's investment portfolio has been established to ensure permanent funding for the heritage house in Baggot Street and the activities of MIA. The investment philosophy is to grow MIA investments over the medium term in a prudent, coherent, ethical and consistent manner. The Fund Managers (Goodbody) have therefore been instructed to provide MIA with

- moderate risk portfolio
- an investment horizon of over five years
- an investment objective of a combination of income and capital growth
- direct investment to be subject to an ethical filter.

Given the need to draw an income from the portfolio and its longer-term nature the focus is on:

- a diversified level of risk
- equities paying sustainable and growing dividends
- bonds with a good risk-reward profile
- absolute return funds generating stable return collectively
- property funds.

Most holdings in the portfolio have daily liquidity. This ensures that at any time some assets are readily accessible if required.

## Ethical Investment Policy

MIA considers its investments in terms of ethical, social and environmental issues and its funds are managed to provide a reasonable return consistent with these considerations. The aim is to promote Mercy ethos through investment practices and to balance the need for financial return with the aim of supporting only companies that operate in a manner consistent with MIA values. In partnership with the investment managers, and observing the standard rules of sound financial management, MIA aims to invest in well-managed companies, with positive records in:

- advancement of women and underrepresented populations,
- Board diversity,
- just employment practices and vendor standards,
- effective environmental policies to promote sustainability of life, especially water
- protection of human rights,
- promotion of non-violence.

The investment manager has been instructed to avoid directly profiting from, or providing capital to, products, services or activities that are materially inconsistent with Mercy values, and are in danger of undermining the credibility and effectiveness of Mercy witness. A range of investment exclusions is therefore maintained.

## Reserve Policy

In 2019, MIA developed a reserves policy. It defines reserves as income which is available to MIA and which can be spent at the discretion of the Board of Directors to further any of MIA's objectives but which is not yet spent, committed or designated for any specific purpose. Reserves set out in the policy do not include the MIA Endowment Fund, the restricted funds or the designated funds received from donors.

The reserves are required for three main purposes

- To meet the annual budget deficit
- To make up any shortfall in designated/restricted funds for ongoing development
- To meet unexpected emergencies

At present €0.5 million has been set as the appropriate annual reserve. In addition the Policy makes provision for the establishment of a level of designated reserves to cover long-term planning and organisational commitments and directs that this be kept in an investment fund account. The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the MIA's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

It takes into account:

- Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted.
- Planned activity level.
- Unexpected emergency maintenance on an old heritage listed building.

The Reserves policy will be reviewed regularly by the Board

## Pensions

MIA staff had the option of joining a defined pension scheme. This scheme has been concluded as MIA staff have moved, under TUPE, to another employer - Neylons Facility Management Services. This company operates a pension scheme to which the employees may transfer.

## Fundraising

The Board has adopted the 'Fundraising Code: Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising'. MIA publicly confirms its commitment to the code in this Annual Report, and there is a statement verifying this commitment on the MIA website. MIA also has a Donor Charter which is consistent with the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising.

---

# Future Directions

---

Our Strategic Plan for 2017-2022 is now more than half way through. Focused on building a Mercy Global Presence, the work of the organisation nurtures Mercy values and spirituality and responds to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor.

It sets the following broad ambitions for the organisation:

- to enable 1.5 million members of the Mercy family – Vowed Members, Associates, partners in Mercy to develop a global sense of identity and interconnection in their Mercy activities;
- to share the richness of the Mercy heritage as a basis for formation, education and advocacy with this population and with those who are served by their ministries and with those with whom they network;
- to harvest the efforts of members in more than 30 countries in which Mercy operates and to influence policy through ECOSOC status at the UN to respond to the cry of Earth and the cry of the Poor;
- to ensure sustainability by careful stewardship of resources and on-going fundraising and to enable the mission to be achieved through good governance, effective management and efficient organisation.

Implementation of this plan will continue over the next three years. Progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Board of Directors and preparation for the development of a new strategic plan will commence next year, building on the outcomes of the current plan and the analysis of current need and circumstances.

