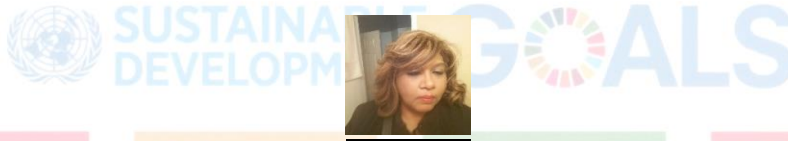


IBVM United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF)

New York City (NYC) July 7-19, 2018



With mixed emotions, I leave NYC. My journey began on July 6th on a Greyhound bus from Guelph, Ontario to attend the High Level Political Forum at the United Nations, New York City. Prior to my trip, I had a chance to interact positively and have comforting conversations with attending members of the Mary Ward team either by phone or email. Special thanks to Cecilia whose warmth and kindness during our conversations assured that ‘all will be well.’ And it was! Her genuine concern and continuous efforts to ensure that the visiting members were well informed and connected was greatly appreciated. In fact, only hours after my arrival in NYC, Cecilia, Sarah and Cynthia were at my residence to welcome me. It was great to have special moments with everyone, Sarah, Cynthia, Mary, Nancy and Cecilia. Thank you!

Previously, I travelled to NYC on many occasions. My destination south, north, east and west, but never to the United Nations. I browsed the website to learn more about the forum, but the true knowledge was gained from my experience of being present. To provide a brief history, the HLPF was mandated in 2012 based on an outcome document, "The Future We Want." The HLPF is the main United Nations platform on sustainable development and it has a central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global level.

On the first day at the preparatory meeting on July 8, I was oriented to the diverse dimensions of United Nations, mission, goals and what is required to achieve success as it relates to the 17 long term sustainable development goals. This is not an easy task. It requires coordination, cooperation and collaboration by all the committed countries, governments, leaders, representatives, NGO’s, and people at the grass roots level. Included in the mix: challenges, chaos, politics, differing perspectives and opinions, while advocating for causes, beliefs, structures and results all under the umbrella of the United Nations and the SDGs.

This transformation is possible particularly as the intended goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely and agreed upon by 193 countries. From session to session, Ministers to NGO’s and in between, never a dull moment, each person, group, promoting and/or trying to understand how he/she/they can contribute to achieve the intended goals. Everyone fully engaged, from the main conference room 4 to the overflow room, choices of issues, topics and sessions. From being present for special moments such as the Nelson Mandela celebration of his exhibition on his 100th birthday to the adoption and signing of the ministerial declaration on July 18, 2018.

Thanks to the IBVM-Loreto Generalate, sisters and associates, globally. To the Mary Ward team in NYC during the High Level Political Forum, I am grateful to have had this opportunity to spend time with you and be part of this family as we journey together towards a transformative future and world. I promise to do my part towards achieving the 2030 SDG’s.

Please join us towards achieving the United Nations vision that ‘no one gets left behind.’