

**Human Trafficking Information
National Council of Catholic Women
Service Commission**



TRAFFICKING IS MODERN DAY SLAVERY

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
CATHOLIC  WOMEN

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**PRAYER FOR ELIMINATING
THE TRAFFICKING OF HUMAN BEINGS**



O God, our words cannot express what our minds can barely comprehend and our hearts feel when we hear of human beings deceived and transported to unknown places for purposes of sexual exploitation and abuse because of human greed and profit at this time in our world. Our hearts are saddened and our spirits angry that their dignity and rights are being transgressed through threats, deception and force.

We cry out against the degrading practice of trafficking and pray for it to end. Strengthen the fragile-spirited and broken-hearted. Make real your promises to fill these, our sisters and brothers with a love that is tender and good and send the exploiters away empty-handed. Give us the wisdom and courage to stand in solidarity with them that together we will find ways to the freedom that is your gift to all of us.

Amen

Anonymous

BACKGROUND

YOU ARE THEIR ONLY HOPE!

This is about saving lives, mostly children's lives. This behind closed doors crime is happening very close to you right now, well within your circle of influence. Whether you live in metropolitan or rural America, there are children chained or locked inside a shack, an apartment, or a house. They are controlled by drugs, beatings and threats.

Some agencies report that there are 300,000 new children forced into the criminal underground every year; some agencies report as many as 500,000 children. One to three percent are kidnapped, 30 to 35 % are sold or bartered by their own families, and 60% are lured in, mostly through a very sophisticated network of professionals.

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human trafficking is modern-day slavery that subjects children, women, and men to force, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of exploitation. This horrific practice can include prostitution, pornography, and sex tourism as well as domestic servitude, factory work, migrant farming and mining. Human trafficking is not the same as smuggling; it does not require movement across borders.

IS IT REALLY HAPPENING IN THE UNITED STATES?

Yes, there is human trafficking in all 50 states. The U.S. is a source and transit point for trafficking and is considered one of the major destinations for trafficking victims. Anyone can be trafficked regardless of class, education, gender, age, or citizenship when lured by false promises and the desire for a better life.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

FORMS OF CHILD TRAFFICKING:

Prostitution, pornography, sex tourism, forced marriage, sweat-shop work, begging, armed services, migrant farming, and mining.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN:

Human trafficking of any kind violates a child's rights to be protected, grow up in a safe family environment and have access to an education. Victims often suffer from inhumane living conditions, neglect, poor diet and hygiene, and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. From rescued victims we know about ½ have seen a medical professional while enslaved, usually for broken bones, venereal disease, drug overdose, etc.

SEX TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES:

In the U.S., more citizens are victims of sex trafficking than labor trafficking. Pimp-controlled prostitution is one of the most common forms of sex trafficking. It also occurs at truck stops, massage parlors, residential brothels, and through escort agencies and online solicitation. The Internet is also becoming a "marketplace" for sex trafficking where pimps can easily avoid the authorities, facilitate transactions, and lie about the age of their victims. In the U.S., victims of sex trafficking often share risk factors, including child sex abuse, parental neglect, parental drug use, emotional and/or physical abuse and poverty.

LABOR TRAFFICKING IN THE UNITED STATES:

Child labor trafficking can occur in restaurants, bars, tourist industries, and in janitorial and agricultural work. Other areas include begging rings, traveling sales crews, and domestic servitude.

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE:

The hotline is **1-888-373-7888** or Text "**BeFree**" **233733** (when posting for victims, use 888-3737-888, easier to remember) around your neighborhood, school, or work place. The hotline handles calls from anyone including witnesses, potential victims, service providers, community members, and people hoping to learn more. It is toll free and can be reached anywhere in the U.S., 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. **You can download a flyer for free at www.nccw.org on the Service Commission page.** Ask permission before posting flyers in coffee shops, restaurants, business locations, etc.

LEARN HOW TO SPOT THE SIGNS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING. COMMON WORK AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL(S) IN QUESTION

- Not free to leave or come and go as he/she wishes
- Under 18 and is providing commercial sex acts
- Is in the commercial sex industry and has a pimp/manager
- Is unpaid, paid very little, or paid only through tips
- Works excessively long and/or unusual hours
- Is not allowed breaks or suffers under unusual restrictions at work
- Owes a large debt and is unable to pay it off
- Was recruited through false promises concerning the nature and conditions of his/her work
- High security measures exist in the work and/or living locations (e.g. opaque windows, boarded up windows, bars on windows, barbed wire, security cameras, etc.)

POOR MENTAL HEALTH OR ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR

- Is fearful, anxious, depressed, submissive, tense, or nervous/paranoid
- Exhibits unusually fearful or anxious behavior after bringing up law enforcement
- Avoids eye contact

POOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Lacks health care
- Appears malnourished
- Shows signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement, or torture

LACK OF CONTROL

- Has few or no personal possessions
- Is not in control of his/her own money, no financial records, or bank account
- Is not in control of his/her own identification documents (ID or passport)
- Is not allowed or able to speak for themselves (a third party may insist on being present and/or translating)

OTHER

- Claims of just visiting and inability to clarify where he/she is staying/address
- Lack of knowledge of whereabouts and/or does not know what city he/she is in
- Loss of sense of time
- Has numerous inconsistencies in his/her story

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The Catholic Church's vehement opposition to human trafficking is rooted in principles of Catholic social teaching, central to which is the sacredness and dignity of human life. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2414) which "forbids acts or enterprises that, for any reason, lead to the enslavement of human beings – to their being *bought*, sold, and exchanged like merchandise, in disregard for their personal dignity." The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) *Committee on Migration's Statement On Human Trafficking* clearly outlines the Church's teaching on human trafficking, noting:

"Human trafficking is a horrific crime against the basic dignity and rights of the human person. All efforts must be expended to end it."