Among the immediate plans for the coming year are the following:

- completion of review of Constitutions;
- enactment of the *Charities Governance Code*;
- development of Mercy heritage resources with enhanced accessibility;
- *Streams of Mercy*, a new programme that includes exploring Mercy locations throughout Ireland;
- provision of fellowship opportunities for 10 participants in a global justice programme;
- engagement with the recommendations of the recent consultative report on Mercy Global Action's future as a catalyst for global justice;
- monitoring of new arrangements for the facility management of Mercy International Centre;
- management of finances and investments to grow MIA's resources

A new CEO, who will take up the leadership of MIA in March, will take the organisation on the next stage of the journey.



## Accounting Records

The measures taken by the Trustees to ensure compliance with the requirements of Sections 281 to 285 of Companies Act 2014, with regard to the keeping of accounting records, are the employment of appropriately qualified accounting personnel and the maintenance of a computerised accounting system. The books of account of the charity are kept at The Mercy International Centre, Lower Baggot St. Dublin 2.

## Relevant Audit Information

In the case of each of the persons who are Trustees at the time this report is approved, in accordance with section 332 of Companies Act 2014:

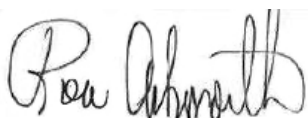
So far as each Trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditors are unaware, and

Each Trustee has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a Trustee in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

## Auditors

In accordance with Sections 380 to 385 of the Companies Act 2014, the independent auditor, Robert J. Kidney & Co. have indicated their willingness to continue in office.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 7 February 2020 and signed on behalf of the Board by



Ron Ashworth  
Trustee



Sheila Carney  
Trustee

---

# Trustees' **STATEMENT**

---

## TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with Irish law and regulations.

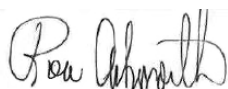
Irish Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under the law the Trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with Companies Act 2014 and accounting standards issued by the Financial Reporting Council, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland) as modified by the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" effective 1 January 2015.

Under company law, the Trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that the statements give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as to the financial year-end and of the profit or loss of the company for the financial year and otherwise comply with Companies Act 2014.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards, identify those standards, and note the effect and the reasons for any material departure from those standards; and
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for ensuring that the company keeps or causes to be kept adequate accounting records which correctly explain and record the transactions of the company, enable at any time the assets liabilities, financial position and profit or loss of the company to be determined with reasonable accuracy, enable them to ensure that the financial statements and Trustees' report comply with the Companies Act 2014 and enable the financial statements to be audited. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.



Trustee



Trustee

Date: 7 February 2020

---

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

---

## Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Mercy International Association for the year ended 31 December 2019 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash flows and notes to the financial statements. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable Irish law and Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland as modified by the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" effective 1 January 2015.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the assets, liabilities and financial position of the company as at 31 December 2019 and of its net movement in funds for the financial year then ended
- have been properly prepared in accordance with FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and as modified by the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" effective 1 January 2015
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

## Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (Ireland) (ISAs (Ireland)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable

company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Ireland, including the Ethical Standard issued by the Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority (IAASA), and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which ISAs (Ireland) require us to report to you where;

- the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the Trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## Other information

The Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.



In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Opinions on other matters prescribed by Companies Act 2014

In our opinion, based solely on the work undertaken in the course of the audit,

- we have obtained all the information and explanations which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit:
- in our opinion the accounting records of the association were sufficient to permit the financial statements to be readily and properly audited
- the financial statements are in agreement with the accounting records
- the information given in the Trustees' report is consistent with the financial statements
- the Trustees' report has been prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 2014.

## Matters on which we are required to report by exception

Based on the knowledge and understanding of the Company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' report.

The Companies Act 2014 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion, the disclosures of Trustees' remuneration and transactions specified by law are not made. We have nothing to report in this regard.

## Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the Trustees' responsibilities statement, the Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and otherwise comply with the Companies Act 2014, and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (Ireland) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

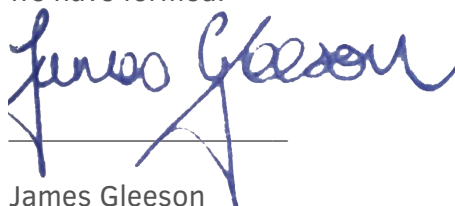
As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (Ireland), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charitable company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

## The purpose of our audit work and to whom we owe our responsibilities

Our report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 391 of the Companies Act 2014. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an audit report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company or the company's members as a body for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



James Gleeson

For and on behalf of  
Robert J. Kidney & Co.  
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Audit Firm  
11 Adelaide Road  
Dublin 2

# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

## INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

### ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2019 €	Restricted Funds 2019 €	Endowment Funds 2019 €	Total Funds 2019 €	Total Funds 2018 €
Income From:						
Donations and legacies	2	580,152	651,276	-	1,231,428	1,703,720
Investments	3	55,039	26,911	576,054	658,004	447,430
Other Income	4	146,304	-	-	146,304	136,434
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>781,495</b>	<b>678,187</b>	<b>576,054</b>	<b>2,035,736</b>	<b>2,287,584</b>
Expenditure On:						
Charitable Activities	5	932,339	794,584	-	1,726,923	1,107,657
Raising Funds	6	104,761	-	-	104,761	91,973
Governance Costs		45,723	-	-	45,723	54,302
Other Expenditure	7	70,256	7,994	95,878	174,128	172,083
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>1,153,079</b>	<b>802,578</b>	<b>95,878</b>	<b>2,051,535</b>	<b>1,426,015</b>
Net (Expenditure) Income before other losses		(371,584)	(124,391)	480,176	(15,799)	861,569
Gains on Investment Assets		339,891	170,631	2,613,077	3,123,599	1,377,861
Contributions	8	100,015	164,593	401,486	666,094	3,738,640
Transfer Between Funds		500,000	-	(500,000)	-	-
Net Movement Of Funds		568,322	210,833	2,994,739	3,773,894	3,222,348
Reconciliation Of Funds Total Funds brought forward		8,850,611	1,637,640	18,215,134	28,703,385	25,481,037
<b>Total Funds carried forward</b>		<b>9,418,933</b>	<b>1,848,473</b>	<b>21,209,873</b>	<b>32,477,279</b>	<b>28,703,385</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 98 to 108 form part of these financial statements.



# BALANCE SHEET

## AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

The notes on pages 98 to 108 form part of these financial statements.

	Notes	2019 €	2018 €
Fixed Assets			
Tangible fixed assets	12	5,716,307	5,752,195
Investments	13	26,199,071	22,710,513
		31,915,378	28,462,708
Current assets			
Stock		5,000	5,000
Debtors and prepayments	14	18,988	14,872
Bank and cash	15	566,340	254,973
		590,328	274,845
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
Trade creditors and accruals	16	(28,427)	(34,168)
Net current assets		561,901	240,677
Net assets		32,477,279	28,703,385
Charity Funds:			
Endowment funds		21,209,873	18,215,134
Restricted funds		1,848,473	1,637,640
Unrestricted funds		9,418,933	8,850,611
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32,477,279</b>	<b>28,703,385</b>

# STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

## FINANCIAL YEAR END 31 DECEMBER 2019

The notes on pages 98 to 108 form part of these financial statements.

	2019 €	2018 €
Cash flow from operating activities	4,468,508	3,722,813
Cash flows from investing activities		
(Increase) in financial assets	(3,488,558)	(2,856,281)
(Increase)/decrease in tangible fixed assets	(10,579)	(331,007)
Dividend interest received	(658,004)	(447,430)
Net cash (used in)/ from investing activities	(4,157,141)	(3,634,718)
Changes in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting year	311,367	88,095
Cash and cash equivalents at start of year	254,973	166,878
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	566,340	254,973
Reconciliation of net incoming / (outgoing) resources to net cash flow from operating activities		
Net incoming resources	3,773,894	3,222,348
(Increase) in debtors	(4,116)	(4,511)
(Decrease)/ increase in creditors	(5,741)	3,386
Dividend and interest received	658,004	447,430
Depreciation charges	46,467	54,160
Net Cash provided by operating activities	4,468,508	3,722,813
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	311,367	88,095
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year	254,973	166,878
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>566,340</b>	<b>254,973</b>

---

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

---

### 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the financial statements. The financial statements have been presented in Euro which is also the functional currency of the charity.

#### 1.1 General information

These financial statements comprising the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Cash Flows and the related notes constitute the individual financial statements of the Mercy International Association for the financial year ended 31 December 2019.

Mercy International Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a share capital, incorporated in the Republic of Ireland. The nature of the company's operations and its principal activities are set out in the Trustees' Report.

#### 1.2 Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the going concern basis, under the historical cost convention and in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2014.

