

## NY United Nations Study Tour

Feb. 14	Feb. 15	Feb. 16	Feb. 17	Feb. 18
Bahai Office Department of Public Information (DPI) Mr. Felipe	Visit to the Convent of the Sacred Heart 91 <sup>st</sup> New York Voluntary Service at ABC Foundation Home stay	Japan Society The Permanent Mission of Japan to the U.N.	UNHCR United Nations Tour	Ellis Island Immigration Museum Reflection Wrap up & Thank you



We arrived in New York on February 13th 2017, after having prepared to listen to others' ideas and opinions and to share our own, in order to cooperate and support each other during the trip. Sr. Gwen Hoeffel, who chaperoned us all through the Tour welcomed us warmly. Sr. Cecile Meijer arranged the most powerful schedule for us and gave us workshop on UN and guided our Study Tour. We were joined occasionally by Sr. Sheila Smith.



The Tour began with the visit to the Department of Public Information.

Mr. Queipo told us how significant the existence of the United Nations is. It is a place of dialogue between nations. Even though everyone's views are different, they all gather together to exchange their opinions, and that is important. We were impressed with the idea about Sustainable Development Goals.

We learned that Information has power more than riches.

### Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- The aim is not to accomplish these goals perfectly.
- It's a catalyst to start taking actions.

Ms. Nagumo and Ms. Takahashi told us how it is to work at the UN as Japanese staff members and we were encouraged.

**We had a great day at the Convent of the Sacred Heart 91<sup>st</sup> Street!  
Thank you, Dr. Ciancaglini, Mr. Chung, Ms. Codina,  
Host Sisters, and all the friends for your generous hospitality!  
How wonderful it is to be a member of the Sacred Heart Family!  
We shall never forget this precious experience!**

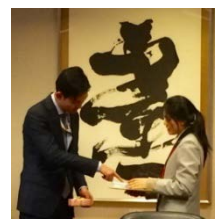


Each moment was special, including the voluntary service with our Host Sisters at the ABC Foundation, where we took 10 baby quilts.



At the Japan Society, we learned from Mr. Miller and Ms. Minamoto how to take interest in other cultures, to be tolerant of inter-culturalism, to raise children in a diverse society, and how important it is to make new discoveries.

At the Permanent Mission of Japan to the U.N., we thought about Japan's financial contributions to the U.N. Though Japan accepts few refugees, it is ranked no. 2 in the world for financial contributions to the U.N. Mr. Yamada's talk on calling to others to take a new action for the world really impressed us.





Mr. Kayal from UNHCR began his talk by telling us how he respects Mrs. Sadako Ogata, a former UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Sacred Heart Alumna, whom he knew in person. (Mr. Kishimori from Japan mission also gave a message to her, which we delivered after coming home.) Mrs. Ogata encouraged the students who

participated in the 2015 & 2016 Study Tour when they sent her their reports and told us to be attentive to the world affairs, especially refugee problems. Mr. Kayal told us that 3400 people are forcibly displaced every day, and more than 65 million people lived as forcibly displaced in 2015. The number is the largest on record, and what UNHCR can do for the refugees is only symptomatic treatment. Politics only can solve the causes. Also we were surprised to hear that the one thing refugees really want when escaping to other countries is WiFi access to get in touch with their families and friends and to be in touch with their social networks. We thought about those refugees who have to flee their homes and the neighboring countries that receive so many millions of them.



On the last day we visited Ellis Island and the Immigration Museum. We thought of those people who ventured out of their native lands to an unknown land. Every evening we had reflection and sharing, and the last sharing was our wrap up.

We were filled with gratitude for the 3 Sisters and everyone who helped and supported this Tour. Special thanks to Sr. Cecile Meijer, the representative of NGO Society of the Sacred Heart at the U.N. who inspired Sr. Taguchi about the MDGs in 2007 and suggested this Study Tour. She is moving on to Brussels and Sr. Sheila Smith will take over. Thank you, Sr. Meijer, for all you have done for us!

Reflecting on what we had experienced and learned, we began to question: what is it we can do for the world? We are now formulating our action plans. We are taking over from the students who participated in the 2016 Study Tour and who are now seniors their Twitter account that spread information about refugees and nuclear issues. Cardinal Monterisi from Vatican visited our school and was impressed with their action plans and told us that he would tell the Pope to be a follower on Twitter. Also seniors wrote to Prime Minister Abe, asking to accept more refugees. In March, we were told that the government decided to receive 300 Syrian University students and their families from 2017 to 2022.



We come to realize that we can begin to change the world to make it a better place. What is important is to know oneself and to dialogue with sincere respect, including self-respect. In that way we can create a new future together in this globalized world.

