

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 various ways in which public and private organizations and individuals are collaborating to work against human trafficking.

Vol. 2 No.11 November 15, 2004

Awareness Raising Remains Critical Component in the Work Against Human Trafficking

A conference was held in October on the East Coast at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland. That conference, co-sponsored by the Baltimore province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and several other religious, social justice and community organizations, attracted an audience of over 250 persons. Participants learned that victims include agricultural workers, domestic workers, those in sweatshops, even gangs of beggars, in addition to those trafficked for sexual exploitation. All victims have their identification papers confiscated by their captors, are forced to live in inhumane conditions and are subjected to physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse. They receive little money for the work they perform.

A police officer on the panel of speakers reported that law enforcement officials found that victims of trafficking rarely show outward signs of abuse and can relate credible stories fabricated for them by their captors. Unable to speak English and fearful of policemen in uniform, victims learn to also fear Americans in general, being told by their captors, "how Americans shoot people," as shown on TV. "Our most effective intervention often comes from other victims who have escaped their captors and learn the truth," he said.

Another panelist, a nurse practitioner at a local hospital, urged her fellow health care workers to take advantage

of "the time behind the closed door" to look for signs that a patient may be a trafficking victim. Those signs might include a history of miscarriages or many sexually transmitted diseases, an inability to make eye contact, poorly healed wounds, missed appointments or the presence of a "hovering person." She said in one case "it was the hospital's van driver who discovered that a woman being treated at the hospital was a trafficking victim."

She encouraged organizations planning future conferences on trafficking to include health care workers. "We are very busy and finding someone in this situation can be like opening a can of worms, but it's time we opened that can! Health care providers must know this information," she said.

(Excerpted: Oct. 18, 2004 article by Nancy Frazier O'Brien, *Catholic News Service*.)

Four congregations of women religious, the *Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary*, the *Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary*, the *Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet*, and the *Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, CA*, will co-sponsor a day-long symposium on human trafficking scheduled for March 5, 2005 at Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles. Veronica Brand RSHM will be the keynote speaker.

"We are very eager to have this event well-attended, since it is so important to have citizens aware of human trafficking and alert to the warning signs that can appear 'right next door' so to speak, especially in a city as diverse as Los Angeles," organizer Mary Genino RSHM stated.

For more information about the program, contact Mary Genino at: wap-jpic@rshm.org



Art:
Carol Louise Smith CSJ



Awareness

Florida Conference Taps International and National Experts

WFOR-TV, The Miami Herald, St. Thomas University School of Law, and the National Italian American Foundation co-sponsored a day-long conference Nov. 12, 2004 entitled, *"Invisible Chains: Breaking the Ties of Trafficking in Persons."*

Ms. Michele Gillen moderated the conference. She is the Emmy-award winning producer/reporter of the *"Invisible Chains"* news series and Chief Investigative Reporter for WFOR-TV, Miami. Speakers included world, national, and state leaders engaged in efforts to fight human trafficking, as well as survivors and case workers involved in anti-trafficking:

Ambassador Jim Nicholson (US Embassy to the Holy See, Rome, Italy)

is a global leader in the fight against human trafficking. His pioneering efforts are building awareness and prompting action to combat modern-day slavery.

Ambassador John R. Miller (Director, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, US Department of State, Washington, D.C.) is the Bush Administration's envoy charged with leading the international fight against human trafficking.

Mr. Francis Bok (former child slave from Sudan and author of *"Escape from Slavery: Autobiography of a Child Slave,"* Boston, MA) was a victim and survivor of human trafficking and is now an associate with the American Anti-Slavery Group in Boston.

Sister Eugenia Bonetti (Union of Major Superiors of Italy, Rome) is a leader among women religious in work against human trafficking in Italy. She was recognized in the US State Dept. *Trafficking in Persons 2004 Report* (TIP) as one of the world's anti-trafficking heroes. (See article, pg. 7)

Mr. Terry Coonan (Executive Director, Center for Advancement of Human Rights, Florida State University, Tallahassee) is author of the 2004 report, *"Florida Responds to Human Trafficking."*

Mr. Douglas Molloy (Chief Assistant, US Attorney's Office, Fort Myers) is a lead prosecutor in cases throughout Florida involving human slavery, public corruption, organized crime, and criminal civil rights cases.

Catholic Women's Groups, Individual Religious Get the Word Out

Betty McKinley of the Palm Beach, FL Diocesan Council of Catholic Women reported that she and Deanery President, Judy Powers, gave a presentation on human trafficking during their October Deanery Council meeting, which the Bishop and several priests also attended.

