

## “Making History”

On 21 October 2017, Sr. Cynthia Mathew CJ arrived in New York to begin an era of CJ/IBVM collaboration. This time we come together to collaborate with the United Nations. At a time when the United Nations reminds all people that we must work together to procure a life of dignity for all and ensure that no one is left behind, we want to play our part in this endeavor. We do this with the inspiration that unites us and calls us forth to respond to the challenges of today's world in the sacred space that this organization, representing the whole human family, offers to those who wish to recognize it as such. This will be an exciting time for us to bring together our joint efforts, our values and principles, our spirituality and creativity to contribute with hope and courage to the present and future of the human family on this planet with limited resources.



## At United Nations Headquarters, New York



For the first time in 11 years, all UN Member States and observers addressed the UN General Assembly (UNGA) during its opening, high-level General Debate. Needless to say, concern for the present world situation and expectations around the statement to be given by President Trump may have bolstered the entire international community! So much so that in his closing remarks on 25 September 2017, UNGA President Miroslav Lajčák said that he had heard “overwhelming support for the proposal to prioritize peace and prevention,” He also highlighted the speakers’ efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing the life or death nature of addressing climate change, and reaffirming their commitment to the UN and each other.

On **United Nations Day 2017**, the Secretary General Antonio Guterres from Portugal and the present President of the General Assembly, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák from Slovakia, reminded us of the essence and the soul of the United Nations. “Our world faces many grave challenges, said Mr. Guterres. “We have the tools and wealth to overcome these challenges. All we need is the will.” In his words at the United Nation Day Concert Mr. Lajčák noted that “The United Nations has achieved a lot in nearly three quarters of a century. UN treaties, conventions and other instruments have formed the bedrock of our international legal system. People all over the world now know that they are entitled to fundamental rights as human beings. And they have



Secretary General Mr. Antonio Guterres (left) and Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the General Assembly (right)

been supported in advocating for those rights to be upheld and protected”. [Read these practical and inspiring words here.](#) They are helpful for everybody who longs for a world of peace and justice.



## Africa Week at the United Nations

Since its launch in 2010, **Africa Week** has evolved to focus on the wide range of Africa’s development priorities, covering the areas of peace, security, governance, human rights, socio-economic, and environmental development. Each year, Africa Week features a series of events which all present address current priorities on the continent. 2017 Africa Week (16 - 20 October) focused on “Supporting an Integrated, Prosperous, People-Centred and Peaceful Africa: Towards the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”. The African Union and the United Nations work together for a prosperous African continent where the different national economies are seamlessly integrated and the economic and social participation of all citizens is guaranteed and promoted.

## Preparing NGO Participation in UN Events

After a few days to acclimatize to life in New York **Cynthia CJ** is plunging into the depths of preparations for the ECOSOC Commissions which will be held early in 2018. **ECOSOC** is the Economic and Social Council, one of the main organs of the United Nations and the entry point for civil society (NGOs). This year we bring the concerns of rural women living in poverty, the need for the fulfillment of basic human rights to universal social protection and other issues to be discussed at the Commission on Social Development, the Civil Society Forum which precedes it and the Commission on the Status of Women.

**Sarah Rudolph**, a novice from the Canadian Province who completed an internship at the IBVM UN NGO in the spring, continues to be involved by working remotely from Toronto as a member of the NGO Major Group at the UN. The NGO Major Group coordinates the participation of hundreds of NGOs at the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), an annual forum for the review of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The NGO Major Group is now preparing for the 2018 HLPF through task teams that will produce advocacy statements, thematic reports, social media products, and other materials to be used in on-site advocacy at the HLPF. Sarah has volunteered to work on the position paper task team. This is an exciting opportunity for our NGO to be involved in the dynamics of UN SDG monitoring. If you would like to read more about the way in which the Reviews are done and how we might all participate, read [Engaging with the 2018 High Level Political Forum.](#)



# FROM OUR NETWORK

## The NGO Advisory Committee.

Our international meetings are held online. In the photo you see the present members of the NGO Advisory Committee in “meeting mode” Who are they? Clockwise from top left: Sr. Pat Hanvey ibvm, Zambia (Chairperson), Mr. Nigel Baker (U.K.) Ms. Mary-Eileen Donovan (Canada), Sr. Janet Palafox ibvm (Peru) Sr. Teresia Wamuyu ibvm (Kenya) and Sr. Monica Suchiang ibvm (India) The six members of the committee meet with the UN Representative four times a year to discuss the work of the NGO in relation to the United Nations and to members of the whole network. They receive a Report on the work of the NGO before each meeting and, based on that information and their experience, we consider how the NGO may continually advance in effectiveness.



