

CONECTA 93

March 2021

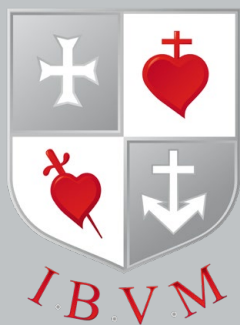


"TRULY THEY ARE WOMEN WHO GIVE MUCH."

BERNIE BOLAND
IBVM, UK



March, women's month



Conecta is the internal newsletter of the Blessed Virgin Mary Institute, IBVM, Spanish Province.

A religious community inspired by Mary Ward, who wants to live its spirituality and share it with the people with whom it lives and works.






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Front Page Picture:

In all the networks in which IBVM participates at the international level, work has been done throughout the month to make visible the importance of women in society's struggle for a better future. "Truly, they are women who give much", Bernie Boland, Ibvm UK.

March, women's month



March is a month full of good things to celebrate, it is the month of St Patrick and the arrival of spring, it is also the month of women. Also UN holds its annual Conference on the Status of Women and all over the world, women demand real equality.

On 8 March we celebrate International Women's Day. Every year we remember that it has been a long and hard road to get to where we are today, but we cannot forget that there is still a long way to go to achieve real equality between men and women in the world, including within the Church..

Inequality in the Church

Since last year, a group of church women have raised the issue of gender equality and created a platform called 'Women's Revolt in the Church'. This platform points out the gender discrimination in the church structure and calls for reforms "until equality is customary". Due to meeting restrictions by Covid-19, it was not possible to organise a meeting of as many great women as the

Church has, to commemorate 8M, but instead, the women of this platform organised an act of vindication, memory and hope, full of music, beautiful prayers and sisterhood.

Violence against women

The Mary Ward Social Centre in Kolkata organised an online event to demonstrate against all forms of violence against women as part of the "One Billion Rising" movement.

This movement, which MW Social Centre has joined, is the largest global mass action to end violence against women in history. The campaign, which was launched on Valentine's Day 2012, began as a call to action based on the staggering statistic that 1 in 3 women on the planet will be beaten or raped in her lifetime. With a world

population of 7 billion people, that's over 1 billion women and girls!

Status

Since its establishment in 1946, the UN Commission on the Status of Women has held two weeks of working sessions during the month of March to promote women's rights, documenting the reality of women's lives around the world, with the broad participation of civil society organisations affiliated to the UN Economic and Social Council, in which the IBVM NGO operates at the United Nations.

The Loreto NGO at UN, Renate and other IBVM-related organisations around the world have organised and promoted a variety of online events related to Women's rights.

IBVM / CJ, getting to know each other

With a history of four centuries behind us, we address the challenges of the future by resituating the components of the Institute that Mary Ward founded. We are left with two groups, IBVM and CJ, which are in the process of merging into one body.

You can follow the process worldwide on this [Facebook page](#) and [YouTube channel](#). In Europe we formed a group, inspired by one of the women in Mary Ward's first group, Susannah Rookwood. We are looking forward to the months and years ahead.

Where are we in Europe? We are in Albania, Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Spain (IBVM and CJ), Hungary, Ireland, Italy, UK (IBVM and CJ), Romania, Russia and Ukraine. Europe has its challenges from a language perspective and thanks to current technologies we are having opportunities to communicate in ways that were not possible before.

In November, we began a stage to get to know each other as religious of the two congregations. On 19 December 2020, we had a first virtual meeting for the whole of Europe. Then we shared information in order to connect with the websites and social media of the different countries. On the other hand, we distributed the necessary information so that we can connect on a personal level



One of the images shared by the Romanian CJs about their ministries, their work with the Roma Community

and with the medium of our choice.

During the month of February, the people in charge of archives and communication have provided a brief history of each country and an account of the ways in which we contribute to the world today. At the same time, we started to have Province to Province meetings. The IBVM Spain has already met with the CJ of Romania while the CJs of Spain have had a meeting with the IBVMs of the UK.

Although most of us religious in the Spanish Mary Ward family are older, we enjoy intergenerational encounters when we meet with countries such as Slovakia or Romania. Age is not stopping us from communicating because we participate willingly, even though we are over 90 years old.

