



# International Solidarity Reflection

School Sisters of Notre Dame

*Shalom*

Women and Children

March 2019

## Introduction

A common theme runs through our ministries: Being there, first and foremost, in encouraging, empowering, and supporting girls and women. The directional statement of the 24<sup>th</sup> General Chapter culminates in the call for us to be women of peace, hope, and love in the heart of the world. Therefore, it is about both being and being there for others, especially for women who need our solidarity.

## Call to prayer

God, our father and our mother, we are your beloved daughters. Let us be grateful for this grace, and in gratitude proclaim the message of freedom and justice and realize it with deeds of solidarity. Amen.

## Experience

### ... in a vocational school for women

Zeynep often comes late to school, sometimes not at all. However, when she is there, she is actively involved, inquisitive and eager, although she often looks tired. It is very difficult for her to complete an education with a specific terminology, since she speaks three other languages and she has studied German for only a few years. Her extremely high motivation to graduate became understandable for me as I gradually learned that her husband treats her badly, and violence is also involved. Sometimes she lacks necessities; her husband gives her too little money to buy food. Recently, the situation escalated. At this time, Zeynep lives in their apartment only for the sake of her child; she is afraid at night because her bedroom has no key. She wants a divorce, but at the trial, her husband reacted so violently that the trial was postponed.

## Reflection

- Where do I encounter in my everyday life women who need support?
- What does it mean for me as a woman of peace, hope, and love to meet these women in my everyday situation?
- Let us look at our faith from the perspective of a woman:

*I BELIEVE IN GOD  
who created woman and man  
in God's own image  
who created the world  
and gave both sexes  
the care of the earth.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
child of God  
chosen of God  
born of the woman Mary  
who listened to women and liked them  
who stayed in their homes*

*who discussed justice with them  
who was followed and financed  
by woman disciples.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who discussed theology with a woman  
at a well  
and first confided in her  
his messiahship  
who motivated her to go and tell  
her great news to the city.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who received anointing from a woman*

*who rebuked the men guests who  
scorned her.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who said this woman will be remembered  
for what she did  
minister of Jesus.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who healed a woman on the Sabbath  
and made her whole  
because she was  
a human being.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who spoke of God  
as a woman seeking the lost coin  
as a woman who swept  
seeking the lost.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who thought of pregnancy and birth  
with reverence  
not as punishment  
but as wrenching event  
a metaphor for transformation  
born again  
anguish-into-joy.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who spoke of himself*

*as a mother hen  
who would gather her chicks  
under her wing.*

*I BELIEVE IN JESUS  
who appeared first to Mary Magdalene  
who sent her with the bursting  
message GO AND TELL.*

*I BELIEVE IN THE WHOLENESS  
OF THE SAVIOR  
in whom there is neither  
Jew nor Greek  
slave nor free  
male nor female  
for we are all one  
in salvation.*

*I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT  
as she moves over the waters  
of creation  
and over the earth.*

*I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT  
the woman spirit of God  
who like a hen  
created us  
and gave us birth  
and covers us  
with her wings.*

*"Woman's Creed", by Rachel Conrad Wahlberg, from No Longer Strangers, found online at [ecumenicalwomen.org](http://ecumenicalwomen.org).*

## Action

- Join the Women's World Day of Prayer which is celebrated every year on the first Friday in March: <https://weltgebetstag.de/en/>
- Let us – with our sisters and the women around us – look at the woodcarving of Sr. M. Sigmunda May based on John 20: 17ff. Let us read the Scripture and share our thoughts on the image and on the creed of a woman.



*Holzchnitt der Ordensfrau Sr. Sigmunda May (1937 – 2017)*

## Closing prayer

Triune God, You sent Mary Magdalene to tell the others: Life is stronger than death, hope stronger than doubt, the justice of God is stronger than any discrimination, and love conquers hatred. Let us understand this message ever deeper and testify through our life in the heart of the world. Amen.

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