

The theme for 2021 International Women's Day is #ChooseToChallenge.

It indicates that a challenged world is an alert world and from challenge comes change. Individually, we're all responsible for our own thoughts and actions - all day, every day. We can all choose to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality. We can all choose to seek out and celebrate women's achievements. Collectively, we can all help create an inclusive world. Let's all **choose to challenge**.

12 small actions with a big impact for Generation Equality suggested by →



How can these apply to us as members of a women's religious community?

1. Share the care - Commit to sharing household chores, responsibilities and other unpaid work. Identify care needs and domestic responsibilities and recognize and acknowledge the value of those who make a contribution.



2. Call out sexism and harassment - Start by calling out any inappropriate behaviour in a safe, respectful manner. Challenge any stereotypes. If you witness harassment, speak up and step up.



3. Reject the binary - It's humankind. Not mankind. Diverse gender identities have always existed in every culture, and ensuring the rights of all is an inherent part of gender equality.

4. Demand an equal work culture - Look for a progressive environment where all views are represented and valued whatever age or position.



5. Exercise your political rights - What's the easiest, most direct way you can make a difference? Vote! And consider voting for women! Stay informed on upcoming elections and spread the word about strong women candidates.

6. Shop responsibly - The way you shop can have a real impact on the environment. Some simple ways to shop:

- Pick up eco-friendly products and shop second-hand clothes
- Avoid buying single-use plastics
- Recycle, upcycle or donate your clothes and other goods

7. Amplify feminist books, movies and more - Consider something written or directed by women (and for women). You can amplify the voices of the women and feminists writing this narrative by watching, listening, reading and investing in the media they produce.



8. Teach girls their worth - Remind girls in your life that they are strong, capable and deserving of the same respect as boys. Make sure they know they are more than their appearance: praise them for their intelligence, strength, leadership, athleticism and so much more. Encourage girls to speak out and assert themselves.



Show girls the possibilities of their potential. Let them know that there is no wrong or right way to be a girl.

9. Challenge what it means to “be a man”- Whether in your friendships or relationships or within your family, support expressions of masculinity that involve vulnerability, sensitivity, caretaking and other traditionally non-masculine traits. Foster an environment where boys and men feel safe expressing their emotions: let them know their feelings are valid and give them the opportunity to share. Don’t mock or dismiss them, and call out others who do.

10. Commit to a cause - There are so many causes you can get behind. To begin, pick a gender equality topic you care about, learn more about it and perhaps find a group or campaign devoted to it.

11. Challenge beauty standards - Start by rethinking your beliefs on what it means to be beautiful. Start in the mirror: notice the way that you think and talk about your own appearance, and the next time you catch yourself being critical, try to give yourself a compliment. Treat all bodies as equally valuable and deserving of celebration—regardless of size, ability, or colour—and call out body shaming when you see it.

12. Respect the choices of others - Every person has the right to make decisions about their body, well-being, family and future. When someone’s choices make you uncomfortable, ask yourself why. It’s often hard to understand a choice that you’ve never had to make. Take it upon yourself to learn and think critically about the situations of others.