Globally we are holding virtual meetings for Africa where IBVM is in Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa, South Sudan, South Sudan and Zambia, and CJ is in Zimbabwe. In the Americas, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the United States, Peru and Cuba are meeting. And finally for Asia and Australia they meet from India (IBVM and CJ), Nepal (IBVM and CJ), Bangladesh, South Korea, Mongolia, Philippines and Timor Leste.

Our IBVM/CJ religious network in Europe is very much looking forward to the possibility of taking further steps to get to know each other better and also to share with the wider Mary Ward family network in the coming months.

CECILIA O'DWYER, IBVM

What does Mary Ward say to us today?

On 26th January, the Seville (South of Spain) Association of BVM Schools Alumnae organized an online meeting to reflect on the relevance of Mary Ward's values today, a lovely way to celebrate Mary Ward Week 2021.

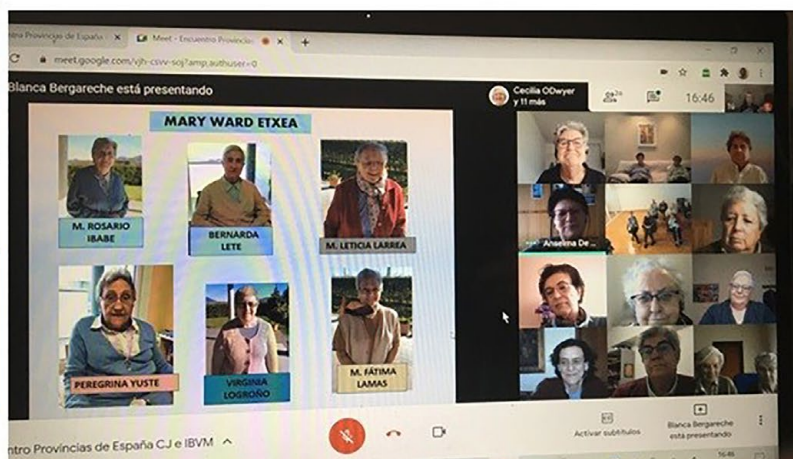
It was a very successful meeting with more than 100 people joining in!

Maria Lopez de Haro, Ibvm, gave a moving presentation on the founder's values.

We all enjoyed so much the celebration.



Encuentro Provincias de España CJ & IBVM



On the 30th January, as part of Mary Ward Week, we had a meeting of the CJ and IBVM provinces in Spain. It was a time to get to know the sisters and their community geographically. Some of us had already had the opportunity to meet in

relation to themes of ongoing formation such as Laudato Si; the parables in Jesus; the invitation to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the college of San Sebastian; the provincial teams and even the joint work for the Ignatian Writings of women's re-

ligious congregations. These are all steps towards getting to know each other and strengthening the union between CJ and IBVM. We will continue to take steps to reach that desire to be One as Mary Ward wished.

B. BERGARECHE, IBVM

Goodbye and thank you, Asilah

It's by lift up my eyes

that
I allow
God
to show
me
how
close
He is



Clotilde ibvm

The Spanish province says goodbye to Lisiane and Clotilde, from IBVM Mauritius, who worked for years in the mission of Asilah and are now moving on. Thank you very much!

The mission of Lisiane Magdeleine, ibvm (five years) and Clotilde de Maroussem, ibvm (four years) has come to an end in Asilah, Morocco. They are waiting in Asilah for the opening of the border of Mauritius, because of the pandemic situation, to be back in their province.

C. DE MAROUSSEM, IBVM



A selfie of Noelle, Judy, Clotilde, Lisiane & María, Ibvm, during last visit of the Generalate to the Mission

European trade agreements impede development in Africa

As part of the Madrid Antenna of the Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network, the IBVM remains committed to Africa and works to make visible the consequences of injustice and poverty produced by Europe's economic and trade policies towards the African continent, agreements that only benefit the richest and deprive the poorest of such essential goods as land.



The Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN) is a network established in 1988 with the aim of contributing to fairer economic relations between Africa and Europe. The network is made up of antennae in various places on both continents, composed of religious and lay people from different congregations who are witnesses to the damage caused by unjust economic and trade policies. AEFJN networks with Christian groups from different churches, organisations and non-confessional

groups who want a more just society for all people around the world.

Each quarter AEFJN publishes research that exposes these unjust relationships. This first quarter of 2021, we expose the case of a company that, changing its name over the centuries, has exploited land in the Democratic Republic of Congo for the production of palm oil.

The communities affected by the plantations of the company Plantations et Huileries du Congo (PHC) have been deprived of their ancestral

lands since 1911, when the British founder of PHC and co-founder of the multinational Unilever, Lord Leverhulme, converted his 750,000 hectares of land into industrial oil palm plantations. The communities never gave their consent for their forests to be converted into oil palm plantations. Over the decades the communities have demanded justice, but the response has been repression and violence.

The full article can be read on the [IBVM Spain website](#).

B. BERGARECHE, IBVM



IBVM Youth Representative, an opportunity and experience

In the next academic year, 2021-2022, the Institute is launching the “IBVM Youth Representative” initiative, which aims to enable young people to get involved in the work and processes of the United Nations, and to be a learning and practical opportunity for them. The project comes as a complement to the international presence that the Institute and the CJ have at the United Nations, through our NGOs there: Loreto IBVM NGO.

We want to create a network of young people interested in deepening the lines of action developed by the

IBVM/CJ at the UN: poverty reduction, environmental crisis, gender equality, human trafficking, global citizenship, access to education...

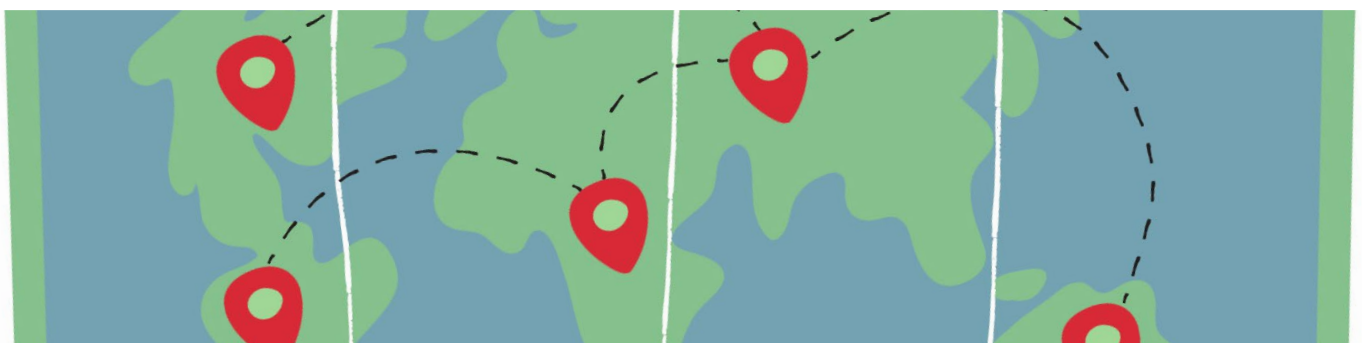
To energise and set up the network, we will look for a person with the capacity and enthusiasm to lead it. We will work together with her/him from JPIC. This is an opportunity to do an internship in an international environment, attend events (for now online) and gain knowledge of the functioning of the United Nations through direct participation.

In addition, the network will be open to all those un-

der 30 years old, passionate about justice and willing to participate in an international project.

The requirements, in addition to those mentioned above, are a good command (written and spoken) of English, knowledge of international organizations and the United Nations, and good communication skills and initiative to generate networks.

The selected person will officially start his/her assignment in September, and the collaboration (which will be carried out online) will last for a whole year, until the following September.



IBVM schools, recognised as an international benchmark by Google

IBVM Schools have become the first Spanish educational institution to obtain the Google Reference School Network recognition. It endorses the incorporation of digital tools in its pedagogical project.

To obtain this recognition, our 6 schools, three in Seville ([Bami](#), [Loreto](#) and [Aljarafe](#)), two in Madrid ([Madrid](#) and [El Soto](#)) and one in Vizcaya ([Leioa](#)) have had the collaboration of the consulting firm [ieducando](#), a partner company of Google For Education, in Spain.