The women hope to distribute educational materials in the parishes. McKinley said, *"This is the first tiny step as we develop our program. We are encouraged that the women will want to pursue this as we have pursued domestic violence in the past. We want to develop carefully and prayerfully our approach to trafficking."*

While gathered for a spirituality seminar in Texas in October members of the *Daughters of Mary Help of Christians (FMA)* from Australia,

Haiti, Canada, and throughout the USA were alerted to human trafficking issues through presentations by Louise Passero, FMA. She will give lectures on the topic to groups in her home state of New Jersey in November.

McKinley, Powers and Passero had each attended the Baltimore conference on trafficking sponsored by the USCCB this past July.

Patrice Colletti SDS organized a half-day session in Milwaukee on aspects of human trafficking, highlighting its domestic and international connections. Portions of *Stolen Childhoods* and other videos brought the images of suffering vividly before the audience of *Salvatorian Sisters, Associates*, members of local parishes and students of the Salvatorian-sponsored high school, *Divine Savior Holy Angels*. Following the session several

attendees took advantage of further more formal training at a day-long program conducted as part of the *Rescue and Restore Campaign* in Milwaukee. (See pg. 3)

Terry Shields MSHR and Pat Moran OP of Philadelphia and Dorothy Pilkington SSJ of Holyoke, MA have raised awareness about trafficking in hospitals in their respective areas. Dorothy had key hospital personnel critique a succinct action packet compiled by Sheila Novak SDS that helps busy hospital personnel learn essential information about trafficking victims.



Advocacy

The Greater Milwaukee Rescue and Restore Coalition

Catholic Charities and the Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center sponsored a free one-day training on the dynamics of human trafficking held at the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Office complex.

Participants included members of religious orders, personnel from social services, immigrant services, education and training services, shelter services, law enforcement and health care.

They were given an overview of U.S. anti-trafficking laws and regulations, methods for referral making, and case practices for both law enforcement and service agencies. One participant commented that she realized “no victim would likely be knock-

ing on the doors of an agency for help. Rather victims may show up first in a jail cell or emergency room and be rescued only because the police in charge or the health care worker sees beneath the surface and realizes the person is actually a victim of enslavement and exploitation.”

Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, head of the Milwaukee Archdiocese, spoke of human trafficking as “one of the crimes against the dignity of human life” and hence a focus of Christian concern. “Close to 20,000 people, mostly innocent and young, are lured into our country from poor nations each year, here to encounter not promise, freedom and hope, but literal slavery, as unscrupulous masters

“Our faith tells us that human life will reach its fulfillment, with its innate dignity eternally sustained and its noble potential finally realized, only in the Kingdom of God. But that can only compel us to work for the coming of that kingdom here and now. Let us stop Human Trafficking!” Arch. Dolan

use them for grueling labor or sexual exploitation.”

He explained how the Church must be in the forefront of efforts to rescue these slaves, heal them, help them return safely home or get settled here, and to see that this anti-life practice is outlawed and stopped. The Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking was formed to educate the public and provide spiritual and material healing for victims. The U.S. Bishops’ Office of Migration and Refugee Services, Catholic Charities, the National Council of Catholic Women, Catholic Health Association, and a number of congregations of women religious are vigorously involved in this effort.

New CT Task Forces Work for State Legislation and Action

Two Connecticut task forces were formed in the fall of 2004 to help curb the trafficking of illegal immigrants into the state for use as slaves, mail-order brides, and child prostitutes. Connecticut has three confirmed cases of trafficking. In one, authorities arrested two Rwandan immigrants on charges of smuggling African children through the United States to Canada. In another, police in Texas found a truck full of 19 illegal aliens who said smugglers were taking them to Connecticut. In another case a local man worked with co-conspirators in Britain to bring people into the US illegally and under false pretenses. Connecticut is a potential destination for traffickers because of its position on Interstate 95 between Boston and New York City.

State Rep. Andrea Stillman, D-Waterford, led the group that formed

the Connecticut Interagency Task Force on Trafficking in Persons, a group made up of 50 experts, including lawyers, victim advocates and police officers. Their goal is to propose a bill outlawing human trafficking and protecting victims who might be afraid to come forward.

