In 2020 we will be missing an invaluable member of the GSIJP Office team – Barbara O’Carroll – who has voluntarily filled the role of office manager over the years with dedication, care and deep, deep commitment to the values of the United Nations and Justice Peace of the Congregation as expressed in position papers. Barbara was a particular fan of the social and gender issues as addressed in the Commissions for Social Development and the Status of Women. My heart is full of gratitude because in my 12 years at the GSIJP office I have had to relocate the office on two occasions. Guess who organized, administered, networked with all concerned from the moment the notice came to hovering the floor of the office we were vacating, turning the key in the door for the last time, ensuring that the plants were safe in her hand bag as she took a taxi to be in the new location to check that all labelled furniture and boxes arrived while following through on all issues related to a change of address – post office, bank, internet, telephone etc. Surely, I will miss such shepherding! This same dedication was our weekly experience of having all matters in order – supplies, bills paid computers functioning. Barbara created warmth and celebration within the office team. The same care that was given to the office environment was further lavished on each of us team members attending to our every need. Holidays were celebrated with candy appearing in the office, and once advent began the Christmas crib and decoration appeared. Barbara’s dedication reached beyond the team and touched each region, unit and JP Contact in her preparation and mailing of the office Christmas Card. I invite you to join with me and the team in wishing Barbara O’Carroll every blessing in her second retirement! – Winifred

It is nearly impossible to summarize all that Barbara has given to this office. From the moment I was welcomed into the office, Barbara was there to make me feel more at ease, welcomed and comfortable. It is a weekly joy to have Barbara in the office and to share about the newest happenings in our lives with one another. Not only does she bring great joy to the office but she keeps us running. The many tasks that she takes care of so that we can do our work cannot be highlighted enough. Never have we had to worry about being out of ink or paper under Barbara’s watch. She anticipates the needs of the offices and keeps us going during the busiest times of year. It has been such a blessing to have Barbara with us for all these years. – Alexis

Barbara has been such a joyful, considerate and caring presence in our office over the years. I deeply appreciate how from day one in the office, Barbara has always made me feel more at ease, welcomed and supported, and I have enjoyed our weekly opportunities to catch up, chat about upcoming family visits, or plan for future events. Barbara has helped us to stay calm and organized in moments of high activity or upheaval, sending out hundreds of Christmas cards every year, getting help when our computers fail or our internet goes out, and coordinating our office moves. From ordering office supplies, to decorating our office for each holiday, to doing our accounting, to caring for our plants, Barbara has always ensured that our office runs smoothly and remains a happy and productive space. I know we will all miss the numerous contributions Barbara has made to our office, but beyond that I will greatly miss her attentiveness and friendship. I wish Barbara every blessing and happiness in this next chapter, and hope she knows how appreciated she is! – Cecilie ☺
Update on Social Protection Floors—Winifred Doherty

2019 was the centenary year of the founding of the International Labour Organization 1919–2019. It was a celebratory year and Winifred was privileged to attend two events in Geneva—one in February, ‘Together to achieve universal social protection’ with a further two days on Universal Child Grants. Studies undertaken by the Global Coalition for Social Protections Floors of which I am a member, indicate that there are only a small number of countries that could not afford to implement a social protection floor. “Child poverty can be reduced overnight with adequate social protection,” said Isabel Ortiz, Director of Social Protection, ILO. “To improve the lives of all children is an issue of priorities and political will: even the poorest countries have fiscal space to extend social protection floors.”

The ILO Recommendation 202 clearly indicated the four elements required for a floor—(i) universal health care; (ii) Child benefits; (iii) pensions for all who are unable to work or unemployed and (iv) pension for the elderly. Funding is possible—provide a percentage of military spending; progressive taxation; end tax havens and capital flight. Investing in people is the antidote to rising inequality where the richest 1% own 50% of the wealth. How do we address these unjust structures?

Social Protection Week in November entitled “Global Social Protection’ was part of the closing ceremonies of the ILO centenary. The fact that both these conferences took place show the interest there is in providing universal social protection including floors but the perennial question is ‘How will universal social protection be funded?’ A recent document from Frederick Ebert Stiftung, a member of the Global Coalition for Social Protection Floors is entitled ‘From International Ivory Towers to National Realities.’ The reports seeks to achieve two things—describe the policy space mapped out by international agreements and reiterates how little of our global wealth and income is needed to achieve some level of social security for all.

International Day of the Girl – Alexis Schutz

My favorite UN day of the year has to be the International Day of the Girl. All year long we work to have girls and their unique issues, concerns and voices raised at the UN but this day is particularly exciting as we see girls really take the lead. It also brings about such great celebrations around the Congregation and I love seeing all the photos and videos of the girls we serve celebrating the day. The International Day of the Girl became a formal UN holiday in 2011 and from 2012 on the Working Group on Girls has been hosting the Girls Speak Out. This year the theme for the event was ‘With Girls, For Girls.’ This calls us to think about how we advocate for girls making sure that we include them in the process and allow them to take the lead as they are the experts of their own lives.

The Speak Out brings together girl activists, advocates and performers to ‘takeover’ the UN and share their experiences and the experiences of girls around the world. The girl performers bring to life the stories of girls around the world who have submitted their stories through spoken word and song. The girl activists share their experiences of working on issues concerning their lives. This year’s activists shared on climate, immigration, violence against girls, leadership, education and health and sanitation. High-level members of the UN also share their remarks to celebrate. This year we heard from Deputy Secretary General of the UN, H.E. Ms. Amina Mohammed, the Missions of Turkey, Peru, and Canada, Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Director, H.E. Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and representatives from UNFPA and UNICEF.

During the performance we were thrilled to hear a quote from a Good Shepherd girl from Singapore who was taken in by Good Shepherd when she was too old for children’s services and too young for an adult shelter. We also had two Good Shepherd for Myanmar of young girls sharing their experiences where they live and how Good Shepherd has been there for them. Girls in Good Shepherd programs in Honduras shared videos calling for a world free from violence and one where education is accessible for them. Throughout the Congregation we witnessed celebrations of IDG. Girls are experts of their own lives and face unique experiences and adversities to their male counterparts and women. We need to continue to celebrate girls and their uniqueness until we see a day where policy reflects the specific needs of girls and includes them as active stakeholders in decisions on their own lives. As advocates we must remember that when we advocate for girls it must also be with girls.
Celebration of 30 Years of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – Alexis Schutz

This year among the preparation for many UN anniversaries, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted in 1989 by the General Assembly. All countries at the UN but one have signed on and ratified. It is the most ratified Convention at the UN. The CRC is a landmark document that calls on governments to ensure that children have what they need for a healthy and prosperous life free from violence. In honor of it’s 30th anniversary, UNICEF hosted a high-level meeting in the UN General Assembly Hall on November 20th, World Children’s Day. The theme for the day was centered around UNICEF’s global pledge for the year: ‘for every child, every right.’

The morning session was filled with children and child advocates celebrating the strides that have been made since 1989 and all that is left to accomplish to fulfill the rights of children. There was also focus on new challenges that children are facing today that were not as pressing or relevant at all in 89 including technology and the climate crisis. The event began with UN official and Rapporteurs calling on us to ensure that children’s dignity must be central to the choices governments make in policy, development and governance. Andrew Morley, President and CEO of World Vision brought forward the concerns of the children served by World Vision and the specific hardships that girls face including FGM, child married and high rates of sexual abuse. After an elaborate video that celebrated the work of UNICEF lit up the walls of the General Assembly Hall, child advocates had their turn at the microphone.

Dante, 11, started things off with a focus on climate. UNICEF shared a video on child advocates fighting for climate justice and then passed the mic to Dante. He spoke about his work on climate change and called on governments to protect his right to clean environment. He also defended youth climate activists, stating “Girls and boys have something to say because we are the ones who will inherit a sicker and sicker world.”