## International Conference on Human Trafficking



“Kolkata Mary Ward Social Centre, in collaboration with Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre, will host an International Conference on Anti-Human Trafficking on 25th -26th November in Kolkata, India. KMWSC and DMWSC, the development wings of the Loreto sisters in India, are organizing the conference entitled “International Conference on Anti-Human Trafficking Initiatives: from Theory to Practice” to commemorate 175 years of presence in India. The conference is being prepared in association with Rabindranath Tagore Centre, Kolkata ([Indian Council for Cultural Relations](#)), West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, West Bengal State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, International Justice Mission, Justice and Care, Vidyasagar School of Social Work. We are invited to

visit the conference website at <http://kolkatamarywardsc.org/international-conference/>. Congratulations to them on the wonderful work they are doing to prevent human trafficking through the Social Centers and for the collaboration with

**Canada:** The focus of ibvm Canada is on addressing the root causes of Labour Trafficking through education and advocacy. Ann McGowan, Director of Mary Ward Center, represents the Loretto community on the [Faith Alliance to End Human Trafficking](#). After the Symposium held in Spring, the group decided to Lobby Provincial and Federal Governments on the question of “Open Work Permit”. This aims at improving the work possibilities and conditions of temporary foreign workers. They met with a Member of Parliament, who welcomed them but was not aware of the issue they presented and their wish to raise awareness. She promised she will follow it up.



STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING...



**demand IS KEY**

### Jean Okroi USA on Efforts to Spot the Demand for Sex Trafficking.

Several agencies collaborate on human trafficking. The National Johns Suppression Initiative is one of them. It is a nationwide initiative aimed at reducing sex trafficking. Launched in 2011 to highlight the role of sex buyers – or ‘johns’ -- as perpetrators in this violent and exploitive industry are called, it ran its 14th operation recently. The operation involved 37 law enforcement agencies from 17 states. They worked together arresting 1,020 sex buyers. Of those arrested 141 are from the Chicago and neighboring cities. And, 15 individuals are facing trafficking charges.

A similar sting called "Operation No Tricks, No Treats" was carried out in Florida. During this sex sting 277 people were arrested. The suspects arrested included: an officer from the Sheriff's office, surgeon, teacher, pediatrician, Air Force veteran, lawyer, retired deputy sheriff and police officer, Colonel in Marine Corps, several pharmacists. They range in age from 16-74 years old. Buyers were from 17 different states visiting the area. Sheriff Judd said "We are committed to fighting human trafficking, by arresting those who engage in prostitution and trying to identify human trafficking victims."

### Leave No One Behind

When adopting the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda the international community determined to Leave No One behind in their efforts to ensure that all could live a life of dignity. Among the many marginalized groups, people with albinism face multiple forms of discrimination worldwide. Albinism is still profoundly misunderstood, socially and medically. **IBVM Sister, Helen Maguire** has been working with a medical team in Fiji with and for people with Albinism since 2014. . In 2014 they held their first workshop in Suva for doctors, health care workers, teachers, parents etc. and as awareness has grown so has the quality of life for these people in terms of educational and medical care. Recently they made a documentary called, "Coming Out of The

Shadows" which was shown at the Melbourne Film Festival, followed by Sydney and will be shown in New York in November. In December the Fijian Government is hosting a visit from a UN representative from the Geneva Office of the UN High Commissioner for human rights for people with Albinism. This is a clear example of how the work of civil society, the local people and their government all converge to improve the situation of people who have been left behind. Read more about [Helen's work here](#).

"LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND"



**Baffling rate of Albinism in Fiji**



### International Day of the Girl 2017

No Ordinary day. A day that celebrates a powerful theme says **Vivienne, Class 10**

See how students and teachers from Loreto Elliot Road, Kolkata celebrated

[HERE](#)

**Cecilia O'Dwyer ibvm**