

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION NEWSLETTER

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

GREETINGS FROM THE MERCY GLOBAL ACTION OFFICE!

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

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

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

MORE INFO AT mercyworld.org

MIA's Digital Programs
2021 | ZOOM
MERCY INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION

REGISTER ONLINE

MERCY RETREATS & EVENTS

Renewal Retreat
11-13 JULY

Young Mercy Leaders
11-13 JULY

Virtual Conference
11-13 JULY

MERCY GLOBAL ACTION ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS

Sustainable Development
25th MAY *

Climate Justice & Water
3rd AUGUST *

Violence Against Women
23rd NOVEMBER *



THEMATIC AREAS

DISPLACEMENT OF PERSONS

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

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

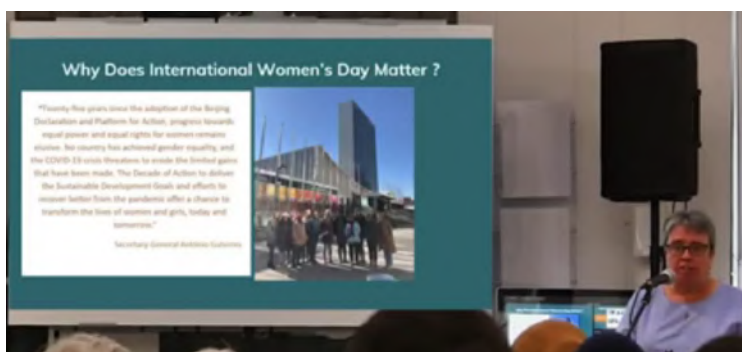
- *MGA met with Carol Vale, from McAuley Community Services for Women, to learn what her Ministry is doing to eradicate homelessness and family violence*

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



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

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



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





THEMATIC AREAS

DEGRADATION OF EARTH



- *Mercy Global Action and the Value of Water*

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

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

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

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

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

Further Resources on Water

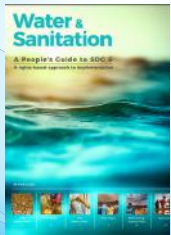
- [Blue Planet Project](#)
- [Water & Sanitation: Privatization is not a Means of Implementation of the SDGs](#)
- [Discover Ways to Advocate for SDG6 on Water](#)
- [UN World Water Development Report 2021 on 'Valuing Water'](#)



Mercy Global Action and the Value of

Water

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



*"Water is a free
beverage."*

- Catherine McAuley



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

HOPE IN A TIME OF PANDEMIC

RESPONDING TO COVID-19 THROUGH A HOLISTIC LENS

Revealing the Sacredness & Injustices of Water:

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

Mercy Global Action Emerging Leaders

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



Rights-Based Litmus Test:

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

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



The MGA Water Task Force 2021:

- Research
- Analysis
- Good Practices
- Collaboration



REFLECT:

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



MERCY
INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION

AT THE UNITED NATIONS THROUGH OUR ECOSOC EYES...

65th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

Speakers:

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

Moderator:

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

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

English/Spanish Interpretation Available





Mercy Global Action Participated in Generation Equality Forum

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

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

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

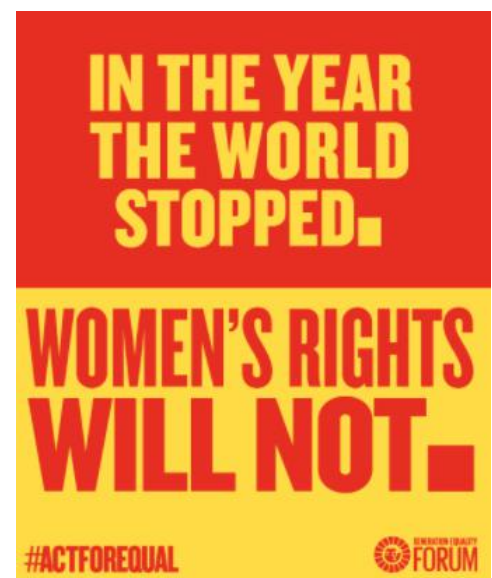
Based on human rights principles and through a data-driven process of consultation with international feminist groups, grassroots activist organizations, governments and other stakeholders, the themes chosen for the Generation Equality Action Coalitions are:

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

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

GET INVOLVED!

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





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

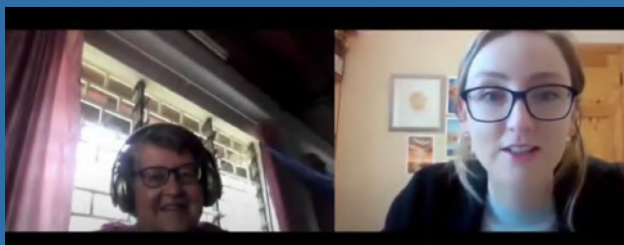
Our Mercy Sisters have worked over the years with many of the different ethnic groups of this land, including Burmans (the majority), Karen and Karenni, Kachin and Rohingyas, Chin and Arakanese. We believe that their efforts together can bring about the return of democracy. The Tatmadaw is not the elected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

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

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

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

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



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

— **Denise Coghlan, RSM**

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

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

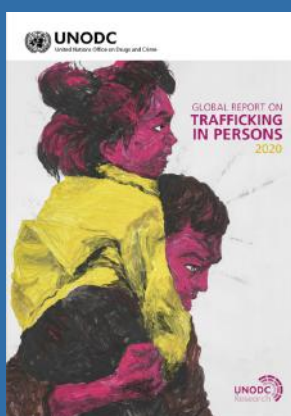
“USEFUL RESOURCES

FI & CIEL Publication:

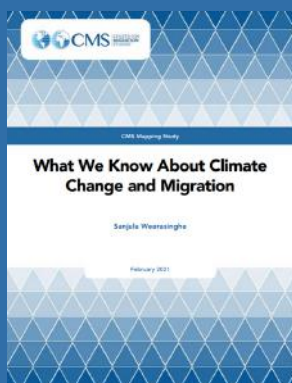
A UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights & Climate Change? Regional Perspectives



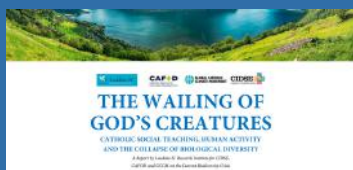
UNODC - Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020



CMS Report - What we Know About Climate Change and Migration



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



UPCOMING EVENTS AND INTERNATIONAL DAYS

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

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

Visit our website to discover more about MIA and our global activities: www.mercyworld.org

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