

www.acrath.org.au

People are NOT for sale

**Australian Catholic Religious  
Against Trafficking in Humans**

# ACRATH PRESS RELEASE

## 24 April, 2023

### Izzy sees the world through a lens of Mercy

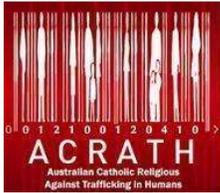


One of ACRATH's youngest members, Isabel (Izzy) Salter, believes that young people and civic society, especially faith-based organisations, can make a difference to the lives of those trafficked and living and working in slave-like conditions. Isabel, 22, is currently undertaking a 10-month internship in New York with Mercy Global Action (MGA), the justice arm and United Nations office of Mercy International Association (MIA).

Izzy has embraced every opportunity offered by the internship. MGA has held special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) since 1998. This allows MGA to place items on the ECOSOC agenda, attend UN conferences, and submit oral and written statements.

“My role has involved identifying opportunities to engage with the UN on MGA's priority justice issues – ‘degradation of earth’ and ‘displacement of people’, participating in issue-based NGO working groups at the UN, assisting with research and drafting processes for MGA publications and position statements, representing MGA at UN conferences, and writing about MGA's work in our monthly newsletter,” Izzy said in an article featured in ACRATH's [April Newsletter](#).





www.acrath.org.au

People are NOT for sale

“This experience has solidified my passion for developing and advocating for policies which address the real needs of people. I’ve also learnt a lot about the invaluable role of civil society – especially faith-based organisations – within governance structures such as the UN. They tend to bring a lens of human dignity and compassion that is easily lost in the bureaucracy of UN processes and the political manoeuvring of ambassadors. They also make room for the voices of people with lived experience, which is key to developing effective policy solutions.”

Izzy joined ACRATH in SA in 2022 after taking on the role of Program Support Coordinator at Young Mercy Links in South Australia. She had learned about labour exploitation at school, but her involvement with ACRATH has deepened her understanding of the connections between migration, human trafficking, labour exploitation, and fast fashion.

While working at the UN gives her a big picture view of human trafficking, it is the everyday opportunities for change that she also wants to influence, particularly amongst her peers. Izzy believes issues around fast fashion and the implications for garment factory workers and the environment are becoming more widely understood.

“I’ve noticed a lot of my friends and people my age being more conscious of where they buy their clothes and rejecting notorious fast-fashion brands. It’s now considered really cool to purchase from thrift stores, and to reinvent, repair, and re-wear old items. I think social media has played a huge role in this, especially organisations like ‘Fashion Revolution’ which have a big presence on Instagram,” Izzy said.

“However, exploitation isn’t really something my friends discuss in the context of other industries, such as technology, coffee, or chocolate. For technology at least, it’s kind of impossible to shop ethically when certain brands have such a monopoly on the industry. Food products can be difficult for a few reasons... It can be tricky to identify the ethical option with so many businesses greenwashing and creating their own certifications, and even when the ethical option is clear, it’s often the more expensive one, which is difficult for young people to afford.”

Izzy isn’t sure what comes after her stint in New York, but she’s confident it will be in human rights. “I’d like to continue working in a space where I’m advocating for the rights of people and the planet – perhaps through policy design at the national level.” In all her work on issues relating to human trafficking she holds onto the words of Pope Francis: “Every person ought to have the awareness that purchasing is always a moral – and not simply an economic – act.”

Izzy participated in a Q&A in the ACRATH’s April newsletter. Read it in full [here](#).

For more information, contact Ange Duthie 0430 488 001 or email: [networks@acrath.org.au](mailto:networks@acrath.org.au)