Having a state law would augment federal anti-trafficking legislation and would allow authorities to charge traffickers twice -- once in state court and again in federal court. A state law against trafficking would give police the freedom to uncover the traffickers who might be behind crimes such as prostitution. This would help identify prostituted women as victims and provide help to them. “Local police departments need training to be able to identify victims,” Stillman said. “We are dealing with a population who

are really here illegally, here under false pretenses, taught to be afraid of law enforcement, and can’t speak the language.”

A police officer and member of the legislative task force said there are unconfirmed reports of forced prostitution in Stamford. She hopes new trafficking legislation would include prosecuting bar owners for the so-called “\$2 dance nights,” since the women brought in from out of state for male customers sometimes are not allowed to keep their “earnings.”

U.S. Attorney Kevin O’Connor formed a second task force to find and prosecute traffickers who prey on illegal immigrants. The group is made up of officials from the US attorney’s office, the FBI, state and local police,

CT Task Forces *cont.* pg. 4



Advocacy

Meeting of Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking

As the various aspects of human trafficking come to light, its complex reality becomes more apparent. Human trafficking wears many different faces and is perpetrated in diverse ways. Traffickers use a global network to bring about their purposes, facilitated by ease of Internet communication and, in some cases, by the sophisticated methods of organized crime.

A group of Catholic organizations is collaborating as a counterforce to this form of modern day slavery. The *Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking* now includes 25 organizations in its membership, as well as several partnerships. The Coalition devises strategies for combating trafficking. It promotes the development of services for and empowerment of trafficking victims. Finally, the Coalition also devises strategies for public education and grassroots action. The Coalition meets four times a year to accomplish these ends.

The meetings are held at the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) headquarters in Washington, D. C. This location provides ample opportunity for dialogue with key government officials working to shape responsive public policies that will eventually

stem trafficking and effectively aid its victims.

Currently the Coalition is drafting a communication plan that would educate about the situation of trafficking, its root causes and solutions. Education would include Catholic social teaching. Target audiences include clergy, national leaders, police, media and youth. The Coalition desires to join with other organizations in order to maximize its impact and to position the Catholic community as a leader in providing outreach and assistance to victims of trafficking.

During meetings, in addition to receiving some "ongoing education" about human trafficking, each member

organization reports on ways they are addressing the issue. This provides the opportunity for inter-collaboration, which maximizes the efforts of each member organization.

The reality of trafficking highlights the shadow side of human existence, so the "counterforce" of the Coalition serves as support and gives staying power to the membership. The power of the many is brought to bear in addressing this scourge of the new millennium.

*Sheila Novak SDS, Salvatorian Sisters
Anti-Trafficking Project*

CT Task Force

from pg. 3

and several government agencies and nonprofit organizations. They will investigate allegations of trafficking and work with victims

Similar task forces have also been established in a number of key cities, including Phoenix, Albuquerque, Houston, El Paso, Atlanta, Miami, Tampa, Orlando, Newark, northern Virginia, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Seattle, and Los Angeles.

(Excerpted from: www.boston.com/news/local/connecticut/articles/2004/09/23/connecticut_targets_human_trafficking/
www.stamfordadvocate.com/news/local/scn-sa-sextaskforce4oct25,0,4944282.story?coll=stam-news-local-headlines)

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

John Paul II





Action



5 LCWR Region 14 Adopts Corporate Commitment to Work Against Trafficking In California

Members of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR-14) recently met at Presentation Center in Los Gatos, CA for their semi-annual meeting. Their agenda included orientation for new members, reflection around ways to implement the national LCWR Call 2004-2009 and celebrate Jubilee 2006 (LCWR's 50th anniversary as an organization).

Attendees also considered various regional and national LCWR action resolutions, including the issue of human trafficking, another abuse toward the world's impoverished women and children. The invited speaker, Jean Schafer SDS, gave a broad overview of trafficking and then brought the issues into the California context. They

received handouts, posters and action packets that aid persons to take local actions: advocacy regarding mail order bride legislation, education in travel venues about child sex tourism, tools to train hospital personnel about spotting trafficking victims, and advocacy for Fair Trade among businesses and consumers. Members were later sent copies of a CD containing various educational materials and action packets for ease in preparing materials for their own members and collaborators.

The LCWR members discussed ways that they could collaborate and support their own justice and peace personnel, who have already begun anti-trafficking efforts within the major cities of California. Discussion

culminated in a unanimous decision to further the education of their congregations' membership and collaborators, as well as that of the broader public. LCWR Region 14 committed themselves to take action over the coming three years, and where effective, assume a public corporate stance against trafficking. One such occasion may be during the August 2005 national LCWR Assembly to be held in Anaheim.