Mercy International Association meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

#### 1.3 Company status

The charity is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the company are the Trustees

named on page 1. In the event of the company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to €1 per member of the company.

#### 1.4 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund.

Endowments funds represent endowments gifted to the charity. The capital element of the endowments may not be used and the income generated from the endowment funds may be solely used in relation to the charity's activities.

#### 1.5 Income

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income. It is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Voluntary income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities.

Investment income is included when receivable.

#### 1.6 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefits to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure headings.



Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the audit fees, investment fees, costs of legal advice for Trustees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity including the cost of Trustee meetings.

Fundraising costs are those incurred in seeking voluntary contributions and do not include the costs of disseminating information in support of the charitable activities. Support costs are those incurred directly in support of expenditure on objects of the company and include project management carried by the company.

All resources expended are inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

### **1.7 Going concern**

The Trustees have prepared budgets and cash flows for a period of at least twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements which demonstrate that there is no material uncertainty regarding the company's ability to meet its liabilities as they fall due, and to continue as a going concern. On this basis, the Trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis. Accordingly, these financial statements do not include any adjustments to the carrying amounts and classification of assets and liabilities that may arise if the company was unable to continue as a going concern.

### **1.8 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are carried at cost, net of depreciation and any provision for impairment. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of fixed assets, less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful life on the following bases:

Fixtures and fittings - 20% Reducing Balance  
Office Equipment - 20% Reducing Balance

### **1.9 Investments**

Investments are a form of basic financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction value and subsequently measured at fair value as at the balance sheet date using closing quoted market price. The Statement of financial activities includes the net gains and losses arising on revaluations and disposals throughout the year.

### **1.10 Interest receivable**

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the Charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the Bank.

### **1.11 Taxation**

No charge to taxation arises as the company has been granted exemption under Sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. The charity is not registered for VAT and accordingly, all its expenditure is recorded inclusive of any VAT incurred.

### **1.12 Debtors**

Trade and other debts are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

### **1.13 Cash at Bank and In Hand**

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition of opening of the deposit or similar account.

### **1.14 Other Creditors**

Other credits are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade payables are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### **1.15 Liabilities and provisions**

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of past events, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably. Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the Charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amounts it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised within interest payable and similar charges.

---

# NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

---

### 1.16 Contingencies

Contingent liabilities, arising as a result of past events, are not recognised when it is not probable that there will be an outflow of resources or that the amount cannot be reliably measured at the reporting date or when the existence will confirm by the occurrence or non-occurrence of uncertain future events not wholly within the company's control. Contingent liabilities are disclosed in the financial statements unless the probability of an outflow of resources is remote.

Contingent assets are not recognised. Contingent assets are disclosed in the financial statements when an inflow of economic benefits is probable.

### 1.17 Financial Instruments

The Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### 1.18 Foreign currencies

Monetary assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into euros at rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date.

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into euros at the rate ruling on the date of the transaction.

Exchanges in foreign currencies are recognised in the Statement of financial activities incorporating the income and expenditure account.

### 1.19 Pension

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge

represents the amounts payable by the company to the fund in respect of the year.

### 1.20 Reserve Policy

In 2019, MIA developed a reserves policy. It defines reserves as income which is available to MIA and which can be spent at the discretion of the Board of Directors to further any of MIA's objectives but which is not yet spent, committed or designated for any specific purpose. Reserves set out in the policy do not include the MIA Endowment Fund, the restricted funds or the designated funds received from donors.

The reserves are required for the three main purposes

- To meet the annual budget deficit
- To make up any shortfall in designated/restricted fund for ongoing development
- To meet unexpected emergencies

At present €0.5 million has been set as the appropriate annual reserve. In addition, the Policy makes provision for the establishment of a level of designated reserves to cover long-term planning and organisational commitments and directs that this be kept in an investment fund account. The calculation of the required level of reserves is an integral part of the MIA's planning, budget and forecast cycle.

It takes into account:

- Risks associated with each stream of income and expenditure being different from that budgeted
- Planned activity level
- Unexpected emergency maintenance on an old heritage, listed building

The Reserves policy will be reviewed regularly by the Board.

