

FEATURED TOPIC:
HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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From Rome

We start this edition with a definition of human trafficking. All initiatives against human trafficking whether from religious or civil organisations, begin with this definition articulated in the Palermo Protocol (2003) to “Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children”. As of February 2018 it has been ratified by 173 countries.

What is Trafficking?

Human trafficking is the criminal and illegal trading of human beings for the purpose of exploiting their labour. It is defined by a movement (or migration) into a non-consensual situation of exploitation (or harm) that results in the loss of control by an individual over his or her situation. Trafficking can occur within a country or across national borders. The “Palermo Protocol” defines trafficking as:

- The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons.
- By means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person.
- The Protocol notes that exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

From New York

Human Trafficking and Migration: Philippine Duchesne Region

Sheila Smith, rscj, UN Representative for NGO of the Society of the Sacred Heart, and Chihiro Yamamoto, nscj, Intern at the UN-NGO, were among the approximately 100 participants at the 6th Continental Meeting of Popular Education that took place from the 9th-13th of April. The theme was: Migration, Immigration & Human Trafficking: Crossing Frontiers-Connecting Humanity. The week-long event began in San Antonio, Texas and continued at the Mexico/USA border in McAllen, Texas.

Participants gathered to learn, reflect, and propose action for the Popular Education Network. Sheila Smith presented and facilitated one morning on the topic of International, Regional, and Local Human Trafficking.



Praying at the border



Ladder cross

A sombre highlight of the event was a visit to the border wall between the USA and Mexico, where many people risk their lives in the hope for a better life.

The methodology of Popular Education is a best practice from the grassroots that has been promoted by the Society of the Sacred Heart at the UN since 2015.

From Rome

Question put to Pope Francis during an audience with young people on the subject of human trafficking, Rome, 12th February 2018

Q. Do you think that the surprising silence surrounding trafficking is due to ignorance of the phenomenon?

A. Certainly there is a lot of ignorance on the topic of trafficking. But sometimes there also seems to be little will to understand the scope of the issue. Why? Because it touches close to our conscience; because it is thorny; because it is shameful.



Then there are those who, even knowing this, do not want to speak because they are at the end of the “supply chain”, as a user of the “services” that are offered on the street or on the Internet. There are, lastly, those who do not want it to be talked about, because they are directly involved in the criminal organizations that reap handsome profits from trafficking. Yes, it takes courage and honesty, when, in our daily lives, we meet or deal with persons who could be victims of human trafficking, or when we are tempted to select items which may well have been produced by exploiting others.

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2018/february/documents/papa-francesco_20180212_contro-tratta.html

Talitha Kum - International Network Against Trafficking in Persons

Talitha Kum is an international network of Consecrated Life against trafficking in persons under the leadership of UISG. Working as a network it facilitates collaboration and the interchange of information between consecrated men and women in 76 countries. Its role is:

- To promote the formation of new regional networks;
- To foster communication and interchange of information between member networks;
- To support actions of political impact internationally;
- To promote February 8 the World Day of Prayer and Reflection against Trafficking in Persons.

Experience with Trafficked Women From the RSCJ JPIC Database (ENW)

This experience is about volunteering with *Rahab*, a charity in central London offering support to women who may or may not have been trafficked and are working in prostitution. “The women are approached through requests from the police to meet women they feel are vulnerable or by word of mouth as some women may mention it to friends. The volunteers usually meet them in the flats they are working from.

The volunteers also attend welfare visits with the police anti-trafficking and kidnap unit, where they have identified women they feel are vulnerable. Many of the women are usually from Eastern Europe, Poland and Romania. There seem to be more from across Europe. Recently the volunteers have met a few women from Brazil. Different parts of London seem to have different nationalities working in them. Sometimes the women would not fit the definition of being trafficked, for example a woman who came from Slovenia and was staying with a friend while she looked for work. Her friend made her work and she had to see about 20 clients a day. The woman had to pay her friend 80% of what she earned. This woman has now moved to a hostel and found a cleaning job.”

Saint Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of trafficking victims

As human trafficking continues to be a supremely important issue during Pope Francis' pontificate, with an estimated 20 million victims world-wide, Saint Josephine Bakhita, enslaved during her own childhood, has emerged as a patron not only for her home country of Sudan, but for all victims of trafficking.

When Josephine Bakhita was eventually freed from slavery in Italy she joined the Canossian Sisters and spent nearly 50 years as a religious. In 2000 she was declared a saint by the Catholic Church. February 8, the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita has become the International Day of Prayer and Awareness



Against Human Trafficking. The date was chosen at the request of women religious to highlight her life.

