

# Human Trafficking in Canada: A Leadership and Learning Kit for Churches



 THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ÉGLISES

*Prepared by the Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group of the  
Canadian Council of Churches' Commission on Justice and Peace*

**2013**

*Second edition, with revised French translation*

Human Trafficking in Canada:  
A Leadership and Learning Kit for Churches

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***The Canadian Council of Churches brings together, in work and witness, 25 churches of Anglican, Eastern and Roman Catholic, Evangelical, Free Church, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox, and Historic Protestant traditions, representing in their membership 85% of the Christians in Canada.***

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# Welcome

*Joy Kennedy, Chair of the Commission on Justice and Peace, Canadian Council of Churches*

Sometimes in the course of pursuing justice and peace in the global community, we are faced with a situation that is so egregious and shocking in our own backyard that it demands immediate concerted attention and action. It may be complex and connected to many other issues, but it stands out alone and calls to our hearts. Such is the case with the subject of this resource - human trafficking.

In April 2008, during a strategic planning process the Commission on Justice and Peace identified human trafficking as a common interest among several member churches and established the Human Trafficking in Canada Working Group. The group's objective was to facilitate learning, theological reflection, and common action on the topic of human trafficking in Canada. Its desire is for all churches to become more aware of the reality of human trafficking in Canada, advocate together when appropriate, share and develop educational materials, and provide a forum for theological reflection on the topic to be better prepared to take action.

In making visible what is often hidden or ignored, we come to understand that human trafficking is human rights abuse, economic injustice, violence; and it is organized crime. The World Council of Churches says: "Human trafficking is not an isolated issue and not limited to the sex trade. It is the consequence of poverty and discrimination of the powerless." The UN defines human trafficking as "a crime against humanity that involves "an act of recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring or receiving a person through a use of force, coercion or other means, for the purpose of exploiting them."

Human trafficking is worldwide and happens across international borders. And this modern form of slavery is here.

I want to commend the extensive and excellent collaboration among this singular group who contributed so many perspectives and skills to the process. The research and compilation of this kit demonstrates the profound understanding and depth of commitment of those who tackled such a difficult task. To ensure that there is proper analysis, shared stories, theological and biblical reflections, along with prayers and ideas for faithful action was an enormous feat. You have our gratitude.

To the staff, particularly Peter Noteboom, and especially our 2011 intern Katarina Prosenjak, this publication demonstrates your wisdom and skill in bringing such an idea into being. We are all in your debt.

As you the reader use this material and engage the issue in your own circle or context we would hope that you find new understandings about this pervasive problem and undertake new ways to confront it – practically and prayerfully. It will not go away except through strategic action, mobilized public support and institutional response, including that of the faith communities in Canada. Let us together dedicate ourselves to God's mission and service, to protect the most vulnerable and to actively seek justice and peace for all.

# Foreword

*The Rev. Dr. Karen A. Hamilton, General Secretary, Canadian Council of Churches*

*So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.  
Genesis 1: 27 (NRSV)*

As General Secretary of The Canadian Council of Churches, it is my privilege to be asked to speak in Christian parishes, in faith communities and in various non-faith based venues about the work of the CCC. I bring to those contexts the work and witness of our 25 member denominations, our consensus approach to the issues affecting the lives of Canadians whom we engage.

There is always interest in the variety of ways in which we strive to be faithful to the Lord of Life. There is always shock, however, when I speak about our efforts against human trafficking and the dire reality of human trafficking as it exists in this country. The shock is eloquent in eyes and on faces. Most Canadians have no idea of the depth of this buying and selling of human life, the very human life created in the image of God, in our country that we name the ‘True North Strong and Free.’

It is a tragedy that human trafficking exists in the ways in which this resource informs us.

It is a tragedy that there are so many in our country and our world who cannot see the truth that every human being, every woman, child and man is indeed made in the image of God.

It is a tragedy that so many of us know so little about this practice that is akin to slavery. It is an ancient abuse of God’s beloved ones but it is also so modern, so much a part of our contemporary time and place.

This resource that you hold in your hands will be painful to read but it must be read.

We must wrestle with such biblical stories as Judges 19.

We must educate ourselves regarding the human trafficking in our land and how it is manifest around the world in such destructive ways as the systematizing and brutalizing of child soldiers that our Canadian senator Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire has committed his life to eradicating.

We must remember the complicity of the churches in the practice of slavery but also the strong, committed, passionate work and witness of the churches in eradicating it. Such tireless work and witness must be our model and our calling.

We must speak and, more importantly, act in the metaphorical truth of the words of the Prophet Isaiah that all people are so precious to God that they are inscribed on the very palms of God’s hands.

## PRAYER SERVICE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING<sup>1</sup>

**Leader** Loving God, we thank you  
for all of the gifts of this precious life.  
We approach you in awe and confidence  
that you surround each of us in your loving  
comfort and in the everlasting hope that  
you will hear our petitions which we now  
offer to you. We pray on behalf of ourselves  
and all of those in this world who are hurting.  
We pray through Jesus Christ our risen saviour.

**People** Amen

### A reading from Habakkuk 1.1-13

#### Psalm 27 (*read together*)

1 The LORD is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear?  
The LORD is the stronghold of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?

2 When the wicked advance against me to devour me,  
it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall.

3 Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear;  
though war break out against me, even then I will be confident.

4 One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,  
to gaze on the beauty of the LORD  
and to seek him in his temple.

5 For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling;  
he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock.

6 Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me;  
at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy;  
I will sing and make music to the LORD.

7 Hear my voice when I call, LORD; be merciful to me and answer me.

8 My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.

9 Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger;  
you have been my helper.

Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Saviour.

10 Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me.

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<sup>1</sup>Tara Livingston is an Anglican Priest in the Diocese of Calgary. She sits on the Women's Inter-Church Council of Canada and the Canadian Council of Churches' Human Trafficking Working Group.

11 Teach me your way, LORD; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.

12 Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes,  
for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations.

13 I remain confident of this:  
I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

14 Wait for the LORD;  
be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.

### **A Reading from the Gospel of Luke 4: 16-21**

**Hymn – Sister, Let Me Be Your Servant** (*during this hymn each person may light candles*)

**Leader** Gracious God, we are gathered together on this day to learn  
and to be inspired both by your word and  
the work that we are doing to proclaim the year of your favour.

We ask that you enter our hearts that they might be open, our minds  
that they might be discerning and our mouths as they speak your precious name.  
O God of grace.

**People** Be with us now.

**Leader** We pray for the women, children and men  
who live in unimaginable circumstances beyond their control.  
Be with them to provide comfort and help us to hear their cries for relief.  
O God of grace.

**People** Open our ears to hear.

**Leader** We pray with all of those people in the world who have no voice,  
that their stories might be heard through your grace and mercy  
and through us gathered here today.  
O God of grace.

**People** Open our mouths to speak.

**Leader** We pray for the leaders of all nations  
to discern your good and loving intentions for all of your beloved children  
that they might act to rescue those who have been lost  
and help those who have been harmed.  
O God of grace.

**People** Call us into action.

**Leader** We pray for all of the victims of human trafficking who are certain that they are alone.  
As we extinguish the lights of our candles let that light enter into their  
hearts that they might be reminded of your presence and know of our  
pursuit of justice on their behalf.  
O God of grace.

**People** Let your light shine.

**Closing Hymn** (*Select an appropriate and familiar closing hymn*)

**An Irish Blessing**

May the road rise up to meet you.

May the wind always be at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face,  
and rains fall soft upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

# *An Outline of Human Trafficking in Canada*

*I wanted to get out of Thailand, so when the opportunity came to make lots of money and live in a big city in Canada, I took it. Upon my arrival at the airport, a group of men met me, took my passport 'for safe-keeping,' and drove me to a house where there were lots of other young women. Soon I realized I was trapped. I couldn't leave the house and was told I had to pay back \$30,000 for my passage. When I asked how I was to get the money, I was told the only way was for me 'to service' men every day. For months, I was kept in the locked house, given little food, and escorted daily, by force, to a brothel. One of the men said, "You will do what we tell you if you want your family to live." Eventually government officials raided the house. I don't know what will happen to me now, since I have no official identity.*

Story (abbreviated) from the Canadian Red Cross, Vancouver, B.C.

## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN CANADA**

Awareness of human trafficking in Canada has been slowly creeping upward. A few high profile legal cases have captured media attention – as of January 2013 the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) report 32 convictions of human trafficking – a National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking was established in 2012, and a Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre has been established by the RCMP to respond to the growing business of trafficking in persons within Canada's borders.

Canada has a long history of trafficking: indigenous women and girls have long been subject to sexual abuse and exploitation. In 2013 Human Rights Watch released a report documenting the "Highway of Tears" in Northwest British Columbia<sup>2</sup> and includes recommendations to participate in an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women in Canada begun in 2011 by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Indigenous women and girls are also over-represented in the sex trade<sup>3</sup>, a major source of exploitation<sup>4</sup>. Domestic trafficking occurs within Canada where victims are transported across provincial borders or from northern communities to larger southern urban communities.

Organized crime groups have the most involvement in trafficking within and through Canada, although smaller crime groups and individuals have also been documented as trafficking in persons<sup>5</sup>. Source regions of victims coming into Canada include Asia (in particular Thailand, Cambodia, Malaysia and Vietnam), parts of Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe<sup>6</sup>. Once persons are trafficked into Canada, they are often destined for larger urban areas such as Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and Winnipeg<sup>7</sup>.

It is important for Canadians to know recruitment tactics from these organized crime groups, who often use the Internet or other forms of technology to attract victims. One instance of recruitment is the offer for modeling opportunities abroad that result in their exploitation in the sex trade.

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<sup>2</sup>"Those Who Take Us Away", Human Rights Watch, 2013, accessed at <http://www.hrw.org/news/2013/02/13/canada-abusive-policing-neglect-along-highway-tears>.

<sup>3</sup>Information accessed at [www.stopvaw.org/Canada\\_Aboriginal\\_Girls\\_and\\_Women\\_Victims\\_of\\_Prostitution\\_and\\_Trafficking.html](http://www.stopvaw.org/Canada_Aboriginal_Girls_and_Women_Victims_of_Prostitution_and_Trafficking.html).

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 10

<sup>5</sup>Criminal Intelligence Service Canada. *Organized Crime and Domestic Trafficking in Persons in Canada*. August 2008, accessed at [www.cisc.gc.ca/products\\_services/domestic\\_trafficking\\_persons/persons\\_e.html](http://www.cisc.gc.ca/products_services/domestic_trafficking_persons/persons_e.html).

<sup>6</sup>Public Safety Canada, Canada-United States Cross-Border Crime Forum. *Bi-National Assessment of Trafficking in Persons*. p. 9. 2006.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

## WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?<sup>8</sup>

Human trafficking denies basic human rights to millions of women, children and men globally. Human trafficking leads to modern slavery and is third only to trafficking in drugs and weapons as the world's most profitable crime, according to the UN. A report from the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking formally defines trafficking as follows:

*'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, 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 for another person, for the purpose of exploitation.<sup>9</sup>*

Human trafficking involves the deception of vulnerable people by traffickers in order to take them from their home and bring them to a place where they are taken advantage of, constantly without hope of escape. Human trafficking may be difficult to detect while victims<sup>10</sup> are in transit because enslavement and exploitation may not begin until arrival at the destination. With promises of better work and a higher standard of living for themselves or family, most victims go willingly only to become trapped upon arrival. Human trafficking leads to the enslavement of women, children and men, held against their will and forced to perform services, physical or sexual, at the mercy of their captor.

## CAUSES OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

There are many causes which lead to the vulnerability of people towards human trafficking. These factors have been labelled as “push” and “pull” factors. Push factors include extreme poverty, unemployment, lack of education and opportunity, lack of information, inadequate social programs, gender-based inequality, war, conflict situations and political unrest in countries of origin.

Pull factors include a globalized, free market economy that has increased the demand for cheap labour, goods and services in countries of destination. Also, technologies like the Internet allow for trafficking to operate beyond national boundaries in an instantaneous and worldwide reaching fashion.<sup>11</sup>

Many people become victims to human trafficking because they cannot provide even the most basic needs for themselves or their families and become desperate for opportunity. Traffickers prey upon these weaknesses and deceive people into leaving their home and travelling to a “better place” in order to provide the much needed basics of life.

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<sup>8</sup>This material is from *Not so Ancient: Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery*. The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. 2009.

<sup>9</sup>UN Office on Drugs and Crime. *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*. Art. 3. 2000m accessed at [www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_%20traff\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf).

<sup>10</sup>While trafficked persons are indeed victims, it is crucial to acknowledge that they have names and identities. See the biblical reflection “Behold a woman...”

<sup>11</sup>Public Safety Canada, Canada-United States Cross-Border Crime Forum. *Bi-National Assessment of Trafficking in Persons*. pp 3-4. 2006. [www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/le/\\_fl/1666i-en.pdf](http://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/prg/le/_fl/1666i-en.pdf).

## FORMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING<sup>12</sup>

### **Sex trafficking**

In this most common form of human trafficking, victims are taken from their homes and forced into prostitution and the sex trade, often told they must pay off their “debt” before being released. Victims are controlled through abuse, threats, isolation and confinement.

### **Child sex trafficking**

As many as two million children worldwide are exploited sexually for commercial gain, according to UNICEF. This creates devastating consequences in the child’s development.

### **Forced labour**

In this second most common form of trafficking, victims are forced to work in dangerous and dirty jobs without pay, including garment sweatshops, factory work, domestic work, farm work, restaurants or construction. Victims are exploited due to surrounding social problems such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, political conflict or crime.

### **Bonded labour**

A debt or bond is created in order to maintain control over them so that the victims work to pay the “debt” and secure their freedom. This debt or bond is often exploited to ensure that the victim is never able to repay.

### **Debt bondage among migrant labourers**

In a similar situation, the contracts of migrant workers are exploited in order to secure long-term involuntary servitude in order to repay the debt. Threats and abusive force are used in order to maintain control of the victim.

### **Involuntary domestic servitude**

Victims of this form of trafficking are held against their will within the personal home of the exploiter and are kept through threats or confiscation of any identification. Here they provide unpaid domestic servitude and are quite often abused.

### **Forced child labour**

Forced/bonded labour involving children.

### **Child soldiers**

The unlawful recruitment of children for labour and sexual exploitation in conflict areas by any of the following: government forces, paramilitary organizations or rebel groups. Child soldiers are often forced to commit atrocities against their people and constantly abused by their leaders constantly to maintain control.

### **Statistics on Human Trafficking**

Due to the largely underground nature of this crime, statistics on human trafficking are quite varied. However, the International Labour Organization estimates that there are 12.3 million adults and children in forced labour, bonded labour and commercial sexual servitude at any given time. Other reports looking to determine the impact of underground trafficking believe there to be as many as 27 million victims worldwide today.

According to the February 2009 UN GIFT (Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking) Report, sexual exploitation accounts for 79% of the world’s human trafficking, involving mainly women and children. Forced labour accounts for 18%, although this form often goes unnoticed and under-reported leaving exact figures unknown. Worldwide, 20% of all trafficking victims are children.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>*Trafficking in Persons Report*. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State. 2009. [www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009](http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009).

<sup>13</sup>*Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. UN Office on Drugs and Crime. February 2009. [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html).

While every country may not be reporting on the events occurring within their borders, there is no doubt that every country is in some way impacted by the estimated 800,000 people being trafficked across borders annually.<sup>14</sup> Whether countries are involved as the origin or source, the transit points for the traffickers or the destination of the victims, they have no excuse in allowing this crime to continue. Unfortunately, the majority of trafficking worldwide happens intra-regionally and domestically, making detection and proper estimates even more difficult.

Within Canada, estimates from the RCMP indicate that approximately 600 women and children are trafficked into Canada each year for sexual exploitation alone, and at least 800 people are trafficked into Canada for all domestic markets (involvement in drug trade, domestic work, labour for garment or other industries, etc.). Moreover, the RCMP estimates that between 1,500 and 2,200 people are trafficked from Canada into the U.S. each year, suggesting that Canada is a source, transit and destination country.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, in January 2013 the RCMP reports just 32 convictions of human trafficking and 54 convictions of human trafficking offenses or related offences (forcible confinement, sexual assault, procuring, conspiracy, and participating in a criminal organization) in Canada.

