

## The United Nations General Assembly

The 72<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Assembly begins on 12 September and the General Debate, during which our Heads of State and Government intervene, takes off on Tuesday, 19 September 2017. The theme of this year's General Assembly is '**Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet**'. It will be interesting to note what our Head of State/Government has to say to the world community.

You can watch it live on the UN WEB TV or in a recorded version at a later time. Written statements and podcasts will be available.



## United Nations Events 2018

The fifty-sixth session of the **Commission for Social Development (CSocD56)** takes place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 31 January to 9 February 2018. The theme for the 2018 policy cycle is "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all". The annual NGO Forum occurs two days prior to the commission.

Once again the annual **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** - the 62<sup>nd</sup> - takes place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018 on the theme: "**Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.**"

**United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)**. The 17th session will be held from 16-27 April 2018 with the theme "Indigenous peoples' collective rights to lands, territories and resources".

**The High-level Political Forum**, United Nations central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, will be held in July 2018. The theme is "Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies" with a focus on Goals 6 (Water and sanitation for all), 7 (affordable and sustainable energy for all), 11 (Safe resilient and sustainable cities), 12 (Sustainable consumption and production patterns), 15 (Sustainable use of land, biodiversity) and 17 (Partnerships). The following countries, with an IBVM presence, will present national Voluntary Reviews: Albania, Australia, Ireland, Spain and Viet Nam. These UN Meetings and processes prior to the event are central to civil society engagement.

## Stewardship of Financial Investments.

"The United Nations, Pope Francis and IBVM documents speak to how we are called to live. While each is unique in its approach and assessments, we can say that all recognise the importance of interconnectedness. People and nature, earth, institutions, policies, decisions – all interrelate and have an impact far beyond themselves," with these words **Carmen Diston ibvm** begins her reflection on "The Sustainable Development Goals and The Stewardship of Financial Investments". The SDGs, *Laudato Si*, as well as our own documents, provide us with common values and guidelines in the management of our financial resources, specifically our investments. **Read Carmen's excellent reflection [here](#)**

## Summer Internship at the NGO Office New York.

This year Aggy O'Dwyer, from Australia, did a summer internship at our office in New York. She worked hard at communicating different aspects of the experience on social media and the NGO website. Aggy began her internship just as Sarah and Libby were coming to the end of their time at the office. Aggy and Sarah speak about the experience of beginning and ending on [this video](#). One of Aggy's first initiatives was to help people deepen their awareness of the connection between everyday life and the Sustainable Development Goals. [#TheLunchBreakExperiment](#) invites all to send photos of the implementation of the SDGs. What was it like to arrive and find yourself in what is probably the most important UN forum of the year: The High Level Political Forum? Read her [blog on this experience](#). Then came the summer Youth Assembly at the United Nations, another fascinating experience - meeting other young people from around the world and learning from them and from the many panels and events that took place. Another video on that event is found [here](#). Passionate about sustainable production and consumption (SDG 12) Aggy is especially interested in ethical and sustainable fashions. Take a look at the [Infograph](#) presentation with useful information for all. Thanks to Aggy for her excellent contribution to the IBVM NGO over the Summer.



Aggy (left) and Phoebe, both from Australia, at the Youth Assembly

## IBVM Worldwide contributions to the work of the United Nations

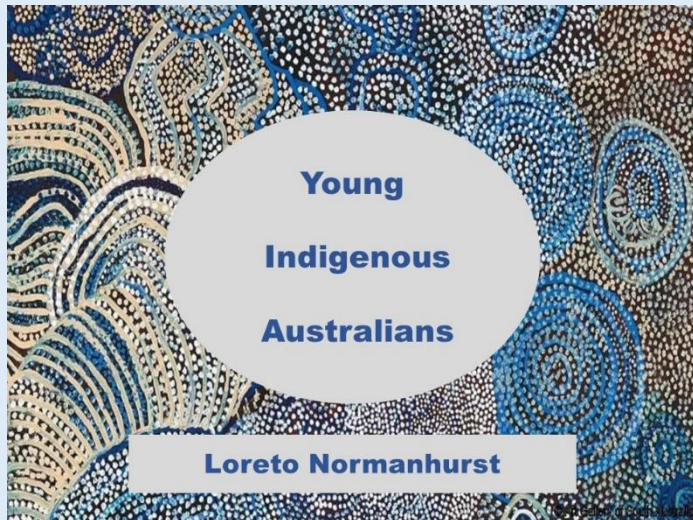
### World Tourism Day 2017 – an IBVM Response



Many people around celebrate the United Nations' (UN) World Tourism Day on September 27 each year. The day aims to foster awareness among the international community of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic values. At the last meeting of our Network on Human Trafficking we noted that, while we are aware of the enjoyment, cultural and spiritual advantages of tourism, a specific aspect is causing increasing concern. That is the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. We want to highlight this situation on 2017 world Tourism Day and at the same time raise our

own awareness of possible victims in our neighbourhood. Please read the information [here](#) and let's try to "Be Alert", Keep our eyes open" and call our national or local hotline if we have concerns.

## International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples



This year's International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples was commemorated on Wednesday, 9 August. Of particular importance, was this Tenth Anniversary of the adoption of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(UNDRIP\)](#). The Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. It addresses the rights of indigenous peoples and establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for their survival, dignity and well-being. Indigenous peoples are still among the most discriminated against communities in the world. IBVM Loreto has educated, and

continues to educate, girls from indigenous communities throughout the world. Students from the Aboriginal Studies class at Loreto Normanhurst, Australia, prepared [this delightful video](#) for us.

**U.N. International Day of Peace** will be celebrated on **21 September 2017**. This day is devoted to "commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace both within and among all nations and peoples.". It offers an opportunity for all humanity to re-commit to peace beyond differences and to contribute to building a culture of peace. The theme for 2017 is: "**Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.**" Education and public awareness of issues related to peace need to be ongoing because, as Albert Einstein once said: "peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding.



**2017 Peace Day Theme: *Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.*** The Together Initiative lends its vision to the creation of peace. UN Update No 27 noted how the United Nations is working to promote a positive vision of refugee and migrant peoples with the Together Initiative. **IBVM Peru** shares stories of the struggles and positive contributions of internally displaced and immigrant people and the role of the national government. Read about it [here](#).

## Indian Students on Peace

Students from several schools in India, Loreto Schools and High Schools, which collaborate with Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre, give their ideas on how the Sustainable Development Goals (1 – 17) can help us achieve peace (Goal16). Watch their engaging [video](#).

#BREAKINGNEWS

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## Loreto schools in the Eastern Africa Province

write to tell us that they “are continuously making efforts to respond to the noble call of taking care of the environment, not forgetting the sustainable Development Goals especially *no. 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation, No. 13 – Climate Action, No. 14 – Life Below Water and No. 15 – Life and Land* which further impel us to strive towards a clean environment for the survival of all created beings”. Take some time to look at what they did for [Environment Day](#)

## Congratulations to Loreto College Curepipe, Mauritius!

It has been selected as the Ambassador of SDGs in Mauritius. We look forward to hearing about their adventures, learnings and activities as they engage in this role. The school is also an Eco- School . The Eco-School programme is the largest sustainable schools programme in the world and is run by the [Foundation for Environmental Education \(FEE\)](#). Eco-Schools empower students to be the change our sustainable world needs by engaging them in fun, action-orientated learning. Read the recent edition of their LCC [Go Green Newsletter](#).



Learn+assess+pray+act+advocate

Cecilia O’Dwyer ibvm