From New York

UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The theme of this year's UN Commission on the Status of Women in March 2018 was:

“Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.”

The Society of the Sacred Heart was a co-sponsor of the following three side-events at the Commission:

1. Shouldering the Burden: Rural Women and Climate-Induced Displacement;
2. Wisdom, Water, and Rural Women: Unmuting Women's Voices for Integrated Water Policy;
3. Preventing Human Trafficking Among Rural Women and Girls: Integrating Human Dignity into a Human Rights Model.



Sheila Smith rscj speaking to participants

At this third event, Sheila Smith, rscj, was a panelist. To watch the full event in English click on this link:

<http://webtv.un.org/watch/preventing-human-trafficking-among-rural-women-and-girls-integrating-inherent-dignity-into-a-human-rights-model-csw62-side-event/5752837968001>

Internship at the UN-NGO Chihiro Yamamoto nscj

My three-month ministry experience as a novice with the Society of the Sacred Heart as an intern at our NGO at the United Nations is described at the following link:

<https://rscjinternational.org/news/reflect-ions-united-nations-study-tour>



Chihiro Yamamoto nscj and Helen O'Regan rscj at a UN-side event

VISITORS TO THE UN

Thoughts about my visit to the UN-NGO Office Diane Roche, rscj (USC)

When the Provincial Team asked me to be the USC link person to both the International JPIC and UN-NGO Offices, I knew that one of the first things I needed to do was to visit the United Nations and get a first-hand sense of what the ministry of Sheila Smith, rscj, entailed. She wisely suggested that I choose to come and participate in the 56th Commission on Social Development.



Sheila Smith rscj and Diane Roche rscj

On the morning of 30th January, with my grounds pass around my neck, Sheila Smith, Chihiro Yamamoto, rscj (intern at the UN) and I walked through security. We entered a courtyard past several iconic sculptures and then into the lobby of the UN itself. The first event was held in a large meeting hall with big screens. Each country had seven minutes in which to outline the progress being made in their country toward the eradication of poverty, which was the focus of this meeting. After an hour of listening we decided to go downstairs to a smaller “side event” at which a coalition of groups (many of whom were members of religious congregations) gave brief presentations about practical strategies for eradicating poverty. One of the women presenting was a graduate of Sophia College in Mumbai, India where she was taught by the RSCJ. I had expected the UN to feel intimidating, but instead I was amazed by how quickly I began to recognize people in the crowd. Now I know that the UN is a very human place where the slow process of dialogue and consensus- building competes with the urgency of those who have a particular vision of how things should be. I left resonating with Dag Hammarskjöld's famous quote: “For all that has been, Thanks. For all that will be, Yes.”

NEWS

Integrity of Creation Working Group meets with the UN Mining Group

The Integrity of Creation Working Group in Rome held an online meeting with the UN Mining Group in New York to discuss the spiritual reflection booklet, a companion to the Water and Sanitation SDG 6 booklet, developed by the UN Mining Group in New York. There were many positive comments and much gratitude expressed for the work of Anne McCabe, SM and Anne Corry, RSCJ, authors of the spiritual reflection booklet.

(from Newsbrief, April 2018)



UPCOMING EVENTS

- ✓ European Sustainable Development Week, 30 May – 6 June, 2018, The European Union www.esdw.eu
- ✓ Laudato si' International Conference, "Saving our Common Home and the Future of Life on Earth" 5-6 July 2018, The Vatican
- ✓ JPIC International Meeting, Society of the Sacred Heart, 14-24 November 2018, Tagaytay, Philippines.

OUR LOGOS

Our logos are designed to represent the work of JPIC in the Society of the Sacred Heart, in our congregation and at the UN. They match each other with some symbols but they also retain their uniqueness.

The open heart: shared symbol of our mission to discover and make known the love of God.

The world: our mission is deeply based in the reality of our world.

The dove: symbol of the Holy Spirit who gives wisdom and guidance to our efforts.

Water and leaf in the JPIC logo: symbols of fertility and hope in our blessed and broken world.

The stalk of wheat in the Sacred Heart at the UN logo: symbol of the UN.

The cross in the Sacred Heart at the UN logo: represents the presence of Jesus and our Christian values.

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RESOURCES

- ✓ JPIC Newsbrief, a publication of the USG-UISG Commission for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/e7a99a_179d342f904b41c7bc6f19346ae2618d.pdf
- ✓ Talitha Kum UISG, International Network of Consecrated Life Against Trafficking in Persons www.talithakum.info
- ✓ Pope's Video calls for action against slavery (in Spanish, text translated into English) <https://zenit.org/articles/popes-video-calls-for-action-against-slavery/>

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