

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

Co-Sponsored by:

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

1 This issue highlights pastoral tools that enable groups to choose to be light in darkness, to be beacons of hope for those caught in the web of human trafficking.

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The People Who Walk in Darkness Have Seen a Great Light. Is. 9:1.

Social-Economic-Political Darkness

- Systemic and destructive competition for power, resources and status among classes, races and nations.
 - Exploitation of the poor.
- Marginalization of non-productive groups (the young, old, poor, etc.).
 - Waste of human and natural resources.
- Violence, arms build-up, arms sales, trafficking of human beings.

Communal Darkness

- Violence / abuse in families, groups and neighborhoods.
- Intolerance / exploitation of those who are different.
 - Competition for recognition.
 - Sexual competition of men vs. women, manipulation of others / lack of fidelity in relationships.
 - Loss of shared vision.
- Lack of investment in the life of the group or in relationships.

Personal Darkness

- Loneliness and escapes from it (addictions), excessive consumption.
- Fears of failure, of others, of self, of risking the new.
- A sense of powerlessness before outside forces, fatalism.
 - Lack of intrinsic worth.
- NO real relaxation or recreation -- drivenness, and burnout.

Engines that Drive Darkness at All Three Levels

Myths of Darkness

- Competition
- Domination and control
- Consumption
- Isolation

Re-mythologize with Gospel Values.

Solidarity, Community,
Reconciliation, Cooperation, etc.

Myth Building

- Capitalism is free enterprise.
- Women maintain family and house. They are not the main breadwinners.
- Racial and religious differences justify violence and war.

How do we become disciples of Good News, bringing light into the darkness?

- Bring light socially by acting justly, resisting death and promoting life through systemic justice (public advocacy).
- Bring light communally by loving tenderly, showing hospitality, solidarity, forgiveness, peace, etc. (corporate sacrifice so as to share with others).
- Bring light personally by walking humbly with God, engaging in prayer, leisure, Sabbath, etc. (personal conversion).

Adapted from: F. Kramer, SJ *Salted with Fire*.1995



Advocacy

The Editor thanks the congregation that supplied the following article and accompanying information (pgs. 2-4), highlighting the fruits of their decisions to offer hospitality to women rescued from trafficked situations. We hope it inspires others to bring light into someone's darkness.

Creating a Hospitable Space to Nurture Trafficked Women

The invitation to offer hospitality to women trafficked into the United States came from the lead agency in our county that works with refugees. We formed a task force of “concerned women”. The task force’s priorities included intensive education about trafficking and journeying with traumatized women, identifying potential needs of trafficked women, and how best to meet the needs given their limited resources and availability, and the establishment of a simple agreement with the lead agency about roles and responsibilities. The “circle of concerned women” work full-time and are available in the evenings; two of them are available during the day for emergencies.

The responsibilities of the **host community** are to create a healing environment and to restore each woman’s dignity, self-worth, and relationships with family. The community commits itself to a long-term relationship with trafficked women. It strives:

- to create a safe, stable, quiet environment;
- to promote independence and self-reliance;
- to help restore communication with family members;
- to provide access to religious services in the women’s native languages;
- to provide for the women’s basic needs until government funding is available;
- to provide supportive companionship and 24 hour availability of contact;
- to identify resources in the community for counseling, medical, dental and vision care, prescriptions, clothing;
- to identify ESL learning sites and bus routes;

- to inform liability carrier of the host community that shelter is provided for two homeless women;
- to avoid invasive and intrusive questions;
- to resolve issues as they arise; and
- to maintain confidentiality about the women and the hospitality site.

Responsibilities of the **lead agency** include:

- to provide case management services;
- to provide for all transportation;
- to provide medical screening for communicable diseases and prescriptions, as needed;
- to screen potential candidates for compatibility with the host community;
- to act as liaison with federal agents and lawyers;
- to conduct employment searches and prepare the women for interviews;
- to educate regarding a savings and checking account;
- to educate in the usage of government-issued cards for identification, work permit, social security, medical insurance, bank card to access monthly stipend and food stamps;
- to maintain confidentiality of the host site.

We as host community needed to be reasonable given our own limitations. Although initially we were requested to offer emergency hospitality, we decided against offering this service because we realized that we did not have enough resources to meet the women’s emotional needs immediately following their rescue. Rather, we chose to offer long-term, i.e. two years, hospitality for two trafficked women.