They took advantage of their meeting time to send supportive messages and offers to collaborate to Assemblywoman Sally Lieber (D-CA Dist.22), who heads the only State Assembly Select Committee on Human Trafficking in the nation.

California State Assembly Committee Holds Public Hearings on Trafficking

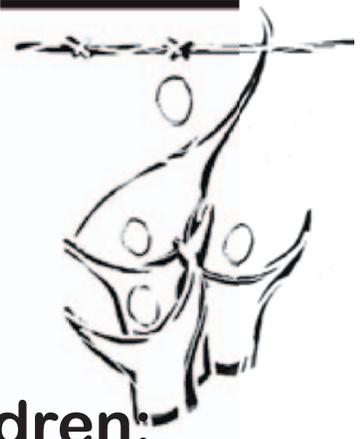
Assemblywoman, Sally Lieber, and her Committee recently began public hearings on human trafficking in conjunction with the *CA Commission on the Status of Women*, the *CA Women's Law Center*, the *CA State Legislative Women's Caucus*, and *San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris*.

The first hearing held in San Francisco in October and another scheduled for Los Angeles in February are designed to help state legislators gain knowledge from organizations and individuals about the situation of trafficking in the state of California in order to draft effective state legislation that will complement already existing federal laws.

Two speakers from Washington D.C. - *Leslie Wolfe*, President of the Center for Women Policy Studies and *Luis A. Reyes*, Attorney from the US Department of Justice - provided the broader context for the panel of speakers that followed. On that panel was *Laurel Fletcher*, law professor at the University of California, Berkeley and involved in its Human Rights Center project, *Hidden Slaves*, the recently published study on forced labor in the US. (See *Stop Trafficking*, October 2004.)



Action



Trafficking of Women and Children: Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary Adopt Corporate Stance

The *Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary*, (SNJM) an international religious order of about 1400 members have announced a campaign of education and action in response to the international trafficking in women and children for purposes of sexual exploitation and forced child labor.

According to the group's leader, Sister Mary Pat LeRoy, "We are proud to be in solidarity with 800 women's orders, representing one million members throughout the world, who have pledged to work toward the eradication of this outrageous and growing epidemic of trafficking in women and children. We call on our political and judicial leaders to address this issue with courage."

The educational programs will take place primarily in Canada and the United States, in areas where most of the sisters regularly minister. The order has also published an educational packet, *Trafficking in Women and Children*, available in three languages. It is being used in Canada, the United States, Africa, and Central and South America.

A play *Lost in Trafficking*, originally written in French and performed by *Theatre Parminou*, was translated by the sisters into English. Financial support by the sisters of Quebec has enabled the play to be presented 14 times in Quebec and it will be performed in

November at the *International Congress on the Rights of Children* that will be held in Montreal.

In addition, members of the order advocate for policies and programs that address problems of trafficking and their solutions through a non-governmental organization, UNANIMA International that they sponsor. In January 2005, Sister Catherine Ferguson, SNJM, Director of UNANIMA and a participant at the United Nations, will coordinate a workshop in New York for invited guests from the United States, Brazil, Ireland, Australia, Canada, Italy, and Chile to develop international strategies to eliminate trafficking. Each of the invited guests works with trafficking issues in her respective country.

Sisters Lise Gagnon, SNJM, and Celine Dubé, CND (Congregation of Notre Dame) co-facilitate an educational session on the trafficking of women in Quebec Province. To date they have met with 350 participants.

The Sisters of the Holy Names are collaborating with other orders of women throughout the world in this effort. In 2001 the International Union of Superiors General, representing one million sisters throughout the world, officially declared its commitment "to address at every level the abuse and sexual exploitation of women and children, with particular

attention to the trafficking of women which has become a lucrative multinational business."

As many as 4,000,000 women and children are trafficked across international borders each year. A report by the Canadian Solicitor General's Office estimates that those profiting from the illegal trafficking in women and children in Canada earn as much as \$400 million annually. According to the U.S. State Department, as many as 50,000 women are trafficked annually to the United States.

Brazil is the largest Latin American source of women in the sex trade in Europe according to the *Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights*. After arms and drugs, the trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation is the third most lucrative business in the world for organized crime.

The headquarters of the Sisters of the Holy Names is in Montreal, Quebec.

*Press Release: October 15, 2004
Peggy Kennedy, SNJM*

The Editor gratefully acknowledges those individuals and congregations that contributed information for this issue of Stop Trafficking.



