



China: “You can’t use my real name. I am not the same person who left this village two years ago. My body came back but my soul is somewhere else... I am filthy inside and my soul is empty. I don’t know if I can live this way. My mother comes to my room and says, ‘Lena, you were such a friendly person. I miss you the way you were,’ and I say, ‘Mama, I am different. Something died in me. I think it was happiness’...I am home because our brothel was raided by police, and six months later I was deported. You might think I am lucky but I am not. Someday they will come back for me and if I do not go, they will kill me and maybe my family.” (an exploited woman’s story - Working Group on Trafficking in Women and Children, JPIC Commission of the Unions of the Superiors General USG/UISG, 2003)

Romania: Maria, age 16, was tricked into traveling to Bucharest to find a job by a childhood friend. Unbeknownst to Maria, the friend had advertised in a Romanian port city that there was a “girl for sale.” Maria was sold to a man who used her as a prostitute, along with an 11-year old girl. For four months, she was forced to work as a street prostitute under the threat of beatings. She was fined, arrested, and interrogated numerous times by the police; however, her “protector” bribed the police to release her, thus forcing her to prostitute again. (*Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 2006, p. 14)

Milwaukee, WI, USA: In 1985, 19-year old Erma Martinez was brought illegally from the Philippines to work as a maid for physicians. Her passport was taken away upon her arrival. She was kept hidden even from the family’s closest friends and had to stay in the basement room when the family had company. In church, she had to sit away from the family. When she had health issues, they did not take her to a doctor/dentist. She was kept in line by threats of deportation and harm coming to the family. She would also not have money to send home. This went on for 19 years! Federal agents rescued her and she now lives and works in Chicago. Members of the Milwaukee family have been convicted and will spend time in prison. (*The Journal Sentinel*, 1/14/07)



“Trafficking is one of the most egregious violations of human rights facing the United Nations.”
—Kofi Annan

“Trafficking in persons is a form of modern-day slavery, and we strive for its total abolition. Future generations will not excuse those who turn a blind eye to it.”
(from the U.S. National Security Strategy)

Street children, as young as two years old, are trafficked into metropolitan centers throughout India, where they are forced to beg for money. Child begging is considered a form of human trafficking.

The profits from human trafficking fuel other criminal activities. According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, human trafficking generates an estimated \$9.5 billion in annual revenue. It is closely connected with money laundering, drug trafficking, document forgery, and human smuggling. Where organized crime flourishes, governments and the rule of law are undermined and weakened.

(the above are quotes found in *Trafficking in Persons Report*, June 2006, pp. 1, 5, 13.)

For more information, contact:
Justice Coordinator
320 County Road K
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Phone: (920) 907-2315
Email: sstorch@csasisters.org



The Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes Takes Corporate Stance Against Trafficking of Women and Children



“Once a drug is sold it is gone, but a girl can be sold over and over before she collapses, has gone mad, committed suicide or died of disease,” said a British Columbian man convicted of trafficking.

(Centerings, Fall, 2004)

“The Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes stands in solidarity with the victims of human trafficking and takes a corporate stance against the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation.”

Feast of St. Agnes, 2007

On January 21, 2007, the Feast of St. Agnes, the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes (CSA) made public its corporate stance against the trafficking of women and children. This is a continuation of CSA's efforts on behalf of women and children which began with its foundation in 1858.

Some examples:

- Helped German immigrant women in New York in the late 1800's
- Help present day immigrants through a variety of services
- Staffed orphanages
- Care for families in Nicaragua
- Help homeless women
- Helped to establish domestic violence services in Fond du Lac
- Help socially and economically disadvantaged people
- In 2003, CSA became a founding member of United Nations NGO (nongovernmental organization) UNANIMA International, whose current focus is working against the demand side of trafficking. (see Resources #1)

Magnitude of the Tragedy

■ The ILO (International Labor Organization) estimates 12.3 million people are in forced labor, bonded labor, forced child labor and sexual servitude at any given time. (*Trafficking in Persons Report*, 6/2006, p. 6)

■ Over 2.5 million men, women, and children are trafficked across international borders each year. Approximately 80% are women and girls and 50% are minors.

■ A study of women trafficked to the European Union found that 95% of victims have been violently assaulted or coerced into a sexual act, and over 60% of victims report fatigue, neurological symptoms, gastrointestinal problems, back pain, vaginal discharges, and gynecological problems. (*Trafficking in Persons Report*, 6/2006, p. 11.)

■ About 200,000-500,000 women are trafficked from Latin America to the United States and Europe each year. Another 50,000 are said to come from Africa (*Trafficking in Women and Children*)

Causes of trafficking

Unrestrained capitalistic policies create an economic system which leaves few options for the poor who are predominantly women and children.

Patriarchal System supports male privilege which allows men to treat women as objects to be bought and sold.

What Can I Do?

Education

Continue to educate yourself and others. Plan workshops in parishes, hospitals, schools, civic groups. Check www.csasisters.org for a Powerpoint presentation and list of videos, DVDs, etc.

Collaboration

- Network with other groups in your area.
- Join an organization such as ECPAT. (see Resources #6)
- Check if hotels, airlines, tour companies you use have signed “the code” committing them to a policy prohibiting the sexual abuse of minors on their property.

www.thecode.org

Legislative Action

- Check to see if your state has laws against trafficking.
- Advocate for laws that
 - create a task force or commission on trafficking
 - criminalize trafficking
 - regulate bride trafficking
 - criminalize sex tourism

These laws should promote the recovery, repatriation and reintegration of trafficked women and children and address the consumer demand for trafficking.

- Work to have the U.S. Senate ratify CEDAW, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. 182 countries have ratified it. The United States is the only country in Europe and North America that has **not** ratified it.



Resources

1. UNANIMA International - a UN-NGO made up of 15 congregations, including the Sisters of St. Agnes, which is working against the trafficking of women and girls, focusing on the demand side of trafficking. www.unanima-international.org

2. STOP TRAFFICKING! A monthly newsletter available at no cost at <http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafersds/stoptraffic/index.html>

3. Rescue and Restore http://acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact_human.html The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers many free materials.

4. The JPE library is on the website. Items can be checked out at no cost. For a list of books and videos, visit <http://www.csasisters.org/page.cfm?categoryid=6&pageid=175>. Contact Susan at sledesma@csasisters.org

5. Center for Women Policy Studies has information on what should be included in legislation. www.centerwomenpolicy.org

6. ECPAT International, End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes. ECPAT produces an excellent newsletter. www.ecpat.com/eng/index.asp

7. Hotline for trafficked persons
1-888-373-7888.

“We are in this life because of poverty and also because of a culture that puts women in a lower status.”
— *testimony of a sexually exploited woman*