We received two young women. One had never heard the English language

before coming to the States. She has the equivalent of a third grade education. She is from a very remote area that takes a day on horseback to get to the nearest town. The other knows basic English phrases and has a grade six education. Their stories are not dissimilar to those of others who are trafficked. Each lived in poverty and desired a better life for her family. A young woman in a very remote village recruited one of the women by telling her that she could get a good paying job in the United States from one of her cousins. All she had to do was get to the U.S. / Mexico border and transportation would be provided into the large U.S. city. (Transportation was via a large trailer truck filled with Spanish-speaking people who were dropped off along the way.) The other young woman was solicited through a woman in a tourist city who promised a better paying job in the U.S. Neither was aware that their new employment was prostitution. Nor were they aware that they would share one bedroom with eight other women and be confined to a two-bedroom apartment. Anytime during the night, a “knock” at the door signaled that either all or some of the women would be taken away for a night’s work. The act of prostitution primarily occurred in massage parlors in a big city but sometimes it occurred at the apartment. While working off their debt, these women were sexually abused, dehumanized, threatened and contracted sexually transmitted diseases. They were at the mercy of the perpetrators. Our guests were in this situation for four months before they were rescued.



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Hospitable Space

from pg. 2

The day before the arrival of our guests, two representatives from the host community went to the shelter to introduce themselves. Both women shared a four-bed room and had lived in four different sites over the preceding two months. On the day of their arrival at the safe-house, all of the host community were present and assisted the women in moving their things. (Prior to their arrival, the host community had struggled with whether to give them private rooms or a shared room. We decided that the women would share a large room with a private bathroom.) It became readily apparent that they did not want to be separated and that they needed each others' companionship. They appeared tired, pale, thin, grateful for the accommodations but fearful and quiet. They immediately wanted access to a phone so that they could call their families and let them know with whom they were living. Their mothers were very grateful that the host community was providing hospitality for their daughters. It was gradually, over time, that the two young women disclosed to their mothers what had happened. Fortunately their mothers did not reject them. This is not always the case.

The same host, who spoke their language, oriented them to their new surroundings during the first five days. The members of the host community joined them for meals during the first month. They were free to roam the premises, but needed a host to accompany them off premises. This restriction was imposed on them because they were in the Federal Witness Program and were thought to be a potential flight risk. However, these two women were too frightened to go

anywhere and were always looking over their shoulder or timidly looking at the crowd fearful that they might see one of the men who had abused them. Each time they left the premises, they carried their federal identification card. Without the identification card, the women could be deported by the I.N.S. even though they were in the *Federal Witness Program*.

One of the women had fiscal responsibilities at home. Each month she needed to send a certain amount to her family to pay for her children's room, board, medication, clothing and education. Although federally qualified, these women were not receiving the monthly stipend from the government upon their arrival at the safe-house. Their case manager provided the necessary income for this particular woman. The women never received money from the host community, but the host community did provide new clothes, ethnic-preferred food and toiletries. Once the women received a monthly stipend and food stamps from the government, they provided for themselves. They also received a social security number, an identification card, work permit and medical, dental, vision coverage.

Prior to their arrival, each had received counseling. These sessions were interrupted because of distance. The host community took it upon themselves to find a bilingual counselor with a specialty in sexual abuse and victimization. A marriage-, family-, child-counseling intern with a specialty in sexual abuse was found. Weekly counseling sessions were offered. Over time, each was able to separate her identity from what had happened to her. Their sense of shame diminished and gradually they became comfortable in participating in church services.

The "circle of concerned women" grew as others stepped forward to become translators, companions for swimming and outings, specialized tutors in English and an instructor in art.

The off-site case manager provided daily contact, transportation to ESL

classes and to all appointments. She was always available by phone. She educated the women in the use of the government-issued cards for their monthly stipend and food stamps. She arranged schedules to accommodate the needs of the women, lawyers, and District Attorney's office. The case manager acted as the women's liaison between the host community, the lawyer and District Attorney's office. She provided much needed support for all.