## 2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted funds 2019 €	Restricted funds 2019 €	Total funds 2019 €	Total funds 2018 €
Donations	18,005	651,276	669,281	648,568
Mercy Congregations' Support	439,642	-	439,642	951,279
Formation Programmes	122,505	-	122,505	103,873
<b>Total</b>	<b>580,152</b>	<b>651,276</b>	<b>1,231,428</b>	<b>1,703,720</b>
2018	1,095,795	607,925	1,703,720	

## 3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2019 €	Restricted funds 2019 €	Endowment funds 2019 €	Total funds 2019 €	Total funds 2018 €
Dividend & Interest Income	55,039	26,911	576,054	658,004	447,430

## 4. OTHER INCOME

	Unrestricted funds 2019 €	Restricted funds 2019 €	Total funds 2019 €	Total funds 2018 €
Pilgrimage & Tours	3,133	-	3,133	13,423
Hospitality Income	91,492	-	91,492	96,071
Heritage Shop Income	32,831	-	32,831	25,907
Refund & Interest Re- ceived	18,848	-	18,848	1,033
	146,304	-	146,304	136,434
2018	136,434	-	136,434	



## 5. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

Expenditures on charitable activities can be analysed as shown below. Many of these programmes achieve results in more than one of these categories but are analysed for these purposes under the principal category.

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2019 €	Restricted funds 2019 €	Total funds 2019 €	Total funds 2018 €
Heritage, Spirituality & Ethos		342,540	625,502	968,042	455,343
Global Action		119,162	151,176	270,338	246,863
Communications		131,291	-	131,291	105,362
Support Costs	6	339,346	17,906	357,252	300,089
		<b>932,339</b>	<b>794,584</b>	<b>1,726,923</b>	<b>1,107,657</b>
2018		961,127	146,530	1,107,657	

## 6. COSTS ON GENERATING VOLUNTARY INCOME

Cost of generating voluntary income represents fundraising costs to both restricted and unrestricted income. This is analysed as follows:

	Basis of Allocation	Charitable Activities €	Raising funds €	Total 2019 €	Total 2018 €
Postage. Office Equipment and Stationary	Staff allocation	13,994	3,498	17,492	17,340
Premises	Staff allocation	99,862	5,256	105,118	109,559
Support Expenses	Staff allocation	243,396	96,007	339,403	258,633
		<b>357,252</b>	<b>104,761</b>	<b>462,013</b>	<b>385,532</b>
2018		293,559	91,973	385,532	

## 7. OTHER EXPENDITURE

	2019 €	2018 €
Auditors' remuneration	8,610	8,610
Investment Management Fees	119,051	109,313
Depreciation	46,467	54,160
	<b>174,128</b>	<b>172,083</b>

## 8. CONTRIBUTIONS

	2019 €	2018 €
Endowment funds	401,486	3,738,640
MGA - Unrestricted funds	100,015	-
MGA - Restricted funds	164,593	-
	<b>666,094</b>	<b>3,738,640</b>

The endowment fund represents restricted donations and bequests relating to the long term funding of Mercy International Association. The capital element of the fund may not be used and the income is limited to the operation of the Charity's activities.

## 9. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE BY EXPENDITURE TYPE

	Depreciation 2019 €	Other costs 2019 €	Total 2019 €	Total 2018 €
Expenditure on programmes	-	1,726,923	1,726,923	1,107,657
Costs of generating voluntary income	-	104,761	104,761	91,973
Other expenditure/governance costs	46,467	54,334	100,801	117,072
	<b>46,467</b>	<b>1,886,018</b>	<b>1,932,485</b>	<b>1,316,702</b>
2018	54,160	1,262,542	1,316,702	

## 10. NET INCOME RESOURCES/(RESOURCES EXPENDED)

This is stated after charging:

	Total 2019 €	Total 2018 €
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets: - owned by the charity	46,467	54,160
Auditors remuneration	8,610	8,610
	<b>55,077</b>	<b>62,770</b>

The Board of Trustees did not receive any remuneration.

## 11. STAFF COSTS

The aggregated payroll costs incurred during the financial year were:

	2019 €	2018 €
Salaries	215,862	237,214

There are no employees earning over €60,000 per annum

### KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

Up until March 31, key management included the CEO, two other Sisters of Mercy and a Franciscan Sister. At the May Board meeting, a Sister of Mercy replaced the Franciscan Sister. Sisters do not receive a salary but their religious communities receive a contribution.

