

Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Sisters Katherine Tierney, Mary Leamy
And Members of Cork Against Human Trafficking

Responding to the Cry of the Poor Human Trafficking

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"I renew my encouragement to all the women's Institutes of Consecrated Life that have organized and supported the commitment of their sisters in the fight against trafficking and in helping victims."

Pope Francis

Addressing Human Trafficking has been a JPIC Priority for the Sisters of Bon Secours for almost a decade. In that time we have been working to raise awareness of and support survivors of this most heinous crime. Through our participation in local and national organizations like Red Kawsay (Peru), U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking (USA), Cork Against Human Trafficking and Ruhama (Ireland) and internationally with Talitha Kum we have been kept abreast of information, resources and opportunities for action.

As we commemorate World Day Against Human Trafficking this month, this newsletter offers an opportunity to reflect on the pervasiveness of Human Trafficking globally, especially trafficking and forced labor present in the many industries that produce products each of us use. The stories of human trafficking survivors presented here are simply heart-breaking. These are our brothers and sisters, loved by God, who are carrying unbearable suffering. That is why we, the Sisters of Bon Secours, "cry out against human trafficking" and use our personal and financial resources to be "good help" to those who are truly in need of our heartfelt response to their pain.

Human Trafficking Tier Placements

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) places each country into a tier based on its government's efforts to satisfy the TVPA's minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking. The qualifications for each tier are as follow:

Tier 1: Countries whose governments fully meet the TVPA minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. **France, United Kingdom, United States**

Tier 2: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with these standards. **Peru**

Tier 2 Watch List: Countries within the definition of Tier 2, but the government is failing to take appropriate actions or provide significant evidence towards their efforts to combat increasing numbers of severe forms of trafficking. If a country is on the Tier 2 Watch List for over two years and has not shown signs of improvement, they are downgraded to a Tier 3. **DRC (Congo), Ireland**

Tier 3: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and are not making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance. **South Sudan**

Source: *Trafficking in Persons Report 2021*



"With the COVID-19 emergency, traffickers have quickly managed to change the forms of sexual exploitation and have made victims even more isolated and difficult to reach."

Raffaella Milano,
Director of Italy-Europe Programmes of
Save the Children

July
JPIC Days of Remembrance

July 14
St. Kateri Tekakwitha
Patroness of
Ecology and the Environment



July 28
World Hepatitis Day

July 30
World Day Against
Human Trafficking



Sisters of Bon Secours...Women of healing...defending and caring for all creation (Mission Focus)

Trafficking Stories



Thailand: A migrant fisherman keeps watch on a fishing boat. Forced labor in the fishing sector remains a significant concern where workers, including migrants, report harsh conditions, excessive hours and stolen identity documents as well as beatings, starvation and murder.



Guatemala: A woman carries corn leaves in Guatemala. Traffickers often use child and forced labor to produce high volumes of product at low prices to meet demand.

“During the whole time,
I was getting doctor’s appointments
and I was sitting in school
and I was going to the grocery store,
standing, behind normal people
and nobody knew.
Nobody had any idea
that I was being trafficked.”

Kat Wehunt, Trafficking Survivor
Leader and Founder, Executive Director of The
Formation Project
South Carolina, USA

India: Facing extreme poverty in India due to COVID-19, Aarav’s parents sold him for US \$21 to the owner of a bangle factory. The owner locked the 12-year-old in a dirty room with several other children and forced them to make bangles for 15 hours a day, using lacquer melted over dangerous burning coal and making only US \$0.70 a week. The owner kept Aarav from communicating with his family and threatened physical abuse if he tried to leave. After receiving a tip from child rights activists, police conducted a raid to remove the children from the factory and arrest the trafficker. The government provided Aarav and the other victims support in the aftermath of the raid.



United States – Chile: Vicente was thrilled when he was recruited and offered an educational visa to attend community college in the United States. The college program promised free tuition for a two-year degree program in Culinary Arts, free room and board, and an internship. After arriving in the United States, Vicente and several other Chilean students learned their program had been changed from a two-year program to a one-year program in food services. Instead of an internship, the school required the Chilean students to work 40 hours per week in a meat processing plant to pay off a debt for the academic program—that they had been told would be tuition-free—and pay for food and housing out of their wages. The school administrators forced Vicente and the other students to adhere to an exhausting work and academic schedule and threatened deportation and legal action if they failed to comply or skipped a work shift. When the school closed the educational visa program after complaints were filed, it encouraged students to self-deport.

Source: *Trafficking in Persons Report 2021, Stories*



Europe: Liam and Jakob were experiencing homelessness in northern Europe when a person they thought was a prospective employer offered them a job in construction, along with room and board, in a neighboring country. They left their country with fake passports and worked hard laying asphalt and stone in residential neighborhoods. Their “employer” forced the men to work long hours, continually reduced their wages, and physically abused them. They were routinely moved around and often unsure of where they were located.

“When people are struggling with their finances, struggling with poverty, loss of work, childhood trauma and abuse, homelessness or a young person who’s not safe at home and ends up on the streets or couch surfing, all those things can lead to you being exploited by a trafficker—and those people are in every town.”

Rebecca Ayling, Project Director, New Hampshire Human Trafficking Collaborative Task Force

“And yet in these difficult times,
we see the best of humanity:
frontline heroes,
men and women risking their lives
and going above and beyond to provide
essential support for
human trafficking victims.”

Ghada Waly, Executive Director,
UN Office on Drugs and Crime

International Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation Committee

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