### **Human Trafficking Indicators**

According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the presence of some or all of the indicators listed below should lead authorities to investigate, or prompt citizens to report what they are observing. The indicators may vary, depending on the category of trafficked persons.<sup>16</sup>

General indicators of victims of trafficking:

- believe that they must work against their will;
- are unable to leave their work environment;
- show signs that their movements are being controlled;
- feel that they cannot leave;
- show fear or anxiety;
- are distrustful to authorities;
- have false identity or travel documents;
- allow others to speak for them when addressed directly;
- work excessively long hours over long periods;
- do not have any days off;
- have acted on the basis of false promises.

Indicators of children as victims of trafficking|

- have no access to their parents or guardians;
- have no friends of their own age outside of work;
- have no time for playing;
- are engaged in work that is not suitable for children;
- eat apart from other members of the “family.”

Domestic servitude

- have no private space;
- sleep in a shared or inappropriate space;
- never or rarely leave the house for social reasons;
- never leave the house without their employer.

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<sup>14</sup>*Trafficking in Persons Report*. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, U.S. Department of State. p. 8. 2007. [www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/index.htm](http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2007/index.htm).

<sup>15</sup>*Victims Of Trafficking In Persons: Perspectives From The Canadian Community Sector*. Government of Canada, Department of Justice. p. 2. 2005. [www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2006/rr06\\_3/rr06\\_3.pdf](http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/rs/rep-rap/2006/rr06_3/rr06_3.pdf).

<sup>16</sup>For the entire list visit: [www.unodc.org/pdf/HT\\_indicators\\_E\\_LOWRES.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/HT_indicators_E_LOWRES.pdf).

### Sexual exploitation

- work long hours or have few if any days off;
- sleep where they work;
- have no cash of their own;
- are unable to show an identity document;
- have very few items of clothing.

### Labour exploitation

- have no labour contract;
- work excessively long hours;
- never leave the work premises without their employer;
- are unable to move freely.

### Human Trafficking versus Human Smuggling<sup>17</sup>

Trafficking is not smuggling. There are several important differences between trafficking and smuggling:

Human Trafficking	Human Smuggling
Victims either do not consent to their situations or, if they initially consent, that consent is rendered meaningless by the actions of the traffickers.	Human smuggling includes those who consent to being smuggled.
Ongoing exploitation of victims to generate illicit profits for the traffickers.	Smuggling is a breach of the integrity of a nation's borders.
Trafficking need not entail the physical movement of a person (but must entail the exploitation of the person for labour or commercial sex).	Smuggling is always transnational.

### Human Trafficking and Prostitution<sup>18</sup>

Sometimes the terms prostitution and sexual trafficking are used interchangeably, but they are different.

Trafficking requires an element of force, coercion, deception and exploitation (this is not always the case for prostitution, although the majority of women and girls in the “sex trade” work under significant duress). People are also trafficked sexually for many different aspects of commercial sexual exploitation; not just prostitution.

In Victoria, Australia, prostitution was legalized in 1994. This led to a massive increase in the sex industry as well as in the levels of sex trafficking into the country.

#### Question for Reflection and Dialogue

- What is new for you in this outline of human trafficking in Canada?
- How would you summarize the scope of human trafficking in Canada?
- What are the defining components of human trafficking, and how would you recognize it?
- How would you describe the scale of human trafficking in Canada?

<sup>17</sup>Human Trafficking Fact Sheet. Rescue and Restore Campaign, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2011. For more information see: [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact\\_human.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact_human.html).

<sup>18</sup>Sexual Trafficking Fact Sheet. The Salvation Army. [salvationist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/FACT-Sheet-Sexual-Trafficking1.pdf](http://salvationist.ca/wp-content/uploads/2009/02/FACT-Sheet-Sexual-Trafficking1.pdf).

## **PRAYER TO BEGIN A MEETING<sup>19</sup>**

O God, we are in awe of your grace – creative enough  
to raise up in every generation, and in our midst,  
witnesses to take up the torch of your passion and purposes  
to lead this human family of yours and ours  
on our common exodus to justice.

Strengthen us to confront the reality of human trafficking  
that we will bring freedom to all our brothers and sisters.

Amen

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<sup>19</sup>Adapted from *My Heart in My Mouth* by Ted Loder. p. 56-57.

# *What Human Trafficking Looks Like in Canada*

## **Maria**

It is not uncommon for domestic workers to arrive to Canada accompanying a diplomat. This is the case with Maria, who came with her employer during a diplomatic mission. She soon began to suffer sexual harassment from her male employer. When she decided to escape, she was left without official status in Canada. It was difficult to regularize her situation because she was no longer a part of the diplomatic mission. She will eventually be forced to return to her country, where she will have very limited opportunity to prosecute her abuser. Diplomats are required to respect the laws of the host countries, but it is difficult to prosecute them. Abusers know this. Caregivers, like Maria, are often vulnerable to various kinds of abuse and they have little means with which to protect themselves.

## **Esperanza**

Some caregivers come to Canada because they follow an employer for whom they worked abroad. This is the story of Esperanza, who was sequestered in an upscale apartment in Montreal. Her employers had procured her a tourist visa, but when the visa expired her working conditions changed. Her hours increased drastically, and when she complained her employers told her that if she left the house she would be arrested, imprisoned and eventually deported. As a result, she was forced to work without wages for more than a year.

Esperanza eventually succeeded in convincing her employers to let her go to Sunday mass, where she met a good Samaritan who helped her to regularize her situation. She filed an application for asylum, which was accepted. This, however, meant having to renounce seeing her children who still live in her country of origin, as well as no longer having the financial means to send remittances for their support.

## **Slavery in Laval**

The RCMP laid charges of human trafficking against a couple in Laval, Quebec, in 2007. They were charged with trafficking in persons, receiving material benefits from it and withholding travel or identity documents. It was the first time that such charges had been laid since human trafficking became an offence under Canada's Criminal Code in November 2005. According to the RCMP, previous incidents had been handled as immigration rather than criminal cases. In this instance, the couple brought a 29-year-old Ethiopian woman to Canada from Lebanon and allegedly forced her to work as a domestic under the threat of deportation.

The woman, whose name was not released by the RCMP, allegedly was not allowed to use the telephone, leave the house unless accompanied by one of the couple, have a day off or speak to anyone. The couple was accused of holding back her identity papers and threatening to send her back to Ethiopia if she did not comply with their demands or complained to anyone about her situation. Ultimately, the charges were dropped.

## **Shona's story<sup>20</sup>**

Shona is 17 years old and grew up in northern Canada. She was and is loved by her family and for the most part had a great childhood. She loved to dream about her future, traveling and seeing other parts of the country and meeting new people. Shona did reasonably well in school until her Granny, in whom she most confided, passed on. Her grades and friends were not very important anymore.

Many visitors came to Shona's community for the beautiful wilderness that surrounded it and they often asked for guides from town to help them. One evening Shona was walking to the store and a really great looking guy a little older than she asked for directions. After talking for a bit, he asked if he could buy her something to drink so he could ask more questions about her community. Rick was really nice and by the end of their conversations she felt she could talk to him about anything and he really seemed interested in her.

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<sup>20</sup>Source: The Salvation Army at [salvationist.ca/docs/Trafficking/trafficking\\_testimonies.pdf](http://salvationist.ca/docs/Trafficking/trafficking_testimonies.pdf).

A couple weeks later she met him again and he talked about his job in the city and how if she wanted to come visit she was welcome. Wow, a chance to get away for awhile!

Shona told her parents some story which they believed and headed to the city on the bus. Rick was so nice, showed her around and then introduced her to some of his friends. She did some drinking and tried some drugs. Rick took care of her and she felt so wild – really living unlike her friends back home.

A few days later, Rick, whom she now considered her boyfriend and who said he loved her, was not so nice to her. He told her she had to have sex with a few of his friends to make up for all their drugs she had used. When she said she wouldn't do it, he beat her up and told her he couldn't wait to tell her family what she had been doing in the city and how much of a slut and addict she was. He demoralized, beat and raped her then put her out on the street.