## 12. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Freehold Property €	Fixtures, Fittings and Equipment €	Total €
Cost			
At January 2019	5,308,473	1,155,350	6,463,823
Additions	-	10,579	10,576
At 31 December 2019	5,308,473	1,165,929	6,474,402
Depreciation			
At January 2019	-	711,628	711,628
Charge for the year	-	46,467	46,467
At 31 December 2019	-	758,095	758,095
<b>Net Book Value At 31 December 2019</b>	<b>5,308,473</b>	<b>407,834</b>	<b>5,716,307</b>
<i>At 31 December 2018</i>	<i>5,308,473</i>	<i>443,722</i>	<i>5,752,195</i>

The building at 64A, Lower Baggot Street was gifted as a reserved gift to the company by the Sisters of Mercy, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin. The estimated value of the gift in 1993 was €1,904,610. In the event of the cessation of use of the premises by the company, a decision of the company to withdraw from the premises or the winding up of the company the property shall be reconveyed to a company of the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy, or its successors.



## 13. INVESTMENTS

Market Value	2019 €	2018 €
At 1 January 2019	22,710,513	19,854,232
Additions	1,296,903	4,634,372
Disposals	(931,944)	(400,230)
Fair value adjustments	3,123,599	(1,377,861)
<b>At 31 December 2019</b>	<b>26,199,071</b>	<b>22,710,513</b>

## 14. DEBTORS & PREPAYMENTS

	2019 €	2018 €
Prepayments	18,988	14,872
	<b>18,967</b>	<b>14,872</b>

## 15. BANK & CASH

	2019 €	2018 €
Bank and cash	566,340	254,973
	<b>566,340</b>	<b>254,973</b>

## 16. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2019 €	2018 €
PAYE control account	(6,062)	9,036
Other accruals	19,065	10,091
Deferred income	15,424	15,041
	<b>28,427</b>	<b>34,168</b>

## 17. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Balance at 1-Jan 2019 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Gains/ (Losses) €	Contribu- tions €	Transfers Between Funds €	Balance at 31-Dec 2019 €
Unrestricted funds	8,850,611	781,495	(1,153,079)	339,891	100,015	500,000	9,418,933
Restricted funds	1,637,640	678,187	(802,578)	170,631	164,593	-	1,848,473
Endowment funds	18,215,134	576,054	(95,878)	2,613,077	401,486	(500,000)	21,209,873
<b>Total of funds</b>	<b>28,703,385</b>	<b>2,035,736</b>	<b>(2,051,535)</b>	<b>3,123,599</b>	<b>666,094</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,477,279</b>

## 18. LEGAL STATUS OF THE COMPANY

The company is limited by guarantee and does not have a share capital. Every board director of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of same being wound up while a member, or within one year after ceasing to be a member, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the company contracted before ceasing to be a member and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up and for the adjustment of the rights of the contributions among themselves, such amount as may be required not exceeding €1. At the year-end there were eight Directors.

The company is prohibited by its constitution from distributing any of its reserves by way of a dividend or otherwise to its Board Directors.

## 19. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

There were no significant events affecting the company since the year-end.

**20. APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** The Trustees approved the financial statements for issue on 7 February 2020

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

- AGM: Annual General Meeting
- COP25: 55th Session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- CSocD: Commission on Social Development
- CSTIP: NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking In Persons
- ECOSOC: The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
- FRS: Financial Reporting Standard
- GDPR: General Data Protection Regulations
- HLPF: High Level Political Forum
- IAASA: Irish Auditing and Accounting Supervisory Authority
- ILO: International Labour Office
- ISA: International Standards on Auditing (Ireland)
- MELF: Mercy Emerging Leaders Fellowship
- MGP: Mercy Global Presence
- MIA: Mercy International Association
- MIC: Mercy International Centre
- MIRP: Mercy International Reflection Process
- NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation
- OEIGWG: Open-Ended Intergovernmental Working Group
- PFII: UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- REPAM: Amazonian Ecclesial Network
- RSM: Religious Sister of Mercy
- SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals
- SORP: Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities
- TUPE: Protection of Employees on Transfer of Undertakings
- UISG: International Union of Superiors General
- UN: United Nations
- UNHCR: United Nations High Commission for Refugees
- WGEH: UN NGO Working Group to End Homelessness
- YML: Young Mercy Leaders programme



This report is printed on recycled paper.