Action

Training Program for Women Religious Involved in Anti-Trafficking Italy – Nigeria – Albania – Romania – Poland

Two years ago 400 participants attended an international conference in Rome, entitled, “*The 21st Century Slavery - the Human Rights Dimension of Trafficking in Human Beings.*” The meeting, organized by members of the Diplomatic Corps to the Holy See, together with the Gregorian Pontifical University, and the Pontifical Councils for Justice and Peace and for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerants, analyzed trafficking as a problem of slavery and a violation of fundamental human rights. The 400 participants included members of different international organizations, institutions and NGO’s, religious and lay associations. Significant was the presence of women religious from different congregations and of different nationalities, already in the forefront of both the prevention and social re-integration of women victims of trafficking.

This year further steps were taken to provide extensive training of sisters in five countries, culminating in another conference held at the Gregorian Pontifical University entitled, “*A Call to Action - Joining the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons.*” Ambassador John Nicholson of the USA Embassy to the Holy See, spearheaded these meetings, having had the foresight to see women religious as a great resource for effective networking against one of the most humiliating forms of contemporary slavery. The trainings

were financed by the US State Department and organized by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Union of Major Superiors of Italy (USMI), the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) and the Foundation ‘*Migrantes*’ were invited to be partners and collaborators in the project.

Objectives of the course:

- to increase the knowledge of religious personnel already active in anti-trafficking as well as provide training to other sisters who agreed to work against trafficking;
- to repeat the formation course in countries and geographical areas most affected by trafficking;
- to create a network of collaboration and communication among religious personnel in countries of origin, transit and destination.

The *first session* addressed the origin and phenomenon of human trafficking, its many dimensions and the action necessary to counteract it. Time was spent reflecting on the economic, political, social and cultural situations in each country, the role of organized crime and of sex consumers. The group studied how civil institutions counteract this social plague at the local, national, international and trans-national levels. The specific role of non-governmental organizations and of religious congregations of women was also emphasized.

The *second session* traced the profile of the persons subjected to human trafficking. In the majority of cases, they have already been victims of violence, abuse, discriminations and exploitation. They are usually vulnerable people, desperately in search of a better life for themselves and their families. They easily fall into the clutches of traffickers and become further enslaved.

The *third session* examined the health risks that women involved in human trafficking encounter both physically and psychologically.

The *fourth session* dealt with three stages of prevention or restoration in both countries of origin and of destination. Primary prevention is achieved particularly in the countries of origin through educational campaigns, aimed at raising women’s awareness of the risks involved and in preventing them from falling into the hands of traffickers. Secondary restoration takes place in the country of destination, where religious work to reduce the damage incurred and help restore the women’s dignity. Tertiary restoration involves the work of social re-integration of the victims who manage to escape from the hands of traffickers.

The *fifth session* dealt with proposals on how best to help women victims of human trafficking.

The *sixth session* dealt with the



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theme of empowerment of women victims as they rebuild their lives, gain self-confidence and restore self-esteem.

The *seventh session* focused on the risks of burnout or psychosocial stress in persons working in this difficult area.

Instruction was framed within prayerful daily reflections on scripture and Catholic social teaching. The methodology used included the systematic presentation of various themes articulated by the trainers and speakers, combined with dialogue and real-life experiences from the participants themselves. Group interaction helped deepen people's understanding of the subject, as well as guide them in developing posters, leaflets, brochures and the use of role-play.

The non-residential course in Rome lasted two weeks, while the other courses, being residential, were for six full days. In Nigeria, Albania and Romania, the participants developed a pastoral plan with concrete proposals and deadlines. A certificate of attendance, signed by the Ambassador and by the Head of the OIM, was awarded to all participants.

The *first course held in Rome* had 28 participants of various nationalities. Besides learning theory, the participants visited sheltering communities, listening centers and an out-reach unit. There were also contacts with guest speakers regarding the current reality in Italy and in Europe in general. At the end of this first course a press conference was held in the headquarters of USMI, organized by the Ambassador, in order to present the course to the public, stress its

meaningfulness, as well as to recognize the role that women religious play in this area.

