

The Oceans Conference

“The week-long Oceans Conference”, writes Libby Rogerson ibvm, “is one of the busiest and most vibrant I have experienced – every side event is full to overflowing as scientists, Pacific Island leaders, and politicians share ideas and practices on how to save the oceans, marine animals and birds”. An impressive array of people from around the world gathered for the Ocean’s Conference held from 5 – 9 June 2017, the best opportunity, to date, to reverse the cycle of decline in which human activity has placed the Ocean. Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG14), the Ocean’s goal, is humanity’s only universally agreed measure to conserve and sustainably manage the resources of the Ocean. We learnt about the difficulties it is facing, and most importantly, the solutions required to overcome those problems. People gathered on behalf of humanity to restore sustainability, balance and respect to our relationship with our primal mother, the source of all life, the Ocean. Read Libby’s moving comments on the experience [HERE](#).

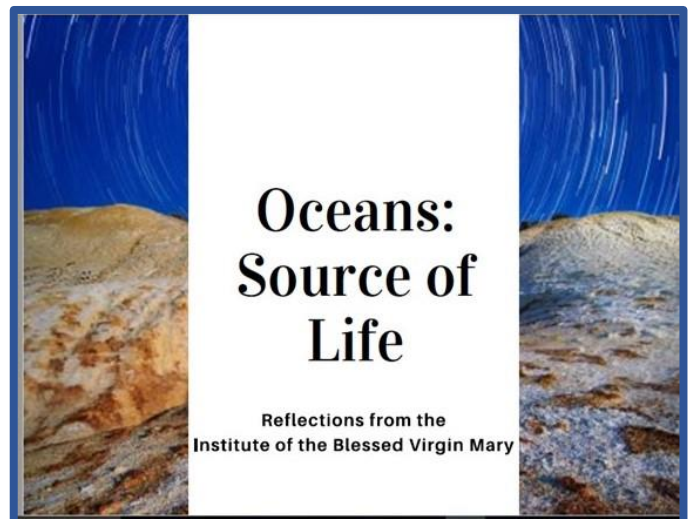
The IBVM/Loreto Network also contributed to the endeavor with interesting reflections on our relationship with the ocean, the difficulties and challenges we observe and our suggestions to restore sustainability. Thanks to Sarah Rudolph for this beautiful presentation. You will find a presentation of the findings [HERE](#).

Students from Loreto Normanhurst, Australia, with the guidance of their teacher, Elizabeth Cranfield, created an Oceans’ video. Congratulations on the excellent work. You can access the video [HERE](#).

SDG Accountability.

Countries Report on their initiatives to implement the Sustainable Development Agenda at a meeting called **High Level Political Forum (HLPF)**. When the term “High Level” is used it means that Ministers, and even Heads of National Governments, attend. The 2017 HLPF was held from 10 – 19 July.

Members of national governments and their diplomats spent 9 hectic days updating and evaluating the promise of the 2030 Agenda, for all people everywhere, ensuring that no one is left behind. Once again they reminded



themselves, and us, that the 2030 Agenda is people-centred, universal, transformative and that its' Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible. They emphasized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. While they welcomed efforts, at all levels, to implement the Agenda, and the encouraging results they also acknowledged that the pace of implementation must be accelerated as the tasks facing us all are urgent. Decisive action is imperative for securing the objectives for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. Some 2500 members of civil society were present. This forum is gathering momentum as we advance with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (SDGs) worldwide.

The IBVM NGO co-sponsored an event, at the Permanent Mission of Ireland, entitled "Poverty to Prosperity: Shared Stories from NGOs Working with Communities". We also contributed to another event entitled "Grass-Root Perspectives: Implementing the SDGs". based on the findings of a survey done in the countries presenting Voluntary National Reports. **Thanks to IBVM members in Bangladesh, Kenya, India, Nepal and Peru for your contributions!**

Aggy O'Dwyer, from Australia, intern at the NGO office in New York, arrived just in time to "fall headlong" into the High Level Political Forum. Read about the fortunes, trials and challenges as she bravely made her way through the maze at [What is it like interning at the United Nations?](#)

The Lunch Break Experiment

Here you have an interesting way of raising awareness and helping people understand the SDGs.