**Irlandesas:
Institución Referente
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PRESENTACIÓN DE LOS COLEGIOS BVM IRLANDESAS
COMO GOOGLE REFERENCE SCHOOL NETWORK



IRLANDESAS
COLEGIOS DEL IBVM

Google

ieducando

Every year, Google selects the leading educational centres in each country and names them Google Reference Schools, in those cases where they stand out for their use of digital tools. But the technology company also has a higher level of distinction: the Google Reference School Network recognition, only for educational institutions that have implemented Google tools in their pedagogical project, in their processes and as the backbone. This is the distinction that BVM Schools has just obtained, which not only becomes the first educational institution to achieve it in Spain, but also one of the few worldwide.

A journey that began in South Africa in 2017

In the summer of 2017, all IBVM and CJ schools around the world held an educational conference under the theme “Rooted, Responsive and Relevant”. This meeting responded to the GC 2014 call “Creating unity that moves us across borders” and brought together more than 70 teachers from around twenty countries.

In her opening address to the conference, IBVM leader Noelle Corscadden said: “Let us be rooted in the Gospel and in our tradition and history. Let us listen and respond to the calls and needs of today’s world and be courageous and

creative in our response to today’s call, so that our Mary Ward schools move forward and continue to be relevant in the 21st century”.

Out of this came a document called the South African Compass, with a number of challenges for all schools:

The first is to guide and monitor the use of media, whereby a Mary Ward school today develops sensitive and effective ways to enable young people to participate safely and ethically in social media and emerging technology. This ensures whole relationships, while increasing opportunities for learning and creating global and digital citizens.

The second challenge was to be agents of change, whereby a Mary Ward school today discerns what changes are happening or needed, and encourages collaborative work to embrace change in order to further God's purpose through education.

This was the starting point for the Digital Citizens project implemented in our schools, into which Google tools have been incorporated.

Simple and scalable technology

Pedro Díez, CEO of the consulting firm ieducando, values the distinction obtained by BVM Schools and highlights that "technology in education allows two things; on the one hand, that teachers can apply innovative pedagogies; and on the other hand, that learning can be individualised and adapted to each student, because no two students learn things at the same pace. The advantage of these tools is that schools forget about the technological part and focus on the pedagogical part, which is very important.

For her part, Teresa Clemente, Director of the Schools' Management Team, explains that "we began this journey with our Digital Citizens Project, with which we aimed to train citizens capable of transforming the world in which they live with the most up-to-date tools and,

in this way, train competent people in all its dimensions".

Transformation process

The project, implemented in all stages, from Pre-school to Secondary and Vocational Training, has involved a major transformation process that has involved, among other things, adding the Chromebook to the devices we were already using for the teaching activities of both students and teachers and G Suite Workspace to back up all administrative and teaching management in all our Schools.

A training itinerary has also been drawn up for teachers that has enabled them to obtain certifications as trainers at a global level and classroom work has been updated by adapting to these methodologies, dynamics and work materials.

At the same time, the educational institution has made a leap in communication with families in real time and has carried out a major transformation of facilities and infrastructure to provide schools with optimal broadband for networking.

"This project is leading us to update and improve practically all the processes that were developed in our Schools. All of this has allowed us to become a Reference Network, with which Google certifies our digital transformation process. So-

mething that seems intangible, but that really has an impact on the entire educational community and helps us to prepare the future citizens of the 21st century in the best possible way", concludes Teresa Clemente.

Innovation at BVM Schools

Innovation has always been in the DNA of BVM Schools. Back in the late 19th century, when the IBVM religious women arrived in Spain, the school in Castilleja (now Irlandesas Aljarafe) was the first coeducational school (for boys and girls) in Seville, and one of the first to allow women to do Physical Education, something totally revolutionary for the time.

Today, work on technological innovation has become essential in our schools as a tool for connecting with pupils and promoting work, as an ally for our teaching staff, as an improvement in communication with families and as an end in itself, preparing the whole educational community in the responsible and intelligent use of technologies, which have proved to be so necessary for education and communication in these times of pandemic and which are going to be increasingly essential in the world of the 21st century.