At the back of her mind, where Shona was still the 17-year-old girl who loved to dream, she started to escape in her mind, to dream again, a dream of a different sort.... *(based on a story from Manitoba)*<sup>21</sup>

### **Ethel tells her story**

My name is Ethel<sup>22</sup> and I was born in Northern Saskatchewan. We lived in a small northern community but my life was painful. Today I am 36 years old but look and feel much older. Our entire community had addictions, mostly alcohol when I was a young girl, but then drugs were introduced. Sexual abuse and beatings were normal for us as girls.

My story is painful to tell and very few Aboriginal girls will tell their story as we are all ashamed of ourselves and now we are ashamed of our community. We keep those secrets to ourselves. My parents who had an alcohol addiction 'gave' me to an uncle. I was traded for a bottle of wine. At the age of 12, I was traded to other men for more booze and soon I left school. It was then my beatings started and I was too bruised and too tired and too embarrassed to go to school. I loved school and was safe there.

My life continued in this circle of sexual trading and beatings. I had two children and wanted to care for them myself. But I had no money and no education. I moved to the city and there I continued the same life of giving myself but the beatings were worse and I was often hospitalized. I wanted so much to give my children a better life.

It was on one of the worst beatings, while in the hospital, an angel appeared to me. Her name was Shirley. She was the first person to treat me with love and dignity and told me she would help me however she could. At first I did not believe her – who would help me, someone who had nothing and was labelled a prostitute. I DID NOT WANT OR CHOOSE THIS LIFE. I was so sick and so destitute and did not want to lose my children I thought maybe there was a chance.

Shirley helped me step by step into programs and helped me go back to school. I am so proud to be able to give my children an education and today I also have my Grade 12. My goal is to continue my education and help people understand as Aboriginal girls we do not want the lifestyle so often is shown.

Shirley never treated me like a statistic but as a person. As I have read much about Aboriginal women – too often we are still statistics and not people who have a voice. I want to be able to bring other girls' stories to everyone.

At the end, I would like to say I forgive my parents.

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<sup>21</sup>"Shona's Story" is a compilation of women's journeys rather than the experience of one specific woman.

<sup>22</sup>While this is a true story, Ethel is not the author's name. The story was provided by Savelia Curniski, the president of NASHI – a volunteer organization based in Saskatoon raising awareness of human trafficking in Canada and working internationally on a safe house for at risk youth.

### **Question for Reflection and Dialogue**

- What is most striking to you about these stories?
- What is most damaging to the dignity of women and girls?
- What does human trafficking look like in Canada?
- What do you notice about the resilience of the people in these stories?
- What moves you to tears and action?

# People Held In Bondage

1. Peo- ple held in bon- dage were ask - ing, "Lord, how long? How  
 2. We were held in bon- dage of dai - ly strife and toil. Con -  
 3. Mil - lions are in bon- dage still in our world to - day. They're

long un - til you hear our cries for mer - cy?" God heard their plea and  
 fused and se - pa - ra - ted from God's mer - cy. Christ heard our cries and  
 bought and sold and owned by oth - er peo - ple. Will their cries go un -

ans - wered and Mo - ses in - ter - vened, then led the way for peo - ple to live  
 of - fered the pro - mise of new life; be - came the Way for peo - ple to live  
 heed - ed, or will we in - ter - vene, and be the hands of Christ to set them

WORDS: Grace Pugh Hubbard, 2008  
 MUSIC: Grace Pugh Hubbard, 2008

TASK AT HAND  
 Irregular with Refrain

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## People Held in Bondage

2

15

free.                    And we are freed by the Liv - ing God, who  
 free.                    And we are freed by the Liv - ing God, who  
 free?                    As we are freed by the Liv - ing God, who

15

21

of fers life a bun dant ly. \_\_\_\_\_ So, with our free - dom  
 of - fers life a - bun - dant - ly. \_\_\_\_\_ Now, with our free - dom  
 of fers life a bun dant ly, \_\_\_\_\_ Then with this free - dom

21

26

let us seize the task at hand: mak - ing God's great Peace \_\_\_\_\_ our re - al - i - ty. \_  
 let us seize the task at hand: mak - ing God's great Peace \_\_\_\_\_ our re - al - i - ty. \_  
 we must seize the task at hand: mak - ing God's great Peace \_\_\_\_\_ their re - al - i - ty. \_

26

31

—  
 —  
 —

31

*Fine*

*Fine*

# *Prostitution and the Law*

*Julia Beazley*<sup>23</sup>

Prostitution itself is not, and has never been, illegal in Canada. Currently, Canada has what might be considered a quasi-criminalization approach to the issue, with provisions in the Criminal Code that essentially render all activities surrounding prostitution illegal.

In September 2010, Justice Susan Himel of the Ontario Superior Court struck down three key prostitution-related provisions in the Code, ruling that they were unconstitutional. The provisions in question are: keeping a common bawdy house, living off the avails of prostitution and communicating for the purposes of prostitution. The heart of the decision, as she wrote, is that our existing laws “force prostitutes to choose between their freedom and their right to security” as guaranteed under the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

The challenge to the laws was brought by three women – a dominatrix and two prostitutes – whose lawyers argued that Canada’s prostitution laws force prostituted women into the streets and expose them to violence. They asked the Court to declare the legal restrictions on their activities a violation of the Charter rights of security of the person and freedom of expression. A similar challenge is proceeding in British Columbia.

It is worth noting that in 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada dismissed a challenge to the communication law, ruling that the restriction was a justifiable limit on free expression because the law was meant to discourage the nuisances of street prostitution and related activities.

Justice Himel’s ruling was appealed by the Ontario government and the federal government. The appeals were heard by the Ontario Court of Appeal in June 2011. The lower court ruling remains suspended until the Court of Appeal releases its decision, meaning the laws remain in effect, for now.

## **Prostitution and human trafficking**

While trafficking in persons occurs for purposes other than sexual exploitation, sex trafficking is by far the most common – or at least most commonly uncovered – purpose for which people, particularly women and children are trafficked. Women, girls and boys are trafficked across international and domestic borders for use in street prostitution, in brothels and massage parlours, in escort services and strip clubs.

In countries where prostitution has been legalized, it has been demonstrated that the sex industry and sex tourism expand. When legal restrictions on prostitution are lifted, the demand for sexual services skyrockets and the need to provide ever more women’s bodies at a lower cost for buyers drives up rates of human sex trafficking. An RCMP report on human trafficking in Canada released the same month as the ruling by the Ontario Superior Court clearly identifies the link between organized prostitution and human trafficking.<sup>24</sup>

## **The Netherlands**

The Dutch took the view that prostitution has, and always will, exist, and so their approach was not to forbid it, but to try to organize it better in an effort to minimize the problems associated with it. They believed that legalization would destroy links between the black market and organized crime, and decrease violence against women, who would be able to work legally in controlled establishments. They also believed that the change to the law would end the exploitation of immigrant women trafficked in to the Netherlands from neighbouring countries.

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<sup>23</sup>Julia Beazley is a Policy Analyst at the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, focussing on issues of Canadian and International Poverty and Homelessness, Prostitution and Human Trafficking.

<sup>24</sup>See Human Trafficking in Canada: A Threat Assessment. Royal Canadian Mounted Police. 2010. <http://205.193.86.86/pubs/ht-tp/httpa-tpem-eng.htm>.

In 2000, penal provisions related to brothels were removed from the Dutch Penal Code. This meant that strip clubs and brothels were allowed to operate as legal businesses as long as certain conditions were met. The change to the law has not had any of its hoped-for outcomes. Since the law was changed, studies have shown that the legalization of brothels actually strengthened links with organized crime. Furthermore, one year after legalization, rates of trafficking had increased significantly.

Today there are upwards of 85,000 prostituted women in the Netherlands, more than 80% of whom are from foreign lands. In addition, child prostitution rates have also skyrocketed, from an estimated 4,000 in 1996 to 15,000 in 2001 – at least 5,000 of whom were estimated to have been trafficked in from other countries.

Countries such as Germany, Australia and New Zealand that have either legalized or decriminalized prostitution have experienced similar increases in trafficking.

### **The Nordic model**

More than a decade ago, Sweden made a bold statement that prostitution was deeply contrary to the equality between the sexes, which was a key value and priority for the nation. They also took the view that there is no such thing as voluntary prostitution – that it is always a forced activity and is only and ever a form of exploitation and sexual violence against women. Prostituted women were therefore to be treated as victims, not as criminals. Their approach was to seek to abolish the sex trade.

