



**Statement on Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery**  
**U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph**

**STATEMENT**

We, the U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, stimulated by the love of God and neighbor without distinction, call on all persons to work to abolish the horrific crime of human trafficking and modern day slavery.

Impelled by our mission to restore right relationships we are committed:

- to educate about the root causes, consequences and magnitude of human trafficking and slavery
- to minister to survivors of any form of human slavery
- to use our strength as consumers and investors to promote a just society that eliminates the incentives for human trafficking
- to advocate for just laws at all levels that punish traffickers, protect victims and prevent recidivism
- to be aware of, identify and report potential victims.

**IMPACT ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

Human Trafficking is 21<sup>st</sup> century slavery and it involves transporting, primarily women and children, within or across borders to be sexually exploited, to work in sweat shops, to be domestic workers, to be objects of sex tourism or to be mail-order brides. Over 15,000 women and children are trafficked to the United States each year.

**TALKING POINTS**

- An estimated 800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year. Victims of human trafficking are commonly linked by poverty and lack of opportunity
- Worldwide illicit human trafficking is a \$32 billion business which feeds on the demand for the services of the sex trade and forced labor.
- The estimated number of people trafficked each year into the U.S. is 14,500 -17,500.
- 50% of the people trafficked in the U.S. each year are children.
- Trafficking in persons is more lucrative than drug trading because a person can be sold over and over. Sex trafficking is one of the most profitable industries of organized crime.

**ACTION STEPS**

- Educate ourselves and others on how to recognize warning signs and patterns, and basic do's and don'ts for working with survivors of trafficking, and how to work in collaboration with secular resources and leaders.
- Raise awareness, volunteer, and advocate for legislation that protects the rights of survivors
- Join an anti-trafficking alliance between local law enforcement and community-based organizations which can assist with the prosecution of traffickers, help protect survivors of trafficking and prevent trafficking in your community.

**ADDITIONAL TALKING POINTS**

- Trafficking in women and children is both a human rights violation and a development issue. It has tremendous human, social and economic costs, contributing to the spread of venereal disease, and HIV/AIDS.
- Trafficking deprives children of education and the opportunity to achieve their full potential, robbing poor countries of their most vital resource for development – their people.
- The United States is also the major destination country for young children kidnapped and transported for adoption by childless couples.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIONS**

- Promote fair-trade and denounce slave labor in product supply chains.
- Provide a Safe House a Safe Place for survivors. Become a host community by providing shelter to two women at a time.
- Ask local religious leaders to educate others on human trafficking through homilies and prayer services on the dates of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (January 11), International Women's Day (March 8), World Day Against Child Labor (June 12), International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25), Abolition of Slavery Day (December 2), and Universal Human Rights Day (December 10).

The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is a dynamic union of all the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the United States who claim a common origin in the foundation at LePuy, France in 1650. Today there are approximately 7,000 vowed members as well as 2,800 Associates in the United States. World-wide there are over 13,500 Sisters of Saint Joseph in over 50 countries.