There were some simple learnings. The women were exhausted when they arrived and needed rest periods during the day. They appreciated the quietness of their new surroundings. Each woman was in a different stage of healing and adapted at different rates. The ability to communicate in their language was critical and it eased the transition process. Even though the language ability of the host community varied, the two young women were patient, using simple Spanish phrases and assisting the host community with their Spanish. Any "knock" at the bedroom door created much anxiety so the host community identified themselves by name whenever they knocked on the bedroom door. Our structured meal times did not meet their custom of eating later, so they were given access to a kitchen and their preferred food so that they could prepare their own meals. The women were taught the importance of being on time in our culture and the potential ramifications for tardiness where they were employed. It was important for one host to obtain each woman's permission to receive her medical information regarding treatment and follow-up because they needed assistance in navigating our healthcare delivery system and understanding diagnosis and treatment. As one woman remarked, "This is more medicine than I have seen in my lifetime." The confidentiality of the host site created a barrier for the women's lawyer who could not reach them by phone. Eventually, the phone number of the site was shared with the lawyer. When a young woman was ready to move out

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AGREEMENT Between THE AGENCY and the HOST COMMUNITY

Responsibilities of the Host Community:

The *Host Community* will provide shelter for a maximum capacity of two women, dependent upon space availability and the availability of the Madrinas. The Madrinas are those women who will become the community of concern providing support to the women during their stay at Myriam's Haven. The Agency recognizes that there may be times when there will be no available space. The Host Community will notify the agency one month in advance if space is unavailable and the women need to be relocated.

The *Host Community* will provide emotional support, food and shelter. The hosts will receive training over the next twelve months to perform this role. They will refrain from asking probing questions and will keep this ministry confidential.

The *Host Community* also understands that the women may participate in routine upkeep of the rooms they inhabit.

The *Host Community* will refer to the women as Myriam's guests. Name badges stating "Myriam's Guest" will be provided to each woman. The receptionist will refer to the women as Myriam's Guests.

Women will ordinarily be accepted between the hours of 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 a.m. unless other arrangements have been made with the Host Community.

The *Host Community* will provide the Agency with a twenty-four emergency phone number.

Responsibilities of the Agency

The *Agency* will not disclose the location of Myriam's Haven nor its Host Community.

Ordinarily, there will only be one representative from the *Agency* who will communicate with the on call Madrina.

The *Agency* will provide the host community with a twenty-four hour emergency phone number.

The *Agency* will provide interpreters as needed.

The *Agency* will complete the form entitled "Profile of Myriam's Guest" on each woman and give this to the representative for the Host Community.

The *Agency* will be responsible for the overall care of each woman, such as transportation, ESL, counseling, making of appointments and referrals, medications, clothing, telephone calls to the family, and use of their agency's return address for letters.

The *Agency* will provide documentation that each woman has had a physical exam for identification of abuse and communicable diseases. The examination and initiation of treatment for the identified communicable disease will occur prior to the woman's arrival at Myriam's Haven.

Representatives from both the *Host Community* and the *Agency* sign and date the *Document of Agreement*.



Myriam's Guest

The following information about each guest is provided to the host community.

Profile Name, birth date and place of birth, native language and proficiency in English, date of entry to the USA and type of work done, emergency contact phone number, emergency family name and relationship to guest, emergency family address and phone number, and immediate needs and concerns of the guest.

Medical History Allergies, verification that a medical screening for abuse and for communicable diseases was completed; for communicable diseases identified, what prescriptions were provided; any dental concerns; when counseling was initiated.

Documentation Process

Date of discovery/rescue; Immigration & Naturalization Services (INS); Medi-Cal; food stamps; name and phone number of attorney; amount of monthly stipend; any concerns.



Action



Bill Making Sexual Slavery and Forced Labor a Felony Introduced in the California State Assembly

(Sacramento, CA) -- Assemblywoman Sally J. Lieber (D-San Jose) will be sworn in to begin her second term as a member of the California State Assembly on Monday, December 6th. Lieber will continue to serve the 22nd Assembly District, and will resume her role as Assistant Speaker pro Tempore of the State Assembly, serving as a member of Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez's executive leadership team.

Lieber will also take advantage of this historic floor session to introduce her first piece of legislation for the 2005-06 session, a measure to make human trafficking—sexual slavery and forced labor—a felony in California. The omnibus measure also seeks to protect victims of trafficking, make them eligible for social services, and will create a task force to develop anti-trafficking policy recommendations.

Lieber has served as Chair of the Assembly's Select Committee on Human Trafficking in California. The Select Committee, created in 2004 by Assembly Speaker Fabian Nunez, has worked with the State Commission on the Status of Women, the Women's Law Center and other victims' service providers to identify issues relating to human trafficking in California and to develop this legislation.

Human trafficking is a modern form of slavery in which force, fraud, and coercion are used to compel individuals to work in the sex industry or forced labor. Through the use of violence, threats, and coercion, enslaved persons may be forced to work in the sex trade, domestic labor, factories, hotels or restaurants, agriculture, peddling, or begging.

