



Medical Mission News

Winter 2019

One Voice, One World

“As MMS we see ourselves in the movement to becoming global citizens. We want to participate in the emerging world community of people who think and act as global citizens in addition to being citizens of their own countries. We feel the need to continue to walk together with those made poor and the marginalized, and participate with them in the process of healing and transforming the Earth.”
(MMS General Assembly Report 2015)



We, **Medical Mission Sisters**, believe that we are all part of the One World and participate in a common journey. What happens in one part of the world, will affect all others: Whether it is climate change, health inequality, disadvantage of women, the destruction of nature and the livelihood of indigenous people or conflicts and war, life is at risk in various countries as well as on our own door step. As MMS, we are one with those who are longing for justice, peace and integrity. We commit ourselves to stand by those who desire to be heard and to be seen, and together we continue to make this world a better and safer place to live in.

Campaigning and raising our voice with those suffering and made poor is an essential part of our mission and this year, we celebrated 25 years of MMS presence at the United Nations in New York. In August our MMS representative at the UN, **Sister Celine Paramundayil**, co-led a workshop at the 68th annual United Nations Civil Society Conference. In a network with other religious and likeminded NGOs, we are urged to set priorities for life-giving mission response locally and globally in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).



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„The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development.” - Laudato Si



Sister Birgit Weiler, a theologian and member of the Peruvian bishops' pastoral ministry for the care of creation, was recently appointed by Pope Francis to serve as an expert on a Synod titled “The Amazon: New Paths for the Church and for Integral Ecology.” She joined bishops from around the world in Rome from October 6th-27th to discuss the role of the Church in addressing the ecological crisis in the Amazon rainforest.

The indigenous, living in the Amazon region, their rich cultural and spiritual heritage are very close to Sister Birgit’s heart. She calls for a conversion of our lifestyle and says that she prays for God to “assist us in opening new ways so that God’s healing and life-giving love can flow freely to our Earth community and that global solidarity and commitment to care for the Earth, and especially the Amazon, may grow.”

“We feel the urgency to intensify our response to mental health issues and work with the physically and mentally challenged, victims of substance abuse, the traumatized and abused, especially women and children.”



Sister Anke Felicitas shares... “As a psychiatrist, I have the chance to be a member of the mental health care team in Flores, one of the Indonesian islands, and to take part in mental health campaigns. I’m also involved in giving mental health training and networking with other psychiatrists. Furthermore, MMS collaborate with the Catholic University in the research about ‘pasung’, the Indonesian practice of shackling and imprisoning mentally ill patients in Flores. The university is interested in the set-up of a data-base about this kind of human rights violation and to

analyse the mutuality of poverty, culture and the phenomenon of *pasung* in order to fight the stigmata in society that come with mental health problems.

It is Anna Dengel’s words which fill my heart with great confidence: ‘We must go forward with great optimism, the right kind, not foolish. But that optimism founded and grounded in faith, hope and charity.’”

“We feel the urgency for education, training and capacity building for children and young women with limited access to education.”

Sister Smita Parmar regularly visits the Mahadalits, a group considered at the bottom of the Hindu's caste system. She organises self-help groups for women and education for the children. Speaking on Indian television, she raised many issues of how the Mahadalits are persecuted and the lives of especially women and young girls are at risk. Smita, along with other villagers, also challenged local authorities about their false promises of raising the hygienic standards in the villages. This forced the district collector officers to visit the village and investigate current living conditions. She also speaks strongly on community empowerment and emphasizes the need for government collaboration with NGOs to create a positive impact on the needy.



“We join our voices with others to campaign against the exploitation of natural resources and negative impacts of globalization. We continue to learn from nature and draw from the wisdom of indigenous people.”



Effective Education is one of the UN's Social Development Goals and plays a vital role in the empowerment of disadvantaged people to speak up for themselves and when their rights are violated by displacement and destruction of their land. **Ivy Carpio**, MMS Candidate, and **IPA** (Indigenous People's Apostolate) teaching staff **Joan Gairan-Talasan**, MMS Associate

Member in the Philippines, visited a remote village in the mountains of Bukidnon. Ivy shares, “We held classes for two days. Along with the adult literacy students came the children. In the advanced class, Joan incorporated the importance of giving thanks to *Magbabaya* (Supreme Being/Creator) for all the graces they received for themselves, their families and for the whole community. One student is very happy that she is able to read and write her name. Through their drawings, they told stories about their community and their hopes for the future. Last summer, they celebrated the Recognition Day for Day Care students as well as the “graduates” of the Adult Literacy-Numeracy Program.

„Rooted in God, we are women of faith and hope committed to bring about healing and wholeness in all aspects of life. Our call is to mission to the entire community of life in the spirit of Jesus the healer.” (GA report 2015)

Sister Nichola Lovett, who lives in London, received the Order of Mercy, an award to honour volunteers who have been nominated by a charity covering work with the sick, injured or disabled, with young people at risk, the homeless or the dying. Sr Nichola writes: “It made me feel humble indeed for this nomination from Meadow House Hospice, where I have served as a volunteer for the past 17 years.” Staff at the hospice say “nothing is too much trouble for Sister Nicola and she is hugely appreciated by everyone she comes into contact with.” Besides her involvement Sr Nichola also regularly serves in the local foodbank and sings in a choir together with patients and staff members of a psychiatric hospital.



Please join our prayer for Sisters Terezija Zuzek and Margaret Inglis, who died in London this year. May they rest in peace.

Together we all are working towards One World where all people can live in peace. We Medical Mission Sisters are very grateful for all the support we received during the last year. All our work and campaigning would not be possible without our donors, our friends, colleagues and co-workers.

Your Medical Mission Sisters

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Please pray for Medical Mission Sisters in: Belgium, England, Ethiopia, Germany, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, The Netherlands, Uganda, USA, Venezuela.

Thank you for your support and prayers. We are grateful for your interest in our work and we hope to keep in touch with you from time to time through this newsletter. If you would prefer not to hear from us, please contact us by phone or email, as above. Visit our website for full privacy policy.