

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

Co-Sponsored by:

- Sisters of the Divine Savior
- Capacitar International, Inc.

¹ This issue highlights the systemic roots that feed human trafficking and offers ways to act against it.

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Analysis of Human Trafficking: Between “Awareness” and “What to Do?”

Clare Nolan, NGO Representative, Sisters of the Good Shepherd
in Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC, United Nations.

The 2001 call from USIG and LCWR/CMSM to focus on the issue of the trafficking of women has been taken seriously. Many congregations have increased awareness and education on the heinous issue of international trafficking for bondage and prostitution.

Additionally, mainstream channels of communication have picked up the issue. *National Geographic Magazine* did an article on *21st Century Slaves* in Sept '03; Public Broadcasting's *Wide-Angle* aired an hour on human smuggling, including trafficking, during the last week of September; and, in an address to the 58th UN General Assembly (9-03), the US President spoke on the topic.

Still, the plaint is heard, “But what can we do?”

Action orientation notwithstanding, I believe that there is a strong need for critical social analysis concerning the issue of trafficking. Even welcomed media attention

can belie a lack of resolute commitment to abolish trafficking. Why is there such a trend to pay attention to trafficking and why does the phenomena continue to grow? Trafficking does not happen in a vacuum. Without clear analysis and constant critique, grounded in a gospel reality yearning for justice, we may fail, in fact, to do the small actions in our daily spheres that could have an impact on combating human trafficking.

I think that it is necessary to place the SYSTEM of trafficking squarely within the systems of *economic globalization* and *imbalanced patriarchy*. By so doing, awareness and concern for trafficking is linked directly to everyday experiences.

It is no coincidence that the massive rise in trafficking has been concurrent with the phenomenal rate of economic globalization. *Economic globalization* supports liberal capitalistic consumerism, profit as goal, and views all things through the lens of trade

commodities. Even wages and labor are now difficult to link relationally to the human person to which they are attached. Despite the unparalleled wealth generated through globalization, the number of poor persons in the world continues to grow, with women constituting over 70% of the population of poor persons.

Likewise, *patriarchy* is an inequitable system that pervades societies of the world. It so favors male privilege and dominance that it affords men the sexual prerogative to treat women as objects. Repeatedly, in various contexts, trafficking is condemned while prostitution is given a wink and a nod. But there is no stark line dividing prostitution from trafficking for sexual exploitation. They are points on a continuum of degradations and violation of women.

When such systemic associations fail to be made, we end up with a contradictory desire to end trafficking

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ANALYSIS cont.

while supporting operant social systems. It then becomes easier for the US government to commit US \$50,000,000. to rescue operations for victims of trafficking than to “connect the dots” between military use of prostitution and trafficking. It then is easy to denounce trafficking and make no reference to the rise in global poverty that makes women vulnerable to trafficking. For the second year in a row, poverty is increasing in our own country. Such a situation lays the groundwork for girls’ susceptibility to prostitution as well as become vulnerable to trafficking, domestic or international.

And in our own realms, it is more popular - and easier - to condemn trafficking (as if so far away!) than it is to challenge someone we know, who may consider using women in prostitution. It is easier to condemn trafficking than to wage a local campaign to get rid of advertising that presents women as commodities. It is easier to passively accept our military systems that “protect us against terrorism” than to ask about their policies and behaviors regarding the exploitation of women.

So, before moving precipitously to the question “What can we *do*?” I

encourage the question, “*What are we doing?*” that supports systems that underpin a depravity such as trafficking. Before tackling the evil of trafficking, resist the kind of economic global systems that impoverish women and children. Oppose boldly the ways in which men are allowed dominance over women. Dissociate yourself from the benefits of globalization and patriarchy. Then, let’s deal together in more specific terms with the question, “What can we do that will put an end to trafficking?”

Clare Nolan, RGS

BVM’s Commit to Anti-Trafficking Efforts

During their August 2003 gathering thirty-two BVM’s in an Open Space Group formulated a statement that the total Assembly later endorsed. They stated, “The reality of women and children being victims of trafficking in forms of slavery is spreading on a global basis. Because there are an estimated 700,000 to 4 million persons victimized by trafficking through fraud, coercion, and outright kidnapping yearly we, Sisters of Charity BVM, desire to honor Mary Frances Clarke during the 200th anniversary of her birth by pledging our renewed commitment to raising awareness of victimized women and children throughout the world.”

The group members committed themselves, “...to initiate and foster awareness of this evil, beginning with education through the Congregational publications: Women’s Office, BVM Network for Women’s Issues, BVM Newsletter and Regional Newsletters.” The group intends, “...to also seek information through the following websites: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Trafficking of Persons, U.S. Dept. of State; Trafficking of Persons, U.S. Legislation.”