[Watch the video!](#) Take your photos! Make your comments and post them on social media with the following hashtag:

#TheLunchBreakExperiment

Invite family and friends to join in!



Spiritual Direction, Spiritual Development and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Development in the Light of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

Arlene Ashack IBVM is an Artist and Spiritual Director. Art and spirituality have always been two integrated threads in her life. She runs the Anawim Arts Studio in Wheaton, Chicago and accompanies many people on their spiritual journey. Arlene recently invited the Board Members of Anawim to join her in reflecting on Spiritual Direction and Spiritual Development in the Light of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Listen [HERE](#) to their words of wisdom. Thanks to each one of you!

Mary Ward Schools and Education for Global Citizenship

Education today must offer values, knowledge and skills as the world needs people who know how to live together. When some 60 educators from Mary Ward schools gathered in Pretoria, South Africa from 25 June to 2 July 2017, they experienced some of the boundaries to be crossed and the diversity to be celebrated which are integral to global citizenship. The question: **"Why were you born at this time of the world's history on this planet?"** led to the recognition that while we are steeped in the traditional values of the Institute, these values have to be continually renewed and expressed in contemporary forms. When everything is permeated with connectedness new values for life have to be developed, traditions reinterpreted, and openness to change encouraged.

In preparation for the Conference educators from Loreto schools around the world took part in a survey and reflected on Education for Global Citizenship from the perspective of their subject areas. Global citizenship was seen as important for life in these times and understood as an essential dimension of the education needed to live in a world that “puts the dignity of people at the center, ensures prosperous and fulfilling lives for all people, fosters peaceful, just and inclusive societies, protects our planet’s natural resources and climate for future generations”. Our Educators named the values, skills, behaviors and aspects of the curriculum they deemed

essential to educate young people in awareness. Empathy, compassion, reflection and action were seen as essential requisites for global citizens. Read the document [Global Citizenship: IBVM Educators’ Perspective](#).



Education Conference South Africa

Together: Respect, Safety and Dignity for all.



Can any country say it has no refugees, migrants or internally displaced people? Our world is characterized by large movements of people. We know of the hopes of those forced to leave or flee from their own countries and the concerns of the host communities when they perceive the flow as a threat to their own stability. The United Nations is working to foster positive perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and to strengthen the social contract between host countries and these communities, as they seek to regulate how the world will address large movements of people. The United Nations [TOGETHER](#) campaign continues until the signing of

two separate Global Compacts, one on Refugees and one on Migrants, in the second half of 2018.

Do you have stories you can share with the [United Nations](#) and with the NGO Office? You may have a migrant, refugee friend or acquaintance who might like to share a story? We need to hear two kinds of stories: stories of solidarity with refugees and migrants and stories of the shared benefits of migration to your country and its economy.

Thanks to Marian Moriarty, Mary Elizabeth Kirke and Libby Rogerson who met online to discuss how we might contribute with the experience we already have. And to Teresia Wamuyu and Kathryn Keigher for their interest in encouraging our whole network.

Financing for Development Follow-Up Forum 2017

This Forum is the primary platform for the Financing of Development's inter-government agreed decisions. However, the present context is experiencing a resurgence of power politics against all multilateral institutions. Consensus politics is difficult. This means that cooperation is more crucial than ever if we do not want future generations to be left to manage our damage. It is important to stop the promotion of models we know do not work and focus on politics (do you

mean policies?) that do work. There is a huge need for a more inclusive global economy, one that ensures that no country is left behind and that there are expanded opportunities for all. The United Nations uses the Forum to provide a platform for huge financial institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), Development Banks and other regional institutions to come together and engage with governments. Governments are then more able to negotiate their way forward. As this Forum monitors the follow-up to commitments made in 2015 to financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, it is important that all are aware that our governments promised to "Leave no one behind" and leave no country behind. [Watch this video](#) in which Sarah and Cecilia from the IBVM NGO office, comment on aspects of the Forum.



Libby Rogerson ibvm Australia, Sarah Rudolph, Canadian ibvm novice and Aggy O'Dwyer, Australia. They had and are having a wonderful experience of the United Nations and making an excellent contribution to IBVM Network.

Learn+assess+pray+act+advocate

Cecilia O'Dwyer ibvm