For over a decade the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB.org) has been a leader in the U.S. in the fight against human trafficking.

NCCW Human Trafficking

THE PRODUCTS WE BUY

The coffee, wine, and tea we drink, the food we eat, the cotton we wear, and the bricks in our buildings may all be products that are harvested or produced by slave labor. There are 128 “worst offenders”— goods that are most commonly produced by child labor or forced labor. Some goods that have the highest rates of child labor are: gold, sugarcane, coal, cotton, rice, tobacco, cocoa, and diamonds.

"Every purchase is a moral act." - Pope Benedict XVI

MINISTRY AND COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Dedicate a week to sharing what you know about human trafficking, and how to spot it!

Talk to your parish leaders, your friends, your circle of influence about forming a group to ‘**Save Children’s Lives by Fighting Human Trafficking.**’ I think you will be surprised that people will come forward once they know what you know about Human Trafficking. **SO, how do I get involved** as an individual, a parish, a diocese, and/or in my home town? Learn about the issue and what can be done to combat human trafficking. The good news is there is a lot you can do!

START THE CONVERSATION

As one Province Director noted, "I first heard about Human Trafficking a few years ago, when I was invited to a community meeting. I was shocked. I had not heard of anything like this. How could this be happening in our world? I immediately got involved, by telling everyone I knew about what I had learned. I called the man who was in charge of the local interfaith group and we held meetings to tell others. I wrote a story for a local newspaper and the publisher did not print it for weeks. He did not know what to do with it. He has since published more stories in multiple papers. The people in the city where I live are discovering what human trafficking is and how it affects all of us. How can we stop it? We need to be aware and make others aware. That is the key: knowledge. We need to report suspicious activity to the National Human Trafficking Hotline. **Together we can make a difference.**"

- **HOST A PANEL DISCUSSION.** Speakers could include local experts in the field, a professor knowledgeable on the subject of human trafficking, a member of law enforcement, or a survivor of trafficking. Within a cross-section of every community, we need to bring together and educate people who are likely to come in contact with victims, or could observe questionable activity and report it, or be in a position to influence prevention education.
- **WRITE AN ARTICLE** about human trafficking for your local or school newspaper or community blog. Don’t feel comfortable writing it yourself? Write to the editors of the paper and ask them to do a piece on it. Volunteer your skills. Do pro bono legal work, promote products made by survivors, or create an artistic piece to raise awareness about human trafficking.
- **ORGANIZE A FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT** organizations that address trafficking. Plan a Walk for Freedom event or hold a Bake Sale in your parish.
- **HOST A SCREENING OF MOVIES: NOT MY LIFE OR CAGED NO MORE** focus on the issue of human trafficking. Facilitate a discussion afterward about ways to take action.
- **HELP REDUCE A CHILD’S VULNERABILITY TO TRAFFICKING** by the consistent presence of a caring adult. Invest in the life of a young girl or boy in your community by volunteering as a tutor or mentor. Get connected to an organization near you at mentoring.org. Get involved with children’s programs in your parish.
- **BARS OF SOAP** to hotels with wrapping providing the hotline number to call to report victims.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- United States Conference of Catholic Bishops www.usccb.org provides many resources. We highly recommend this resource as a starting point.
- Catholic Relief Services www.crs.org
- Cross International www.crossinternational.org
- Catholic Charities <https://catholiccharitiesusa.org>
- Download National Human Trafficking hotline 1-888-3737-888 poster found on www.nccw.org on the Service Commission page to hang in public restrooms
- Look Beneath The Surface – English <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqyzW84I3Dc>
- Child Trafficking – Globalize 13 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0x98jjVq8nI>
- How to call your U.S. Senator to voice your support for their actions against human trafficking. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcmVYIX86hA>
- Find out how the work of exploited people has a direct effect on your life. Visit www.slaveryfootprint.org to take an online survey that helps you determine how many slaves touch the products you buy. Through the site’s action center and mobile app, consumers are invited to take action and call for ethically sourced products.
- Advocate for Victims – Add your name to the petition. Visit www.change.org
- Switch to Fair Trade brands, and/or host a Fair Trade Party. Fair Trade certified products are produced without slave or child labor. Profits from Fair Trade products support farmers and laborers involved in production and ensure that they are paid fairly and work under safe conditions. Visit <http://ethicaltrade.crs.org/>

SUGGESTED CALENDAR

January	Immediate Action - What can I do right now.
February	Feb 8 th The Saint and the Super Bowl
March	Educate and share ‘Look Beneath the Surface’
April	Educate and Share Communication / Media/Social Media
May	Educate and Share with Law Enforcement
June	Educate and Share Public Activities and Events for Awareness
July	Distribute Hotline Number posters
August	While vacationing hang up flyers in rest stops along the way
September	Educate and share knowledge with medical professionals
October	Write your congressman to support all legislation against Human Trafficking
November	Coalition Building/Community Support
December	USCCB – BECOME A SHEPHERD TOOL KIT