The California Anti-trafficking Initiative (CAI), the newly-formed statewide coalition of anti-trafficking organizations, welcomes the introduction of anti-trafficking legislation that seeks to protect victims of human trafficking, as well as create criminal tools to hold traffickers accountable for their actions. A recent joint study by the Human Rights Center at UC Berkeley and Free The Slaves on trafficking in the United States found that

California has one of the highest incidences of trafficking in the country. (See Stop Trafficking October 2004 issue.)

"It's essential that California provides national leadership to create model legislation that addresses trafficking as a human rights issue, rather than solely a criminal or immigration issue that does not protect the rights of victims," explains the spokesperson for CAI. *"As anti-trafficking advocates, we are committed to working closely with legislators to ensure that state anti-trafficking law and policy reflect the diverse scope and dimensions of human trafficking in the state of California."*

Women and children comprise the majority of trafficking victims. Victims of trafficking report children as young as four years old being sold into slavery, often for sexual purposes. In 2001, the United States Department of Justice concluded that between 300,000 and 400,000 American children are victims of sexual exploitation every year.

"The problem of human trafficking has reached epic proportions, and is growing faster than any other criminal industry in the world," Lieber stated. *"Individuals, as young as 4-years-old, are bought, sold, transported and held in inhumane conditions for forced use as prostitutes or laborers. It would be morally reprehensible and socially irresponsible to ignore this problem and the thousands of victims it creates every year."*

According to the United States Government, an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 people are trafficked into the United States each year, with the majority being women and children. The Bay Area in particular, with its three major airports and the San Francisco and Oakland seaports, is a major entry point for traffickers.

"The State of California has a responsibility to assure that all men, women, and children in California are protected from the exploitation of human trafficking, and that human trafficking across international borders is curtailed," said Mary Wiberg, Executive Director of the California Commission on the Status of Women. *"The California Commission on the Status of Women supports the efforts of the Select Committee on Human Trafficking to address this critical issue."*



Action

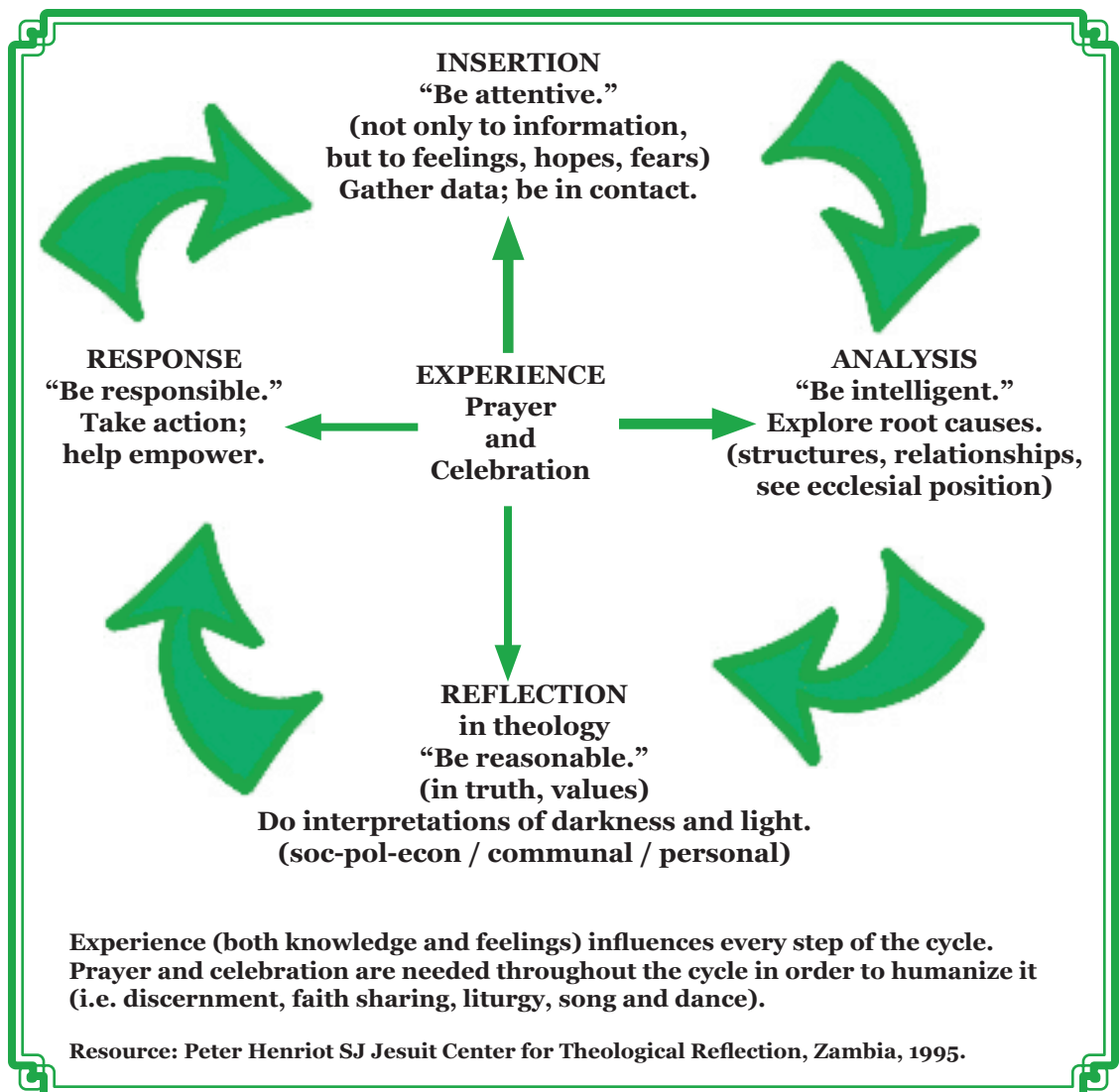
Toll-Free Hotline:
 (Trafficking Information
 and Referral)
1-888-3737.888

