

*IBVM and CJ working together for a more humane, just and sustainable world*

## Christmas 2019.

*This photo, present in recent social media, is a contemporary reminder of the 2000 plus year old story of Incarnation – God among us. Incarnation in poverty and displacement, where the most vulnerable human beings repeat the experience at the mercy of the other members of the human family. This Christmas, we pray that we may allow the sacred, within and among us, to bring forth a more humane world, a more just world and a sustainable world, from a place where best efforts and profound self-interest come into play for the future of the whole human family and the planet we inhabit.*



(Rober Astorgano/Fotomovimiento)

## 2019 in Review

At our recent meeting with the **NGO Advisory Committee** we presented a review of 2019 and we share some of the main points. Among the highlights were the advances in IBVM/CJ collaboration including the now joint Advisory Committee to the NGO, Province UN Representative network and the networks on Human Trafficking and on Migration and Refugees.

**The UN Updates** and editions of **Towards Global Citizenship** of 2019 highlight what we, along with you, did in New York, Washington, Geneva, Nairobi, Chile, Madrid, Salt Lake City and South Korea. We thank all who took part in the different Conferences and Forums and to so many of you who contributed to the UN Updates, Towards Global Citizenship, Reflections on specific Sustainable Development Goals, calls for examples of best practice and to the survey among IBVM members, done by the Advisory Committee on the impact of the NGO with the United Nations. Our amazing interns and Youth Representatives deserve special congratulations for their work, which not only in New York but also the online work with the ECOSOC Group of young people, including younger members of CJ and IBVM throughout the world.

We invite you to remember the part we all played in making collaboration with the United Nations during 2019. Watch the video [WITH THE UNITED NATIONS – 2019](#) where you, around the world, and those in the office in New York worked to make the work of the United Nations meaningful for the whole human family. And, please see [YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR NGO AND THE UN](#) where Youth Representatives and other young people enthusiastically engaged.



Janet Palafox ibvm (Australia) and Francesca Torcasio, our Youth Representative, also from Australia have, in recent months, been learning about and contributing to the work in New York. Thanks to them we now share more interesting information. Here are some different aspects of the work of the United Nations.

### United Nations General Assembly

The global media keep us up to date when Heads of State and Government arrive in New York for the General Assembly. But, what happens when they leave? At the beginning of October each year the diplomats take on the long term work of the Assembly. This is done in five Committees, named, First, Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees. They range from peace and security related issues to economic, financial, human rights, social, cultural and humanitarian issues. They also include aspects of decolonization, budget and legal matters. Janet and Francesca followed some sessions and Francesca prepared more detailed information about the first three committees which are more relevant for our work. Read about them [here](#).

### Countries with Specific Needs

Countries with specific needs are divided into a number of categories: least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), including the 90 most vulnerable member States of the UN. Cynthia attended a special session on Landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). Where are CJ and IBVM present in landlocked developing countries? Thing about this before you read more here. Countries with specific needs engage in processes aimed at their advancement. In the case of Landlocked developing countries, the Vienna Programme of Action, drawn up in 2014, aims at reducing poverty and achieving sustainability. Find out more [here](#).



## Reports to UN and Civil Society

A wide variety of Reports are presented to the UN committees and to civil society during these months of General Assembly work. They range from Reports by the Human Rights Special Rapporteurs to Reports such as The Global Sustainability Report, 2019, an independent and critical scientific assessment of the implementation of the SDGs. Janet prepared a summary of the findings that are of particular interest to us. Read about the concerns and what is needed to move forward in her summary [here](#).

## COP25 - MADRID

The climate summit in Madrid (COP 25) was on “life support” one reporter wrote at the time of preparing this Update. After marathon negotiations between countries left them more divided than ever on how to fight global warming and pay for its ravages, the conference ended with “a modest agreement, postponing, until next year, a key decision on the global carbon market.” In spite of five-alarm warnings from science, deadly extreme weather made worse by climate change, and weekly strikes by millions of young people, negotiations in Madrid, while under pressure to send a clear signal that governments were willing to reach consensus in tackling the crisis, the most serious issues did not achieve agreement. “I am disappointed with the results of #COP25”, tweeted **Sec. General Antonio Guterres**. “The international community lost an important opportunity to show increased ambition on mitigation, adaptation and finance to tackle the climate crisis. But we must not give up, and I will not give up.” With similar concerns in mind, we hear that **Pope Francis** will call for a complete “ecological conversion” involving new human relations and respect for creation in his traditional peace message, to be read in all Catholic churches on 1 January 2020. Read this information [here](#). We will share, at a later date,

the impressions of **Angela Orellana**, from Toronto, who was present at the Summit.