Nans, 13 from Syria shared her experiences as a refugee. She and her family have settled in the United States. This was no easy task and she spoke about the backlash and discrimination they faced moving to the US and her struggles to adapt to the language. These things won’t stop her from pursuing university and one day helping refugee children like her.

Nika from Laos shared about her work on girls’ education. She has worked to advocate her government to ensure that all children, especially girls, have equal access and opportunity to education. She highlighted that there is more to providing equal access to education than just building schools. Girls and boys must be able to afford school fees, have access to safe transportation to school and be supported by their families.

The morning wrapped up with panel of youth advocates from around the world sharing their work on disability rights, media, climate, peace and security and sports for all. Goodwill Ambassadors David Beckham and Millie Bobby Brown spoke about their work with UNICEF and the future they want to see for children. The afternoon was a space for member state statements, some of which were given by children from the country. We must continue to celebrate and lift up the CRC until all children around the world feel the full implementation of the convention.

16 Days of Activism – Alexis Schutz

Each year from November 25th (International Day for the Eradication of Violence Against Women) to December 10th (Human Rights Day) feminist and women’s groups globally engage in the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based violence. This year the GSJP office worked with and contributed to the campaign for the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (NGO CSTIP).

This year’s NGO CSTIP campaign focused on government accountability towards ending human trafficking. Over the 16 days on social media, we looked at the vulnerabilities girls and women face that lead to human trafficking, the drivers of human trafficking, the commitments governments have made to ending human trafficking and how they are uploading them and what steps civil society can take to call their governments to account. We shared this information via Facebook and Twitter and the committee membership engaged and shared with their wider network. As part of the sub-committee working on this campaign, I created graphics and content for fours of the sixteen days, retweeted and shared posts and created a social media guide for other members to use.
to boost engagement. On Human Rights Day, we facilitated a Twitter Chat bringing together the different themes of the campaign.

Beyond working with NGO CSTIP, I worked on sharing the work of the congregation on social media. This year, we saw great contributions from both Asia Pacific and Latin America. In Asia Pacific, Units took one of the 16 days and participated in actions on their day. Throughout the Units, Sisters raised awareness on family violence and violence against women and girls through taking out ads in local papers, passing out flyers to parents of the children they serve, and taking to the streets.

Good Shepherd Philippines engaged in a full 16 days campaign focused on men making commitments to ending violence against women. Saint Mary Euphrasia Integrated Development Foundation conducted “Usapang Lalaki,” translating to “Talk Between Men.” Male mission partners made specific commitments to ending the culture of violence that women and girls face. These posts were extremely powerful and really brought to light the issues of accountability and male allyship.

Good Shepherd Malaysia and international artist group Pangruk Sulap worked together to break silence against rape through custom t-shirts for this year’s 16 days. They hosted youth workshops to raise awareness and educate youth on gender-based violence. They also worked with local communities, government agencies and companies to raised awareness and educate on the topic.

Good Shepherd Taiwan worked together with the Taiwan Taxi Company to publicize our commitment to end violence against women and girls. They were estimated to reach over 525,000 people through their ads.

Latin American JP contacts came together to create an online video campaign. This campaign looked to explain our position on prostitution as violence against women. The videos also shared the ways that policy can protect women and girls that are sexually exploited and prostituted and hold buyers, pimps and brothel owners accountable.

It was great to see so much engagement from Units around the globe and see the creativity in each campaign. You can read about all of the Asia Pacific 16 Days actions here and view the videos from the regional Latin America campaign here.

Every year, we hope that participation in the 16 Days grows and we can continue to ‘orange the world’ until violence against women and girls is eradicated. ☀️

2020 at the UN is a year of commemorations and celebration! The big one is the UN at 75 – yes 75 years since its founding. It seems like yesterday when we celebrated the UN and 70 and yet much has happened in the last five years to weaken the position of the UN within the global arena. The continual disfunction of the security council in brokering peace, the breakdown of multilateralism, the inability to get consensus and action in the face of the emergency crisis, gender equality running on parallel tracks within the UN at CSW64 and outside the UN in Generation Equality and the almost invisibility of the social pillar are all reasons to be concerned. Yet, there is positive engagement around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Global Compact for Migration and the Compact for Refugees and the monitoring mechanism on implementation of the Palermo Protocol. The curtailing of services and events at the UN due to budget constraints resulting from member states not paying their dues has a direct impact on civil society access to the UN.

To mark its 75th anniversary in 2020, the United Nations will launch the biggest-ever global conversation on the role of global cooperation in building the future we want. Starting in January 2020, the United Nations will hold dialogues around the world from classrooms to boardrooms, from parliaments to village halls - it will place special emphasis on youth and those whose voices are too often marginalized or not heard in global affairs. The aim is to build a global vision for the year 2045, the UN’s centenary; to increase understanding of the threats to that future; and to drive collective action to realize that vision. Will you engage in this conversation? For more information see https://www.un.org/en/un75/join-conversation

While the big commemoration will be UN at 75 we have other landmark achievements to commemorate – The World Summit for Social Development, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at 25. UN Women is celebrating 10 years and the Sustainable Development Goals 5 years. The World Summit for Social Development and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action have been taken up for annual review within the Functional Commission of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations within which we have engaged with written statements, oral statements, side events and parallel event. This year of 2020 is no exception. One specific effect of the budget constraints is that our NGO statement are no longer translated into the 6 languages of the United Nations. They are posted in the language in which they are submitted.

Social Development has always been a focal point of the United Nations and is addressed specifically in the Copenhagen Declara-
have taken part in the following UN Regional Commission meeting in preparation for CSW 64 in Europe, Addis Ababa, Bangkok and the Mena region. The meeting in Santiago is re-scheduled for the end of January 2020 due to political unrest earlier in Chile.

In parallel with the Commission on the Status of Women is Generation Equality with two meeting one in Mexico in May 2020 and one in France in July 2020.

Currently there is an ongoing process of discussion and conferencing calling to develop a small number of action coalitions to be resourced and implemented.

The Commission on the Status of Women March 9 – 29, 2020 will focus on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted 25 years ago ‘Realizing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls.’ There are some interesting papers posted on the website in English only under Expert Group Meeting. Good Shepherd

Homelessness and unaffordable housing are structural issues resulting from the commercialization and financialization of housing around the world which in turn drives inequality. An affordable housing policy, SDG 11.1 while essential, is not sufficient to end homelessness. It should be accompanied by other measures such as social protection policies including social protection floors SDG 1.3. Addressing inequality SDG 10 demands implementation of concrete policies to leave no one behind and to reach the farthest behind first. The Commission is for the 9th to the 19th February, 2020 Other issues addressed by the Commission have an impact on specific groups of people – older persons, youth, indigenous people, people with disabilities and families.

There is also an emerging theme for the Commission - “Twenty-five years of the World Summit for Social Development: addressing emerging societal challenges to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” Visit the Commission website to see new posting, follow on Facebook or Twitter if you have an account.

English: https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020
French: https://www.unwomen.org/fr/csw/csw64-2020
Spanish: https://www.unwomen.org/es/csw/csw64-2020

The GSJP Office has been in existence since 1996 – now in its 24th year. The world around us is changing rapidly. The United Nations as an organization is grappling with this same change, seeking to find new ways to be relevant and effective on the global stage in providing leadership and technical assistance to address the emergencies and crises of today. In the same way the GSJP Office must adapt and change to better position itself to voice justice for all God’s people especially girls, women and children ensuring that no one is left behind. With this in mind the GSJP Office undertook an evaluation of the office’s ministry in relation to the Congregational directives. The evaluation was undertaken by Marina El Khoury, an Independent Evaluation Consultant and is now available. The main headings - relevancy, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and added value are presented under findings and challenges. The recommendations include immediate action, medium term and longer term with sharper focus and more ‘buy in’ by Units, the Good Shepherd International Foundation with strong Congregational ownership. If you are interested in reviewing and engaging with the report please send an e-mail to winifreddohertyrgs@gmail.com.

English: https://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020
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