The Pastoral Cycle formulated by Peter Henriot S.J.

is a highly useful model for group discernment, decision-making and action. Fr. Henriot invites us to keep our focus on experience, but to sustain the process with frequent prayer and ritual celebration.

The challenge at each stage in the ongoing process of providing pastoral service to victims of human trafficking or in addressing the root causes of this human rights abuse is twofold:

- to act with the full range of human comprehension, compassion and resolve, and
- to remain a people of hope and joy while struggling with the global dimensions of this suffering.





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Thank You

We wish to gratefully acknowledge those who have provided generous monetary support for the Salvatorian Sisters Anti-Human Trafficking Project during 2004:

- Mary Ann and Peter Eltink
- Monica and Larry Roben
- Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary
- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Western Region
 - St. Pius Catholic Parish, Wauwatosa, WI
- Marge and Anthony Scola
 - S. Cecile Amann SDS
 - Anonymous Gift

U.S. Government Funding of Anti-Trafficking Initiatives

At the end of November 2004 Assistant Attorney General R. Alexander Acosta of the Civil Rights Division and Assistant Attorney General Christopher A. Wray of the Criminal Division announced that the U.S. Department of Justice awarded more than \$7.6 million in grants to enable state and local law enforcement to fight human trafficking by creating task forces to aid in the identification and rescue of human trafficking victims.

“Local law enforcement and community-based organizations, particularly faith-based groups, are best situated to identify trafficking victims in their communities during the course of their field operations and delivery of social services,” said Acosta.

“Increasing the capacity of local law enforcement to work jointly with community-based social service providers and federal law enforcement is essential to combating such human degradation.”

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

Assessment of U.S. Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/pressreleases/DOJo4760.htm>

Contains a full list of the recipients of the Law Enforcement and Service Provider Multidisciplinary Anti-Trafficking Task Force Awards.

Editor’s Note

If other congregations are hosting rescued persons and believe their experience would be insightful for readers, we invite them to contribute to the dialogue by submitting an article.

Hospitable Space

cont. from pg. 3

on her own, we agreed to leave her bed available for one month, in case she decided to return.

After a three-month stay, one young woman went to live with her relative. The other, who was too fearful to open the bedroom door more than one inch, remains with us, lives independently in the setting, works and attends ESL classes in the evenings. She hopes to attend a young adult learning center to acquire job skills and obtain her GED. At that juncture, she will move to a transitional living center for women where she will continue to receive an additional two years of case management services.

During this time, the host community has grown in their understanding of trafficking and the impact it has on individuals. A member of the host community and the case manager are providing trafficking education to hospitals and community clinics. Two of the hosts are involved with a county-wide task force on trafficking. One provides supervision to an intern in *Marriage Family Child Counseling* while the other provides art therapy.

As a “circle of concerned women,” we are blessed by the presence of these two young women. We commit ourselves to offer hospitality to two women at a time. We hope that this story will encourage others to offer a hospitable, stable and safe environment to nurture trafficked women.

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/stoptrafficking/index.html>

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