

Shalom / UN-NGO Newsletter

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*Purify our hearts from all injustice through your gracious coming.
Mother Theresa Letter #2053, Trust & Dare, December 5*

Shalom International Meeting

By Sister Kathy Schmittgens, International Shalom Coordinator

What breaks your heart? What breaks the heart of God? What is at the heart of your heart? These were just some of the questions that were reflected on at the International *Shalom* meeting from October 18-25 at the Motherhouse in Munich.

Branch Representatives Sister Maria-Theresia Knippschild (Europe), Sister Helen Galadima (Africa), Sister Francine Perez (Asia & Oceania), Sister Rosa Maria Trochez (Latin America), and Tim Dewane (North America) along with Sister Julie Lattner, General Council Liaison, Sister Eileen Reilly, UN/NGO Representative and Kathy Schmittgens, International *Shalom* Coordinator met to formulate the *Shalom* Focus and Commitments for the next two years.

Being close to Blessed M. Theresa made those days particularly special. The meeting opened with an evening prayer at the tomb of Blessed M. Theresa. We were able to celebrate Foundation Day with a visit to Regensberg and liturgy at Stadtamhof.

Taking the theme "Into the heart of the world" we received input from Sister Julie Lattner on the General Council's Vision in the light of *Love Gives Everything* and did our own reflection on what is stirring in our hearts as we look at what is stirring in the heart of the world.

Listening to the reports from the five branches was powerful. We hope that somehow we can share this information with more sisters throughout the Congregation.

Again looking at the heart of the world we visited Dachau Concentration Camp to open our eyes to what can happen and what humans are capable of when injustice, prejudice and racism go unchecked. Each of us found that there are echoes of this in many parts of our world today.



Taking into consideration all these experiences and the dialogue among ourselves, we decided on the following as our Focus and Commitments for the next two years.

Shalom Focus and Commitments 2018-2020

The Triune God impels us into the heart of the world to be women of peace, hope, and love. In the spirit of Blessed M. Theresa and Mother M. Caroline, we the members of the *Shalom* International Network, guided by *You Are Sent*, *Love Gives Everything*, and Catholic Social Teaching, commit to:

Educate

- We will continue to study Catholic Social Teaching, in particular *Laudato Si'*

Advocate

- We will promote efforts to strengthen just structures, and change unjust structures.

Act

- We will promote our centers of prayer for peace and find ways to broaden participation in prayer for peace.
- We will foster the living and witness of reconciling love in community and today's global world.

In collaboration with others

- We will strengthen our networking within *Shalom* and the UN/NGO office.
- We will collaborate with others working for peace, justice and integrity of creation locally, nationally, and internationally.
- We will continue to celebrate UN International Days and Church days related to *Shalom*.

For the dignity of life

- We will develop attitudes and skills necessary for intercultural living.
- We will work for human rights, especially among migrants, refugees, and all who are discriminated against in our societies.

And the care of all creation

- We will make lifestyle choices that promote integral ecology.
- We will make decisions that counteract climate change in ways that are appropriate for our local environment and encourage legislation that will help our ailing planet.

Centers of Prayer for Peace

We discussed at length the Centers of Prayer for Peace. This is a powerhouse of the *Shalom* Network. We can do more to increase participation and engagement in this prayer. Here are some suggestions that we encourage you to consider:

- Include colleagues and Associates in the prayer, either physically present or in spirit
- Encourage sisters reminding them that they are part of a much bigger reality
- Give the Calendar of prayer a more prominent, visible place on our websites
- Be creative in encouraging sisters, colleagues and Associates to spontaneous prayer



International Day of Peace: September 21

By Sister Kathy Schmittgens, International Shalom Coordinator

The International Day of Peace is one of the *Shalom* UN Days marked throughout the Congregation. It is a beautiful day for us to work and pray for peace in so many different and wonderful ways. Here are just a few examples from the day in 2018.



These are some pictures of Peace Day celebrations in Poland, Belarus and Hungary. Adults, youth, primary students and little ones prayed, learned and celebrated the importance of peace in our world. Sister Natalie in Belarus reported:

On September 20 and 21, during the catechesis, I mentioned the topic of International Day of Peace in six groups. Older children even remembered that two years ago, when I was replacing S. Karolina, I encouraged them to prayer every day for peace with the words of St. Francis "Lord, make me an instrument of peace..." They showed me this prayer pasted in their notebooks. I was very happy.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights 70th Anniversary



By Sister Eileen Reilly, Director of SSND UN-NGO Office

As we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), we remember that we must “stand up for Human Rights,” if they are truly to be “Universal.”

At a workshop offered recently at the United Nations (UN), the participants were challenged to be “upstanders” (those who stand up for Human Rights), not bystanders when human rights are not respected.

Participants were introduced to “[Stories that Move](#)”, an on-line, multilingual toolbox that presents stories to challenge learners (14–17 years old) to think critically about diversity and discrimination, and to reflect on their own position and choices. The stories range from the time of World War II to the present.

Global Compacts of Migrants and Refugees

By Sister Eileen Reilly, Director of SSND UN-NGO Office

Early in December, the UN Global Compacts on Migrants and Refugees will be approved by most United Nations member states. A key feature of these two documents is the call to share responsibility for Migrants and Refugees. Unfortunately, a few member states have chosen not to be part of these agreements.

The Compacts will be finalized in January 2019; then the task of implementation will begin. There is growing recognition around the world that responsibility for migrants and refugees must be shared by all countries, not just those adjacent to the trouble spots from which people are fleeing.

Some facts for International Migrants Day on December 18

Source: [UNHCR Global Trends 2017 report](#)

- There are currently **68.5 million forcibly displaced people** in the world and the number is growing. Most refugees are Syrian (6.3 million), followed by Afghans (2.6 million), and South Sudanese (2.4 Million).
- As of 2017, Turkey, Pakistan, and Uganda were the largest refugee-hosting countries in the world. Turkey is currently hosting 3.5 million refugees (mostly Syrians), Pakistan, 1.4 million (mostly Afghans), and Uganda, 1.4 million (mostly South Sudanese).
- **40 million internally displaced**; **25.4 million refugees**; 3.1 million asylum seekers

(image: <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>)



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