ALEJANDRO DELGADO



ROOTED RESPONSIVE RELEVANT

Being an agent of change

A Mary Ward school today discerns what change is happening or needed, and encourages collaborative work to embrace change in order to take God's purpose forward through education.

(cf KG pp 3 & 7)

Keeping our focus fixed

A Mary Ward school today continues to take its bearings from Jesus, his gospel, and our charism, and to be guided by our JUST SOUL traditional values of Justice, Verity (Truth), Sincerity, Freedom, and Felicity (Joy).

(cf KG pp 1-2 & IBVM Call 1)

Guiding and guarding in the use of media

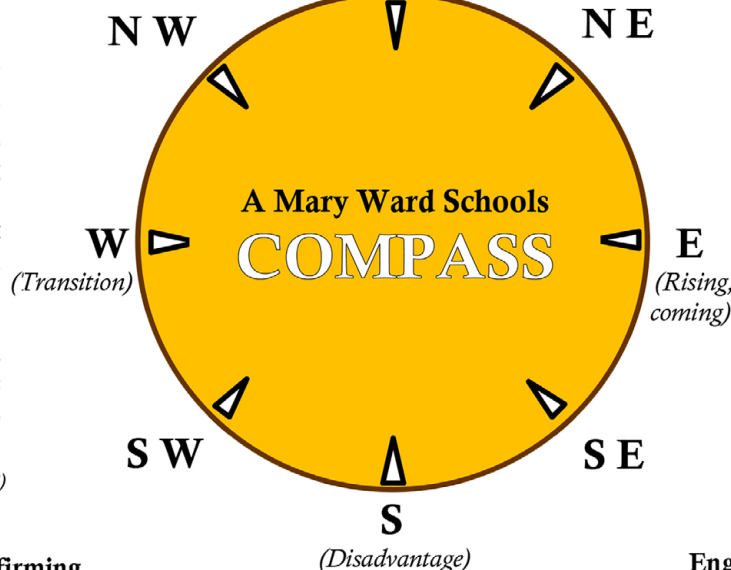
A Mary Ward school today develops responsive and effective ways to enable the young to engage safely and ethically with social media and emerging technology. This ensures the integrity of relationships while enhancing the opportunity for learning and creating global digital citizens.

(cf KG pp 7-8 & CJ Call 8)

Owning and developing the charism

A Mary Ward school today joyfully accepts responsibility for evolving and unfolding in our time the God-given charism that Mary Ward channelled in her time. We continue to interpret this charism, adapting what has been passed on to us, in creative and innovative ways congruent to the times.

(cf KG p 2, IBVM Call 1, CJ Call 8)



Cultivating values needed now

A Mary Ward school today promotes not only the traditional values in which it is rooted but also those values needed for education that is responsive and relevant to the present reality and to the future.

(cf KG pp 1 & 7)

Embracing and affirming diversity

A Mary Ward school today embraces diversity as a mirroring of the wonder of Creation. Seeing the image of God in human diversity, we encourage the young to discover their interdependence so they each find their own dignity – “I am because you are” * – and feel truly affirmed and included.

(cf KG pp 6-7; IBVM Call 5)

Thinking and acting justly

A Mary Ward school today is aware of inequalities and oppression in the world of which it is part, and strives to be part of the solution, building peace by helping the young to think and act justly in response to injustice – whether in the school community, the broader community, or the environment.

(cf KG pp 3,6,7,9; IBVM 2; CJ 5,6)

Engaging with the bigger picture

A Mary Ward school today, recognising the interconnectedness of all things, finds educational ways to engage with *Laudato si'* and *Agenda 2030: Transforming our World*. We promote the values, skills, and behaviours needed for living as global citizens finding fulfilment in harmony with all of creation.

(cf KG p 3; IBVM 2,4,5; and CJ 4,5,6)

Get connected to **Conecta**


If you would like to collaborate with the **Conecta** newsletter by writing, sending some photographs, suggesting a topic, or telling us something interesting to share so that we can write it, please contact us.



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