They understood that the sex trade operates according to simple market principles of supply and demand and that as long as there is a demand for the purchase of women's bodies, there will be pimps and traffickers and organized crime ready and willing to guarantee the supply. In order to abolish the sex trade, you must address the demand.

In January 1999, they introduced the Law of the Prohibition of the Purchase of Sexual Services, a legal framework that decriminalized prostituted women and imposed harsh penalties on the johns, the pimps and the traffickers. By choosing to solely prosecute the purchasers of sexual services rather than prostituted women, Sweden became the first country to criminalize demand while decriminalizing supply.

Ten years after the law was implemented, an independent inquiry was established to study how well the prohibition has worked and the effects it had on rates of prostitution and human trafficking for sexual purposes. Sweden has seen a dramatic decrease in rates of street prostitution, as well as in the establishment of trafficking rings, which the National Police attribute to the prohibition on purchase of sexual services.

### **Question for Reflection and Dialogue**

- What is the current criminal and legal status of prostitution in Canada?
- How would you describe the difference between Canada's experience and the experience of The Netherlands and Sweden?
- What do you see would be an appropriate legislative response to prostitution and sex trafficking in Canada?

## *Prayer*<sup>25</sup>

Creator God, each person on this earth was made in your image – full of dignity and deserving of respect, honour and compassion. We pray for victims of sexual trafficking who have been bought, sold and exploited – that they would be set free and that their dignity and honour would be restored.

*Lord have mercy.*

Father God, we pray for your daughters and sons who are vulnerable to sexual trafficking. We pray for women and children. We pray for the poor. We pray for orphans and abandoned children; widows and abandoned wives. We pray for those who have already been sexually abused. Father God, protect them and prevent them from being trafficked.

*Lord, have mercy.*

Jesus Christ, you are the suffering servant who has experienced violence, humiliation and rejection. Comfort victims of sexual trafficking who have gone through the same. May they never feel alone. Pour out your love, giving strength, grace and wisdom.

*Lord, have mercy.*

Son of man, purify the hearts and minds of traffickers and all those involved in the sex industry. We pray for repentance and change; justice and restoration.

*Lord, show your power.*

All-knowing God, do not allow us to ignore injustice. May our eyes be ever seeing, our ears be ever hearing and our hearts be ever searching. Give feet to our prayers so that we might stamp out oppression and walk towards truth.

*Lord, show your power.*

Omnipotent God, we ask that you break the chains of injustice and set the captives free! Release the prisoners of sexual trafficking and deliver them from all evil. Redeemer, we pray for restoration, healing and hope.

*Lord, show your power.*

Lord of lords and King of kings, may your justice and righteousness reign supremely in this world and in our lives. May your kingdom come and your will be done. May human trafficking be abolished, and its victims be set free.

*Lord, show your power.*

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<sup>25</sup>From The Salvation Army web site [www.salvationarmy.ca](http://www.salvationarmy.ca)

# *Analyzing Human Trafficking*

## **SUPPLY AND DEMAND AT WORK IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING<sup>26</sup>**

Supply and demand factors come into play in issues of human trafficking in the socio-cultural, economic and political aspects of life. Here is an initial list. What would you add?

### **Socio-cultural**

#### Supply side

- unequal relationships of social power between men-women, rich-poor
- Illiteracy;
- inadequate educational and employment opportunities;
- erosion of traditional family values;
- racial discrimination, racism and related intolerance;
- media and new technologies.

#### Demand side

- unequal relationships of social power;
- pornography, sex tourism, internet luring and its role in the growth in demand for sex;
- attitudes and perceptions towards women and men in society;
- greed and consumerist behaviour.

### **Economic**

#### Supply side

- economic disparities;
- feminization of poverty;
- globalization and its differential impact on vulnerable groups;
- economic liberalization;
- a lucrative trafficking business with high monetary returns;
- downfall of communist regimes in Eastern and Central Europe.

#### Demand side

- demand by employers for an unskilled and cheap labour market;
- confinement of women's labour in the domestic and entertainment spheres and in the informal sector;
- increased commercialization of sex;
- development policies and patterns that depend on temporary migrant workers.

### **Political**

#### Supply side

- feminization of international migration;
- civil and military conflicts;
- growth of transnational crime;
- weak law enforcement mechanisms;
- corruption of police and law enforcers.

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<sup>26</sup>This material comes from the Awareness and Action Kit "Being a Global Village" offered in January 2009 by the Canadian Religious Conference to raise the awareness of high school students to human trafficking throughout Canada as the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver was about to begin. This kit is unfortunately no longer available but the CRC is happy to share the material here.

### Demand side

- unequal and exploitative political and economic relations;
- restrictive migration policies;
- military bases with enormous prostitution infrastructure;
- sales of arms and increased armed conflicts;
- weak law enforcement mechanisms.

### **Question for Reflection and Dialogue**

- From your experience, what would you add to the socio-cultural supply and demand factors?
- From your experience, what would you add to the economic supply and demand factors?
- From your experience, what would you add to the political supply and demand factors?
- How are the factors different for labour trafficking and for sex trafficking?
- How might faith communities address supply side factors?
- How might faith communities address demand side factors?
- What will your faith community do to respond?

# *Biblical Insights into Trafficking in Persons*

*Sheila Smith, RSCJ*<sup>27</sup>

Trafficking in persons has been described as a modern form of slavery. It is a serious human rights violation and is reported by the United Nations to be the fastest growing form of transnational organized crime.

*According to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (a supplement to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime):*

“Trafficking in persons shall mean 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, 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 labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs” (Article 3).

Therefore, trafficking in persons is a serious crime that involves:

- the movement of people across or within borders;
- threats or use of force, coercion and deception; and
- exploitation, whether forced labour, forced prostitution, or other forms of servitude.

Slavery is the oldest form of abuse in human history, especially the sexual slavery of women and children. When we look in the Bible, it is clear that freedom from slavery is a theme that runs like a thread throughout both the Hebrew and Christian scriptures. Perhaps the most well-known example is the Exodus event in the Hebrew scriptures.<sup>28</sup> This is the defining event in the life of the people of Israel when they are freed from the forced labour and dominance of their oppressors and become servants of God. *“For they are my servants, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt; they shall not be sold as slaves are sold.”*<sup>29</sup>

It may seem surprising that upon being freed, the Jewish people of the time used the master-slave metaphor to define their relationship with God. Even in the later Christian scriptures, we encounter this language of slavery. For example, in Luke’s gospel, Mary, the mother of Jesus, proclaims herself to be the handmaid (female slave) of the Lord (master).

In traditional biblical interpretations of the annunciation story in Luke 1, Mary’s passive consent to a virginal conception preserves her purity and sexual innocence. Her yes allows the plan or dream of another (God) to be fulfilled. She is a vessel to be used in conformity to God’s plan.

Jane Schaberg’s feminist analysis of Mary as servant or slave offers another interpretation.<sup>30</sup> According to Schaberg, a new understanding around the element of *consent* can bring a liberating aspect to this story. Mary’s consent demonstrates, not her powerlessness and victimhood, but affirms her inner freedom, her autonomy, her own inner wisdom, as well as her freedom from human masters.<sup>31</sup> Although the patriarchal culture in which Mary lived enabled the disempowerment of women, making them dependant on men, Mary encounters a God who protects her outside of the patriarchal social order (in her *irregular* pregnancy) and whose creative presence dwells within her. This is the God who gives life to Jesus.

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<sup>27</sup>Sheila Smith is a member of the Religious of the Sacred. Since 2004, she has been engaged in education and advocacy on the issue of human trafficking. Currently, she is a Doctoral candidate at Saint Paul University, Ottawa.

<sup>28</sup>See the Book of Exodus.

<sup>29</sup>Leviticus 25: 42.(NRSV).

<sup>30</sup>For an interpretation of Mary as servant or slave, see Jane Schaberg, *The Illegitimacy of Jesus: A Feminist Interpretation of the Infancy Narratives*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, Biblical Seminar Series no. 28, 1995: 135-138.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.,138.

Today, as in biblical times, the master-slave dynamic is very much alive. All around the world in our male-dominated, social-economic-political systems, trafficked persons are at the lowest level of human society.