Mira Mosle, BVM
Dir. of Communications

Questions for Discussion and Analysis:

- ❖ **Why is this topic coming to my (society’s) attention now?**
- ❖ **How do I see the dynamics of trafficking operating in my own sphere of reality?**
- ❖ **In what ways am I complicit with societal trends that maintain the *status quo* regarding women and their roles, women as objects, and consumerism in general?**
- ❖ **In what ways could I, in my daily spheres, challenge the *status quo* in favor of dignity for all?**



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Advocacy

If you would like more information about the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking, contact

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srstvics@usccb.org

Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking

The Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking consists of national and international Catholic agencies working to eliminate the scourge of human trafficking.

The main purposes of this Coalition are to

- formulate plans for combating trafficking and serving its victims
- promote development of services for trafficking victims and approaches to empowerment of trafficking victims;
- dialogue with government officials and others engaged in public policies affecting this issue;
- devise strategies for public education, awareness-raising and grass roots action.

MEMBER AND COALITION OF CATHOLIC ORGANIZATION LIAISON ORGANIZATIONS
(as of April 10, 2003)

AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Members

African Women Religious Conference
Catholic Charities USA
Catholic Health Association
Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc.
Catholic Relief Services
Commonwealth Catholic Charities
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Covenant House
Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
Jesuit Refugee Services
Leadership Conference of Women Religious
Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns
National Council of Catholic Women
School Sisters of Notre Dame-Schools North America
Sisters of the Good Shepherd
Trinity College
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Catholic Campaigns for Human Development
Committee on Women in Society and in the Church
International Justice and Peace Migration and Refugee Services

Partners

Annette Kane
Diocese of Richmond
Kahlau Consulting
Miramonte Institute
Primetrime Solutions

The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights.

—LETTER OF POPE JOHN PAUL II TO ARCHBISHOP HAN-LOUIS TALEAN ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE "TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SLAVERY—THE HUMAN RIGHTS DIMENSION TO TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS"

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

continues its work to combat human trafficking. Currently, USCCB is the recipient of three grants directly related to trafficking: a *Technical Assistance* grant, a *Trafficked Children's Services* grant, and a *Trafficked Adults' Services* grant.

See www.USCCB.org for STOP TRAFFICKING of PEOPLE (STOP) booklet



Advocacy

"If one thousand, one hundred, or if ten people whom I could name -- if ten honest people only -- aye, if one honest person in this state of Massachusetts, ceasing to hold slaves, were actually to withdraw from this copartnership and be locked up in the country jail, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be: what is once done well is done forever."

Henry David Thoreau

Help Children Avoid the Sex Tourism Trap

September 28, 2003 Carol Smolenski, Executive Director of ECPAT-USA, joined a group of concerned citizens holding vigil in Nogales, AZ. The group was gathered to raise public awareness concerning the exploitation of children in sexual tourism across the Mexican-Arizona borders.

ECPAT (*End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes*) is part of an international network of organizations speaking out against commercial sexual exploitation of children in all forms.

Smolenski stated, "*Cross-border commercial sexual exploitation of children is an enormous but little recognized problem.*"

We estimate that, internationally about 25 percent of the people who travel abroad to abuse children are Americans."

ECPAT-USA has a brochure that warns travellers about legal implications of engaging in sex tourism. (www.ecpatusa.org)

A federal law prohibits

travelling abroad to have sex with anyone under the age of 18. Violators may be imprisoned up to ten years, as well as fined.

ECPAT recommends:

- Ask employers to provide educational materials about such laws to personnel who are based outside of the U.S. or who frequently travel abroad.
- Encourage church, civic organizations or clubs to take a stand against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.
- Ask your travel agent or airline to make the ECPAT brochure available to travelers.
- Contact ECPAT-USA to receive more helpful suggestions for getting involved.

If you hear of persons traveling abroad to sexually use minors, or if you hear of the promotion of child sex tourism, contact the local FBI field office or the U.S. Customs Service, International Child Pornography Investigation and Coordination Center:

Phone: 703-293-8005

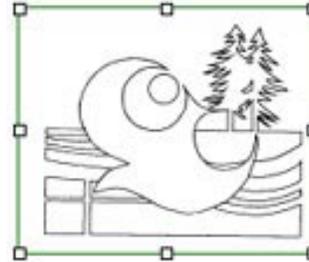
E-Mail: icpicc@customs.treas.gov or ECPAT-USA: info@ecpatusa.org