## Green Congregation Award to Loreto India.

After the disappointing outcome of COP25 it is a breath of hope to hear that the Loreto Congregation was awarded, on 13 December 2019, the Green Congregation Award by the Commission for Education of the Catholic Bishop’s Conference of India. “It was awarded during an All Faith Climate Conference,” write National JPIC coordinators Mrs Ranjan & Mrs Andrews, “for our initiative to make our schools solar powered as well as our commitment to plant trees to fight climate change. It symbolizes our enthusiastic team work, coordination and cooperation at all levels, right from your end to our students, superiors, principals, teachers and support staff. It clearly displays that we can make a difference when we all unite together for a noble cause and move ahead with clear planning and understanding, God’s grace and blessings.”

## Asian Movement of Religious against Human Trafficking (AMRAT)

The Asian Movement of Religious against Human Trafficking (AMRAT) held its annual general meeting on 9-12 November 2019. Sr. Ancy CJ attended the meeting held in Gujarat, India.

“AMRAT Talita Kum India, is a unit of the Talita Kum international -The network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in persons to combat human trafficking”, writes Sr. Ancy . “Human trafficking is the second largest illegal trade in the world today, the first being arms and ammunitions and the 3rd drug mafia.

108 religious women from different congregations all over India and Nepal came together at the Pastoral center Nadia, Ahmadabad diocese from 10th to 12th November 2019, for the AGBM Cum capacity building of its partners.” Read more about this important group meeting which is of special concern for all of us and our efforts to stop the scourge of human trafficking throughout the world”.



## The National Lawyers Forum of Nuns and Priests in India

Networking for Justice, the National Lawyers Forum of nuns and priests in India, held its annual meeting at St. Pius Campus, Mumbai. Cynthia Mathew CJ is a member of this network. The November 15-17 conference had as its theme “Pursuit of Justice – Our Prophetic Response.” Read [here](#)



## 2020 at the United Nations

2020 is an important year for the United Nations in that a number of significant anniversaries are coming up.

### The UN at 75

To begin with, the United Nations is celebrating **the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its Foundation**. At the first Briefing on this anniversary, which took place several months ago, we were told that, given the present state of the world and the defensive approach to multilateral work and agreements, there is not much to celebrate. On 24 October 2019, the UN announced the launch of **the “biggest- ever global conversation”** about the future of the planet. We are all invited to take part, all generations, in settings as varied as classrooms, boardrooms, parliaments, villages, in the most rural of areas, and the most densely populated human settlements. Would you like to get a group together for one of these conversations? All you need to get going is in [this website](#) .

We are looking forward to hearing from you.



### Beijing +25

2020 marks the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the “Beijing Conference”, the Fourth World Conference on Women which, with its daring Declaration and Plan of Action, has been central to the impetus behind the empowerment of women. To describe Beijing+25, think of two parallel railway tracks. The Official Track consists of a review of the last 25 years. National Reviews are gathered, Regional meetings take place in Addis Ababa, Geneva, Bangkok, Amman and Santiago. Expert groups meet and thousands will descend on New York for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) from 9 – 20 March, 2020. This

will be the official celebration of the advancement of women in the past 25 years.

Meanwhile, on the second parallel track, another initiative is being undertaken - Generation Equality Forum. It is a civil society – centered process leading to two major meetings in Mexico 7 – 8 May 2020 and Paris, 7 – 10 July 2020 convened by UN Women and supported by the governments of France and Mexico. The outcome of this process, a forward looking action plan, will be presented to the General Assembly at a special session on Beijing+25 in September 2020.

### Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development.

“On September 24, 2019 at the [SDG Global Summit](#), the Secretary General Antonio Guterres called for a decade of action to accelerate progress in 2020 and beyond to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The call is in response to the member countries’ Political Declaration that asks the Secretary General to “engage governments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in generating solutions and

accelerating action to address the systematic gaps in the implementation” of the SDGs “. Read more [here](#) about this important effort to get behind the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



*Happy 2020 from Cecília, Cynthia, Janet and Francesca at the  
NGO Office, New York.*