*Today we have women, men and children, and sometimes entire families, enslaved in a variety of ways, including enforced agricultural labour, brick making, mining, charcoal production, jewellery making, cloth and carpet making, domestic work, as well as in false adoptions, mail-order bride arrangements, sex tourism and coerced prostitution.*<sup>32</sup>

The mistreatment of trafficked persons, their powerlessness (largely due to poverty), and the abuse of their human rights are enabled by underlying values that promote attitudes such as profit before people. Treated like disposable objects, trafficked persons are powerless and dependant on those whose wills they are forced to comply with.<sup>33</sup> In order to feed a consumer-driven, materialistic lifestyle, someone, somewhere in the world has to produce, massively, efficiently and cheaply to keep up with the demand. In order to keep up with the global demand for pornography and prostitution, millions of women, children and men are sold over and over again for profit. How can we say that slavery has been abolished? Is this not reminiscent of the master-slave model of old when other empires have been built on the backs of the poor?

Just as in biblical times, persons who are trafficked have little or no protection in many countries in the world, including Canada. The symbolic *Egypt* has become a new land colonized by economic globalization. In the fall of 2005, the Government of Canada passed a law criminalizing trafficking and made it possible for the first time to prosecute a trafficker in Canada for the crime of human trafficking, but we have yet to fulfill our international obligations to fully protect trafficked persons in our legislation.<sup>34</sup>

An encounter with the God of Mary, the God Jesus fully incarnated, gives us hope in the midst of the seemingly irreversible and horrific situation of global human trafficking. Like Mary and Jesus, casting our lot with the future, we too respond with courage in our time to the root causes of human trafficking, such as poverty.<sup>35</sup> Like Mary and Jesus, acting outside of the male-dominated social order is not easy. Blessing our broken world – still governed by oppressive, male-dominated systems, politically, socially, economically, religiously – with our faith and our courage, we act with hearts that are created for encounters with a God who protects outside of the patriarchal social order and whose creative presence dwells within all people and all life.

#### **Question for Reflection and Dialogue**

- What Biblical insights do you find helpful in reflecting on trafficking?
- What role do our lifestyle choices have on the practice and development of trafficking?

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<sup>32</sup>Eileen Kerwin Jones, "Sex in the City: Human Trafficking and the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children", *Counselling and Spirituality* Volume 25, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 73-100.

<sup>33</sup>For a developed analysis of the commodification of human beings, see Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

<sup>34</sup>On May 11, 2006, the Canadian Minister of Citizenship and Immigration announced new measures to provide trafficked persons with a temporary residency permit.

<sup>35</sup>Elisabeth Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, New York: Continuum, 2005: 254.

## *Hymn*<sup>36</sup>

### **It Came upon a Midnight Clear**

Edmund Hamilton Sears

Salvation Army Song Book 83, Voices United 44.

*Note: This may seem an odd song to sing outside of the Christmas season, but it speaks of peace and rest for the weary. Consider adding the following two original verses between the SASB's verses 3 and 4.*

Yet with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And warring humankind hears not  
The love-song which they bring;  
O hush the noise and cease your strife,  
And hear the angels sing.

And you, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow,  
Look now! for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing.  
O rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing!

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<sup>36</sup>The Salvation Army Ethic's Centre: Human Trafficking. Resources, Worship Aids [www.salvationarmyethics.org](http://www.salvationarmyethics.org)

# *Human Rights and Trafficking of Women and Girls for Sex: A Call to Action*

*Michelle Miller*<sup>37</sup>

*He has shown all you people what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.*

(Micah 6:8)

Women and girls are controlled by pimps and trafficked for prostitution and forced labour both within their own countries and across international borders. Coercion, abuse and control are intrinsic to trafficking. It is the exploitative purpose of the activity rather than the movement of persons either inside a country or across borders that matters (Jõe-Cannon, 2005).

## **Introduction**

As people of faith we believe in human rights and the emancipation of women everywhere. Because of our deep convictions regarding the dignity of the human person and the need for gender equality, we are deeply disturbed by the normalization of the buying and selling of marginalised and vulnerable women in Canada as evidenced in the prevalence of human trafficking.

We can recognize and ground our work in the following:

**Prostitution and trafficking are a form of male violence against women.** The majority of those being sold are female and overwhelmingly the buyers are male. The act of renting a woman's body stands on the continuum of violence against women including domestic abuse and sexual assault.

**Trafficking and prostitution cannot be separated.** The boundary between "forced" and "free" prostitution is a false one. The distinction denies contexts where "free choice" is severely restricted, including the reality that the majority of women entered the sex industry when they were children and others are coerced through poverty and limited options. Both trafficking and prostitution rely on the local sex market. Buyers do not discriminate between so-called "forced" or "free" prostituted women.

**The male demand for paid sex is a key factor driving the trafficking in women.** Trafficking operates as a market for which a product must be supplied. This market is predicated on male demand for sexual access to the bodies of women and girls. The supply is created through taking advantage of the vulnerability of women and girls and grooming them to be sold to men.

The role of race, sex and class must be examined in relation to prostitution. Aboriginal women and girls are over-represented in domestic trafficking. Asian, Eastern European and Latina women are marketed as person of a specific race. Women make up 70% of the world's poor.

**International trafficking would be lessened by safe pathways of migration.**

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<sup>37</sup>Michelle Miller is the Executive Director of Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity (REED), a faith-rooted organization working to end the sexual exploitation of women and girls.

Recognizing the realities of human trafficking and sexual exploitation, it is our deep conviction that Canada can model an alternative that liberates, protects and empowers women, particularly those in prostitution by:

- 1) **decriminalising those being sold:** true justice demands that women not be systemically victimised. Instead we can create opportunities for women to choose non-exploitive work;
- 2) **criminalising the buyers, pimps and traffickers:** recognising that prostitution is a form of violence against women and holding the perpetrator accountable;
- 3) **funding exit strategies/enforcement of law against buying humans:** 95% of women involved in prostitution want out of prostitution. Giving them support and choices to get out is the way of empowerment.

This three-pronged approach has demonstrated safety, freedom and empowerment of women in several other countries in the world and is a valid and helpful option for Canada.

#### **Question for Reflection and Dialogue**

- How does a human dignity and human rights framework help you formulate a response to human trafficking?
- What would you add to the proposed ways to liberate, protect and empower women?
- What contributions can men, in particular, make to work for human dignity and the emancipation of women?
- What legislative responses does the article suggest and how might your community advocate for change?

# Human Trafficking for Forced Labour

Louise Dionne and Jean Bellefeuille<sup>38</sup>

Forced labour is a form of human trafficking most often neglected by states worldwide. Globalization has significantly increased the number of migrants in search of work, many of whom end up in forced labour. This affects people in both developed and developing countries in all regions of the world.

More than half of the victims of forced labour (56%) are women and children. The International Labour Office estimates that there are 12.3 million victims of forced labour, of which 2.45 million are in situations similar to slavery.

Canadian immigration programs are focused on securing temporary migrant workers, who have fewer rights than permanent residents, to fill jobs. This practice opens the doors to exploitation.

Access to a permanent residency status or citizenship is the best way to avoid the abuse of immigration programs where people are brought into the country and then become victims of human trafficking.

The vulnerable situations which migrant workers frequently experience require comprehensive protection and the implementation of universal standards such as those proposed by the UN's *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families*. Canada should sign this Convention and encourage all developed countries to do so.

## Question for Reflection and Dialogue

- What have you heard in the news recently about labour trafficking?
- What are the common factors in sex trafficking and labour trafficking?
- What legislative responses does the article suggest and how might your community advocate for change?

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<sup>38</sup>Louise Dionne is the coordinator of the Action Committee Against National and International Human Trafficking (CATHII) composed of religious orders working together to form an equal society by eradicating trafficking of women and children. Jean Bellefeuille is the national Director of the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation program work of the Canadian Religious Conference. Since 2004, CRC has as its main priorities the fight against human trafficking and concern for the environment.

# Restorative Justice – Healing at the Root

Grant Effer<sup>39</sup>

Human trafficking is a world-wide industry driven by the *demand* for the exploitation of others. The human trafficking industry satisfies the demand through the sale and purchase of human beings. For the Christian church that believes in the inherent dignity of all persons, full restoration must include the healing of all involved, victims and offenders.

Often, peace is thought of as the absence of conflict and violence. When we speak of peace with God, peaceful communities, people at peace with themselves or a peaceful home, the church means something far more positive than merely the absence of conflict. This kind of peace connotes wholeness, health, and well-being of people in community.

“This is a highly relational understanding of peace. That understanding is found in Scripture. The word for peace used in Old Testament Hebrew is *shalom*, and *eirene* is its New Testament Greek translation. Those words refer to an ideal in which material and physical needs are satisfied (see Lev. 26:3-13 and Psalm 38:3), relationships are reconciled (1 Samuel 16:4-6; 2 Cor. 13: 11) and behaviours are righteous (Deut. 10:12-22).”<sup>40</sup>

Restorative justice or reparative justice<sup>41</sup> is an approach to justice that focuses on the needs of victims, offenders, and the communities involved. It goes beyond merely satisfying legal principles or simply punishing offenders.

“Restorative justice is founded on a vision of justice that heals and restores. It is based on an understanding that crime is a violation of people and relationships and that justice is served when those most directly involved in an offence are given opportunities to redress the harm caused. The values of restorative justice include caring and compassion, equality, healing, responsibility, truth and honesty, inclusion, trust, safety, respect, non-judgmentalism, self-awareness, integrity, flexibility, and empathy.”<sup>42</sup>

In restorative justice, victims take an active role in the process and offenders are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions. Restorative justice focuses on the personal needs of both victim and offender. In addition, it provides help for the offender in order to avoid future offences. It is based on a theory of justice that considers crime and wrongdoing to be an offense against an individual or community, rather than the state. Restorative justice that fosters dialogue between victim and offender shows the highest rates of victim satisfaction and offender accountability.<sup>43</sup>

The church, the body of Christ, needs to be the advocate for restorative action directed toward the root.

## Question for Reflection and Dialogue

- What unique contribution does a restorative justice approach bring to healing?
- What kind of healing or repair might be possible when a person has been trafficked?
- How is a faith perspective relevant to healing, restoration and justice?

<sup>39</sup>Major Grant Effer is the Corps Officer (pastor) of The Salvation Army Montreal Citadel Corps, a dynamic multicultural Christian church that has a social conscience and is committed to making a difference in the manner of Jesus Christ by teaching the truths of the gospel (saving souls and growing saints) and assisting families in need and facilitating transitions for new immigrants and refugees (serving suffering humanity).

<sup>40</sup>“Building Peace, Building Right Relationships.” Prison Fellowship International. 2004.

<sup>41</sup>Weitekamp, Elmar. “Reparative justice: Towards a victim oriented system.” *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*. Volume 1, Number 1, p. 70-93.

<sup>42</sup>Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC) [http://ccjc.ca/restorative\\_justice/](http://ccjc.ca/restorative_justice/)

<sup>43</sup>Lawrence W. Sherman and Heather Strang. “Restorative Justice: The Evidence.” University of Pennsylvania. 2007.

## *Everyday Choices in the Face of Human Trafficking<sup>44</sup>*

**Everyday choices you can make to *prevent* human trafficking** (*indicate the choices you will make!*):

- Seek freedom from a lifestyle of consumerism.
- Ask questions about the products you buy – where are they from and under what conditions were they made?
- Participate in campaigns such as: Clean Clothes, Play Fair, Not For Sale or Sweat Free. Visit these websites for more information: [www.cleanclothes.org](http://www.cleanclothes.org), [www.playfair2008.org](http://www.playfair2008.org), [www.sweatfree.org](http://www.sweatfree.org), [www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org), <http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/>
- Demand fair trade policies and production.
- Promote and act for peace. Oppose all forms of violence and exploitation.
- Support equal opportunities for education for all.
- Challenge those who make sexist or racist jokes.
- Promote gender equality and human dignity in your own life.
- Give women the same opportunities as men.
- Invest in micro-credit. See [www.oikocredit.coop](http://www.oikocredit.coop) and [www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org) for ways to invest. This can be a great way to ensure that others have dignified work and escape the claws of human traffickers. Have a fundraiser in your group/church and together investigate micro-credit investment possibilities.
- Find out how you can support Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in their efforts to alleviate poverty that disproportionately affects them. See: Sisters in Spirit or Brothers in Spirit: [www.nwac-hq.org](http://www.nwac-hq.org).

**Everyday choices you can make to *end* human trafficking** (*indicate the choices you will make!*):

- Stop viewing pornography, if you do so. Find healthy ways to discover and celebrate your sexuality.
- Educate yourself and others about human trafficking. See the list of resources in this kit.
- Contact an anti-human trafficking group to invite a speaker into your congregation. See the list of speakers in this kit, e.g., Michelle Miller (REED, Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity ([michelle@embracedignity.org](mailto:michelle@embracedignity.org))).
- Address your concerns to your elected officials regarding human trafficking and its root causes.
- Advocate for just refugee and immigration policies and safe paths of migration. See the Canadian Council of Refugees at <http://ccrweb.ca/>.
- Advocate for protection of all trafficked persons. See “Protection? Proposal for legislative amendment to protect trafficked persons,” Canadian Council for Refugees at <http://ccrweb.ca/en/trafficking>.
- Organize a prayer service about human trafficking in your community. See The Weekend of Prayer for Human Trafficking on the Salvation Army website. <http://salvationist.ca/action-support/human-trafficking/weekend-of-prayer/>.
- Pray every day for an end to human trafficking.

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<sup>44</sup>From “Being a Global Village.” Canadian Religious Conference. 2009. PowerPoint frames 41-42.

## *Litany*<sup>45</sup>

**One:** Gracious and Glorious God,  
we give you thanks for allowing us to come before you with all our prayers.

**All:** We seek your justice and your truth.

**One:** When we learn about human trafficking and modern-day slavery,  
we feel filled with despair, confusion, sadness, and fear.

**All:** We seek your guidance and your strength.

**One:** When we realize that our choices and our purchases  
contribute to the destruction of life,  
we cannot find words to express our grief.

**All:** We seek your mercy and your healing.

**One:** Mighty and Miraculous God, we know that you are a God of liberation.  
We know you are able to open a way when there seems to be no way.  
We ask for transformed hearts and minds.  
We ask for wisdom to live in ways  
that bless all your precious and beloved children.

**All:** Please fill us with your Spirit  
that we may have courage to speak up.  
Please help us to trust you, and to follow  
in the radical ways of peace made known by your Son. Amen.

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<sup>45</sup>The Rev. Sarah Haas, Associate Pastor of Friedens United Church of Christ. Indianapolis, Indiana.

# Hearing the Story of the Vulnerable and Silenced

JoAnne Chung Yan Lam<sup>46</sup>

*As part of my Master of Theological Studies degree at Emmanuel College, I requested working with the Canadian Council of Churches on human trafficking. It was a struggle to comprehend human cruelty in the midst of desperation. The existence of suffering and oppression in our world challenged my own understanding of the nature of God and the redemptive power of the cross. By studying biblical texts through diverse lenses, I have come to experience that the resurrected hope in Jesus resides in and with those who are suffering and the vulnerable ones are calling us to “seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6: 8).*

Although the Bible presents ethnical concerns in the ancient Jewish and Palestinian contexts, the impact of the patriarchal system remains prevalent in our contemporary settings. While the commoditization and devaluing of human life has led to international trade in persons, I would suggest that desperation is the major underlying cause.

At a United Nations Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery in 2003, I heard personal witnesses of young children and women coerced into working under subhuman conditions, “sold” by their parents out of desperation. Despite the testimonies, delegates from the identified countries refused responsibility. As a theology student and Christian, I asked, “Where is God in the midst of this oppression and suffering?” Jesus walked among us to establish an alternative social order where the vulnerable and marginalized may rejoin the community as valued individuals and one of the beloved.

I remember the passage from Micah that says, “What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6: 8). In the following biblical reflections, I will use the stories of Ruth and Esther to illustrate the vulnerability of persons in disadvantageous circumstances due to oppressive social structures, practices and ethics. Most importantly, by understanding the desperation and powerlessness of the women in the stories, we can recognize the parallel experiences of women and children in the contemporary practice of human trafficking and sex trade. It is my hope that we will not address the issue of human trafficking as a gender issue because both genders are traded within the labour market. Faced with a choice between exploitation and death, humans would rather be mistreated than perish. Such is the impact of human desperation.