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Action



Logo of the
Intercommunity
Peace and
Justice Center

www.ipjc.org

Awareness	Involvement	Leadership
Read an article.	Share an article with another person. Discuss what you learned.	Make an article available at church or work.
Watch a video with community, family or friends.	Reflect and discuss your feelings, questions and hopes for those who are victims of trafficking.	Write a short review or recommendation on the video. Organize a church or community showing of the video.
Visit one or more websites and follow one story or issue. Download the curriculum on modern slavery (www.freetheslaves.net).	Send a copy of the curriculum to a teacher you know or to your child's social studies teacher.	Offer to be a support person or volunteer for a parish, school, or classroom project on trafficking of persons.
Research through the internet, church or government agency one group that works on the issue of trafficking of persons.	Volunteer with, or make a donation to, one group addressing trafficking of persons.	Have your church, community group or family support an organization addressing trafficking of persons.
Become familiar with the United Nations resolution on trafficking of persons (2000).	Write a letter to your Senator asking for the U.S. to ratify the UN resolution without reservations.	Coordinate a church or community call in or letter campaign. Post a sample letter at church or school.
Be aware of the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. It is due for reauthorization.	Call, e-mail, write your Congress person to support the anti-trafficking reauthorization.	
Watch for media coverage on the topic of trafficking of persons.	Ask your church or denominational newspaper to run a story on the trafficking of persons.	Explore any possible sister church/agency/city relationships that might address trafficking of persons.
Discover the local and regional resources on trafficking of persons.	Contact individuals or organizations about what materials, speakers, workshops they provide.	Form a committee or ask your church social concerns group to consider hosting a speaker or workshop.
Be familiar with options for charity (direct service for victims) and for justice (addressing the root causes) regarding trafficking of persons.	Take one action to support victims. Take one action for advocacy that addresses the systems that affect trafficking of persons.	Invite others to join you in your action. Post this action guide where others will see it.
After further study, reflect on whether any practice at your place of work or in your purchasing could in any way have a link to the trafficking of persons for sweatshops, prostitution or servitude.	Identify one purchasing practice you will change or one question you will pose at your work place.	Suggest your work place support fair-trade products. Provide a speaker, panel or forum on the issue of trafficking of persons.
Consider where or how government, military intervention or economic policies can have a correlation to the trafficking of persons.	Ask people that you know who have worked with or served in the military what their experience has been.	Identify and support groups that monitor or research trafficking issues and related military and economic policy.

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Contact E-mail: slynch@ipjc.org



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Workshops that Heal and Help Awaken Hope

Action

Send In News!

We will regularly publish information regarding what is happening within and among congregations and collaborating organizations on the issue of human trafficking: awareness-raising, advocacy for victims, and action taken to counter trafficking.

We would like to feature the ministries of particular congregations, the efforts of LCWR regions, and/or highlight collaborative work being done with agencies engaged in anti-trafficking.

Your contributions are welcome and appreciated!

*Salvatorian Sisters and
Capacitar International Staff*

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations and collaborating organizations working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please use this e-mail address:
jeansds2000@yahoo.com

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In working to overcome human trafficking, it is important to recognize the deeper issues of personal, societal and global violence against women and children. Until the trauma of this violence is healed in each of us, as well as in victim and perpetrator, trafficking will continue. During the last 14 years *Capacitar International, Inc.* has worked in the area of trauma healing, giving grassroots people simple and effective skills to heal the wounds of violence.

Capacitar workshops empower participants to move through past trauma, stress, fear and pain, whether experienced personally or vicariously, as in the helping professions. Wellness practices, e.g. breath work, Tai Chi meditation, acupuncture, visualization and ritual, can be means to heal and transform past wounds, evoke interior strength and re-awaken human potential. Re-discovering positive life energy within, many who practiced *Capacitar techniques* find themselves personally empowered, able to act as advocates for others.

Capacitar trainers have taught the body-mind-spirit practices in more than 23 countries and 15 states in the U.S. Those who have benefited from *Capacitar trainings* include: people involved in peace building in Northern Ireland, Indonesia and East Timor; people living in zones of armed conflict in Colombia and Guatemala; and people dying of AIDS and their care-givers in S. Africa, Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho. *Capacitar trainers* helped people suffering from poverty and natural disasters, both in the U.S. and countries of Central and South America. A new project, *Capacitar for Kids*, teaches inner city children, parents and teachers, skills to heal and transform ongoing violence in their schools and communities.

If groups within your congregation

Informative Web Sites:

(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

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(Back Issues)*

<http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafersds/stoptraffic/index.html>

FreedomNetworkUSA
www.freedomnetworkusa.org

*International Rehabilitation Council
for Torture Victims*

www.irct.org
<http://www.irct.org/usr/irct/home.nsf/unid/BKEN-5J2CHG?OpenDocument>

Articles:

National Geographic
21st-Century Slaves
September 2003
<http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0309/feature1/index.html>

Christianity Today
The Hidden Slavery
November 2003
pgs. 68-74

Maryknoll Magazine
Stop Trafficking
November 2003
pgs. 30-32

Video:

*So Great A Violence:
Prostitution, Trafficking and
the Global Sex Industry*
(\$29.95 ea.)
Order from CATW
P.O.Box 9338
N. Amherst, MA 01059
Fax: 413-367-9262

or the staff and/or clients of your organization would like to learn skills to manage stress and heal trauma, please contact *Capacitar International, Inc.* for information on workshops and materials:

www.capacitar.org
capacitar@igc.org