

OUR PLEDGE TO WOMEN AND CHILDREN

We pledge to honour and advance the rights of women and children by:

PROVIDING SUPPORTS

We strive to support women and children in vulnerable situations, listening to their stories, providing information, and referring them to appropriate agencies for support so that they are able to have informed and effective opportunities to participate in decision making.

IRELAND: In May 2022, Brian O’Toole, Justice Contact for England and Ireland moderated a webinar entitled “Ukraine Criss: Uniting Together in Service”. During the webinar, they called on the experience of the RENATE (*Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation*) members who are currently working at the borders of Hungary, Poland and Romania to describe the experiences and the risks posed in the chaos that ensues. Participants were told of traffickers turning up at the borders to entrap unsuspecting women and children and that they are largely being unchallenged. Additionally, they also heard from Ukrainian citizens who have travelled across the border into Romania and are now working with RENATE to assist in safeguarding vulnerable war refugees. This funding for this work has been quickly mobilised and disbursed by Misesan Cara.

IRELAND: The Presentation Sisters in both the Northeast and Southwest Provinces of Ireland have offered to house Ukrainian families at a number of properties. Accommodation is but part of the welcome, and following Nano’s example, we have ensured a warm, hospitable welcome that has been extended to the first group of 55 Ukrainians that are being housed in Fethard Convent, Co Tipperary. Additionally, Sisters are offering language classes and other pastoral supports as the needs arise.



Source: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/sound-of-laughing-ukrainian-children-fills-fethard-convent-1.4844472>



Source: <https://www.irisht Examiner.com/news/munster/arid-40844327.html>

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Along with many countries around the world, our Presentation Sisters and Presentation People are providing pastoral support at the grassroots to women and children in vulnerable circumstances. In her role as a Chaplain, Sister Terri Emslie from Western Australia supports students, parents and staff members in schools who are experiencing trauma, conflict, mental health issues or a range of other stressful situations. Sister Terri is well-resourced in that she is able to connect women and children in need to appropriate agencies for support e.g., housing, food, psychological support. A pragmatist with a big heart, she is creative in finding appropriate solutions to assist women and children experiencing challenges by tapping into community connections and adopting a multi-disciplinary team approach.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: Presentation Sisters in Papua New Guinea are working around the clock, often in very challenging and unsafe conditions, to combat Gender-Based Violence. The Sisters provide a range of supports to women and children who are subject to violence, particularly in establishing short-term accommodation, pastoral and spiritual supports.



Photo Courtesy of Anne Lane (Published in Global Sisters Report)

IMPROVING ACCESS TO LEARNING

We strive to improve access to learning for women and children around the world as we recognise that education is a key way to combat injustices that can severely impair lives.

QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA: The Work and Welcome Program offers refugees and migrants to Australia the experience of an Australian workplace and the confidence they need to re-establish a sense of hope, dignity and belonging. The school's support of this program is a practical way to extend hospitality to migrants and refugees and to support them in establishing a new life in Australia. The encounter with the stories of migrants and refugees also challenges the prejudices and biases of staff, students and families towards migrants and refugees. Such negative perspectives are often promoted by mainstream media in Australia. The Work and Welcome Program addresses the social injustice of the displacement of peoples. By encountering the story of the refugee or migrant employed by the College, staff, students and families can broaden their understanding of this issue, respond with empathy to the experience of migrants and refugees and critique the Australian Government's immigration policies. Australia's system of mandatory detention of refugees and asylum seekers has been condemned as arbitrary and illegal by United Nations bodies and UN Member States. Participants in the program gained an experience of an Australian workplace, particularly the use of written and spoken English, that assisted them in obtaining employment following the placement. More practically, the income participants receive enables

ENCOURAGE INFORMATION SHARING

We strive to share a diverse range of information pertaining to injustices faced by women and children via a range of channels to ensure a far-reaching audience. We acknowledge, above all, the importance of women and children having equal access to information without prejudice

WESTERN AUSTRALIA: In June 2021, the Year 11 Student Faith Formation Day at Iona Presentation College in Perth was re-envisioned and re-shaped to encourage the senior students to consider the important role they play in continuing Nano's lantern work for justice, in a way that is Christ-centred and reflects their call as Presentation people to "speak and act in partnership with others for global justice from a contemplative stance in a spirit of oneness with the whole of creation" (Seventh Assembly, 2017). Throughout the day, the girls participated in six concurrent sessions structured around the IPA Education and Action for Justice Strategy Priority Areas – Women and Children, Care of the Earth, Indigenous and Tribal Peoples and Eliminating Violence against Women and Children. By hearing from Guest Speakers, the students were privy to a wide range of information pertaining to the injustices experienced by women and children and they were encouraged to reflect on how they can respond to the call of "shining the light" on these important issues.



We strive to raise awareness about the injustices faced by women and children at the systemic level, locally, nationally, and globally, to educate our networks and wider society about its harmful impact on our modern world.

NEW YORK: The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW66) is an annual UN event dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The 66th CSW took place this year from March 14 – 22, 2022. The priority theme this year was “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes”. This event and its theme are central to the work and intention of the International Presentation Association given that our UN focus is to work for the elimination of violence against women and children.

AUSTRALIA: A significant number of Presentation Sisters and Presentation People across Australia play an active role in the Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) at both a local State and National level. A Forced Marriage Project is underway across Australia, in schools and hospitals, places where community gathers, in parishes and parks. ACRATH continues to raise-awareness about the undignified practice wherever and wherever asked, in small and large groups, via meetings, lectures, Zoom, community radio, print media, social media. Inspired by the Declaration of Human rights (1948) Article 16 which sets down that "marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intended spouses", and various UN Conventions preventing child, early and forced marriage, ACRATH declared the goal (2) to "eliminate forced marriage" by raising awareness, leading actions regionally and nationally, advocating with government, working for systemic change at all scales and collaborating with counter trafficking networks widely. Presentation Sisters and People collaborating with ACRATH are further inspired to answer their "why" by contributing to the fulfilment our national responsibilities to Sustainable Development Goal 5.3 which states that by 2030 the world aims to "Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation."