

Human Trafficking (Peace & Justice Paper #2)

Reflect “Trafficking in persons” shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring 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, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs. (Article 3, subparagraph (a), of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol)

Analyze Trafficking happens because there is both a supply and a demand for human persons. How might we recognize a **trafficking network**? Can we name the categories of **persons** who are **engaged** either directly or indirectly in **trafficking**? What are the factors that underlie the practice of treating women and children as commodities? We know that trafficking often operates out of the reach of the legal system and can be difficult to identify because victims remain silent due to fear or threats. Why is trafficking considered a modern form of slavery? Are you aware of the “groups” who network for the purpose of trafficking in your region of the world? In regard to trafficking, what sources of corruption need to be exposed and how?

Theological Reflection What values in Scripture and Catholic Social Teaching demonstrate how to act? Joseph was sold into slavery by his jealous siblings. He would have endured the range of dangers and indignities associated with being trafficked. (Genesis 37) “The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offense against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights.” (John Paul II, 5.15.2002) “Trafficking in persons—in which men, women, and children from all over the globe are transported to other countries for the purposes of forced prostitution or labor—inherently rejects the dignity of the human person and exploits conditions of global poverty.”
(U.S. Catholic Bishops, *Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope*, 2003)

Action When will I make a commitment to promote social intolerance of human rights violations; research what organizations/groups in my area can do on the issue; pray for those who are victims of trafficking; and study the immigration and trafficking laws at state/national levels?

Communally, I can join others who work at canceling debt in developing countries, promote the education and formation of women, address the exploitation of women and children, and work to end behavior that threatens global warming and climate change (that threatens life on Earth).

Resource: www.usccb.org/mrs/traffickingweb.shtml

Footnote: Catholic Charities of Louisville is operating a state wide program to combat human trafficking: **Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking.**