The *second course took place in Lagos, Nigeria* with 22 participants from congregations all over Nigeria. Some of the challenges for religious sisters in Nigeria were:

- the work of awareness-raising and prevention in order to stop the exodus of youth into Western Europe;
- the acceptance and social re-integration of those who agree to voluntary repatriation with financed support, and also a system to protect their families;
- ways to cope with the actual emergency of many women expelled from so-called host-countries without any financial help or support;
- the importance of collaborating and networking among congregations and with local agencies which operate in the various areas involved;
- the need for more communication and co-operation between the lay institutions and religious communities that work in the countries of origin and in those of destination;
- lack of appropriate projects, structures and finances for the practical involvement of different religious communities willing to give attention to this ministry of mercy;
- the need to give support and help to the already existing project of the Nigerian Conference of Women Religious named: "Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women (COSUDOW)", operating mainly in Benin City.

The *third course was held in Shkodra, Albania* with 13 participants. The trainers started the course with some fear because of the complexity of the problem in their local situation. Soon, however, the entire group was committed to help Albanian women, who have been exploited and marginalized. This course ended with a courageous declaration signed by all participants, showing their courage to work against trafficking.

Some of the main demands and difficulties expressed by the participants were: isolation and the need for a

network, for more information about the problem, for knowledge of national and international strategies, as well as the need for more involvement by the Church. The fear of retaliation by criminal organizations was also highlighted, since the mafia in Albania are very violent and could strike at any moment.

One of the greatest challenges for women religious in Albania is the work of prevention, of informing families and engaging in education about the problem in schools, parishes and youth groups. There is, besides, the work of accepting and re-integrating very young women who return home with the desire of starting a normal life. Their experiences, whether that of deception and exploitation by traffickers, the acts of violence suffered, the abortions provoked, or the rejection by family and society have a profound effect on the future of these victims, and all this requires a ministry of love, compassion and professional competence.

The *last formation course was held in Moldova, Romania* for a group of 22 religious of different nationalities. The course was intense since the material was new for almost all the participants. The sisters were challenged to assume responsibility for the many young women who leave home in search of a new and "promised land." They realized Romania cannot allow itself to destroy a whole generation of young women in the streets of Europe, lured by false expectations of easy and immediate financial gain. Not only the sacredness and dignity of the person is at risk, but also the family, society and the Church are undermined by this phenomenon.

One of the many aspects, which emerged from discussions, was that of poverty, which is still very visible today, several years after the fall of the Communist regime. It has caused, in recent years, a constant exodus of youth towards Western Europe in search of a better life. The presence of Institutions, organized by the State for poor and abandoned minors is



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Training *cont. from pg.8*

still obvious. These enormous buildings called "Camin" house 300 to 400 minors. At the age of 18, these young people are literally on the street, with only the recommendation to look for their parents, whom many of them have never seen.

Remunerated sexual exploitation is a normal risk for many immature young girls. Without security and without a family to care for them, they are potential victims who are targeted by traffickers. They are young, inexperienced and, therefore, easily convinced, conquered, bought, sold and used. Sheltering these young women in protected environments to prevent them from the risk of falling into the snares of traffickers, through deceptive promises, is of vital importance.

This is one of the fields, to which the religious of Romania have to pay attention. It is a challenge that requires a concrete solution. The Sisters of Charity of St. Joan Antida in Bucharest have been involved in the ministry of sheltering, recuperating and re-integrating many of these young women over the past five years. However, structures and funds are needed for an adequate service in this field. It is hoped that other congregations and parishes will be encouraged to face this growing threat.

A fifth training took place in Warsaw, Poland in collaboration with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and financed by the US State Department. The program lasted four days and followed the same themes as the prior trainings.

Neighbors' Tips Break Prostitution Ring

Prosecutors say sharp-eyed Bloomington, MN residents helped them close a brothel. Neighbors told police they observed men entering a nearby residence for between 30 minutes and an hour. Sensing something suspicious they documented more than 100 license plates as men stopped by.

Two Asian men were subsequently arrested and charged with leading a prostitution ring involving entrapment of Asian women. Police found and confiscated a ledger book documenting the activities of the brothel operation. (From <http://www.twincities.com/mld/twincities/9887168.htm>)

Informative Web Sites: (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

Office of Refugee Resettlement
www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking

Salvatorian Resources: Human Trafficking Information
<http://www.sdssisters.org/slavery/index.html>

Toll-Free Hotline: (Trafficking Information and Referral) **1-888-3737.888**

The Trafficking Information and Referral Hot Line

- Received more than 1,000 calls between its start April 1 and Aug. 31, 2004.
- Texas is among the top 10 states with the most calls to the hot line.
- About half the callers spoke Spanish.

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

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!*
<http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafersds/stoptraffic/index.html>

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

Editing and Layout:
Jean Schaffer, SDS