## **Ruth and the impact of desperation**

The story of Ruth emphasizes the obedience, commitment and dedication of a Moabite woman, especially in her relationship with her mother-in-law, Naomi. We first encounter Naomi’s family when her two sons and husband are deceased and she is left with two Moabite daughter-in-laws. Naomi’s plan was to return to Judah and requested the two young women to also to return to their homes. Ruth insisted on remaining with Naomi even though she had the choice of returning to her mother’s house: “Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people and your God my God. Where you die, I will die – there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!” (Ruth 1: 16-17).

Consider the normal human preference to return home instead of relocating to an unknown country. As women within the Jewish social context, neither Naomi nor Ruth had any rights to property or access to family assets. Hence, Ruth’s decision to go to Judah was not influenced by the promise of prosperity or social security. What would have been some factors that influenced Ruth’s decision?

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Possibly, the situation at her mother's house was such that they could not afford to care for Ruth as well. Instead of becoming a burden to her community, she took the risk of remaining with Naomi because in Judah her exoticism potentially could attract her next husband easier than in her home context. Considering that the only method to establish social security was through marriage or children, Ruth had to be certain of the possibilities. Furthermore, Ruth could be aware of the family assets in Judah, which suggested a better life. In desperate situations, a "better" could be merely an illusion or a hope based on very slim factors but it remains more hopeful than familiar and dire circumstances.

Although there are various perspectives from which we could read about Ruth's experience in Judah, I would like to address the process of her acquiring Boaz as her next husband. First, Ruth offered to glean in the fields saying, "Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone in whose sight I may find favor" (Ruth 2: 2). We can see that this practice of gleaning is one based on mercy of kinsmen and workers in the fields. If Ruth and Naomi could not establish themselves in the social context, their property would be lost. Since women did not hold ownership of land, Naomi needed a male in order to redeem land rights. Without the ability to bear children, Naomi did not have similar opportunities to find a new husband and Ruth became the last hope for either woman to find stability for the future. Ruth's presence in the fields signaled her widowed status and indirectly, she was on display for interested parties.

Boaz took note of Ruth and her diligence in gleaning. He complimented her on her dedication to Naomi and the bond that the two shared. Communities both of men and women under extreme oppression and exploitation find alternative ways to care for one another. Even in desperation, they are able to extend themselves beyond normal means and Ruth displayed this bond in her relationship with Naomi. Although Naomi had no choice but to use Ruth as a means to redeem family properties, Ruth must have understood the severity of the situation and quietly submitted to the strategy of self-offering.

*"When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came stealthily, uncovered his feet, and lay down. At midnight the man was startled, and turned over, and there, lying at his feet was a woman!"* (Ruth 3: 7-8)

Ruth's incident is a form of forced prostitution, possibly echoing the parallel experiences of "Comfort women" during World War II and numerous instances of sexual exploitation in the midst of war and conflict.

In desperation, Ruth and Naomi resorted to commoditizing themselves as a means of survival. Beside gleaning for food and living as a foreigner under the mercy of the Judeans, Ruth's marriage to Boaz would restore their social status, economic stability and security. Naomi and Ruth recognized the impossibility of surviving in this setting and the women knew that Ruth and her sexuality was the answer to their dilemma. Out of desperation, Naomi pushed her daughter-in-law to offer herself to Boaz. With the intention of "seeking security" for Ruth, being without alternatives, Naomi plotted positioning Ruth at the disposal of Boaz (Ruth 3: 1-4).

At the same time, Naomi is not an unfeeling monster to place Ruth under such dire circumstances. Ruth also expresses a commitment to Naomi similar to the one we observe between Jonathan and David where one "loved [another] as his own soul" (1 Samuel 18: 1). This love in Ruth moves her to offer herself as a means to establish a better life together. One can imagine the risk of this offer because Boaz need not recognize his responsibility to Ruth after their sexual encounter. However, as the story unfolds, the blessing of God is upon Ruth and Naomi in that Boaz was honourable and receptive to Ruth's offer. That said, I am not praising the effectiveness of the social structure as encountered by Ruth and Naomi, but we need to be realistic about the inability of vulnerable individuals to find alternatives to exploitation. The task is to address factors that contribute to human desperation instead of incriminating the victims.

### Questions for Reflection and Dialogue

In our contemporary society, women who exist under similar circumstances to those of Ruth and Naomi do not frequently experience the grace and mercy displayed by Boaz. Instead, these women and girl-children are traded as products, supplying a demand within a global economy, and destroying generations of delicate spirits. If we are to see God in all creation, do the people who buy sex workers and migrant labourers also see the face of God in those helpless eyes? This addresses the question of treating human beings as goods for trade.

Human trafficking is a contemporary form of slavery where the rights of the individuals are ignored and hopelessness forces families to offer their children for job opportunities abroad or arranged marriages to strangers through agencies, in hopes of an improvement in life's circumstances. If we take a moment to consider the impact of our actions on a child across the globe, there is hope for humanity to learn a just sharing of resources and acknowledge everybody's right of access to all of life's necessities.

- 1) How do we, as people of faith, address the continual objectification of people?
- 2) Can you identify contemporary examples of similar situations of desperation and exploitation like that of Naomi and Ruth?
- 3) In our daily lives, how have we participated in the "system" that benefits from the exploitation of the impoverished to the advantage of the grossly wealthy?

### **Esther and the recruitment of virgins**

When I read about the emperors of China, I was envious of the fantasy-like lifestyle of the queen and the numerous concubines within the Forbidden City. It seemed they were living in a little piece of heaven. Since then, I have read the history of the horrible experiences of these women. Set in a social system where physical attractiveness and the ability to bear children were like currency, the women plotted to eliminate threats by means of violence and vicious acts. A beautiful palace was a prison where, instead of finding solidarity, the search for security rested on establishing power within the ranks of the palace. For survival, women sustained oppressive gender stereotypes. In the story of Esther, we observe the treatment of women, not as sex slaves, but as disposable objects of affection. I will use the experience of Esther and the many virgins recruited for the queen's selection process to reflect on the plight of women within a social context that continues to understand women as objects.

As I studied the story of Esther, I remembered my Sunday School teacher insisting on the courage and trust Esther demonstrated in her struggle to secure survival for her people, the Israelites. As much as we would focus on the hero aspect of Esther, the biblical story makes us reconsider the situational and circumstantial factors that allowed Esther to become a hero for her people. First, King Ahasuerus was dissatisfied with Queen Vashti because she refused his command to parade before his guests, as she was beautiful and a trophy for the king. This caused King Ahasuerus to look powerless before his guests, as he could not even command his queen. Anger led the king to dethrone Queen Vashti, beginning the experiences of Esther and the other virgins.

I would rather not focus on Esther but on the experience of the virgins who were not selected. To begin with, young virgins were "sought out for the king" (Esther 2:2). An edict was written so that all "virgins" were gathered by commissioners of the king, possibly as one would do to gather animals. The biblical passage says that Esther was also "taken into the king's palace" where beauty treatments took place under the supervision of Hegai. I imagine that much corruption occurred here where the young women were taught to offer gifts or purchase favour with the eunuchs.

However, the texts clearly name Esther as the favourite of Hegai and that she "pleased him and won his favour." It leads me to question what Mordecai would have done to establish such a position for Esther at such an early stage of the selection process. While Esther received preferential handling, the other young women were left to wait for their treatments. The treatments for these young women were crucial if they hoped to become queen. At the sight of Esther's closeness with Hegai, these girls may have realized their common destiny.

To be in the palace for 12 months of cosmetic treatment illustrated the standards the king required the young women to meet. In ancient China, young girls were brought into the palace for etiquette training within The Forbidden City, so that they would serve the emperor. Such is the practice described in the biblical passage. The women arrived in the palace from various settings and contexts – the eunuchs needed to ensure quality control. Perhaps one could parallel these 12 months with the grueling training for supermodels and movie stars. Their physical appearance is constantly under scrutiny. Their cosmetic treatments involve maintenance to the extreme, avoiding any deviation from superficial perfection. The standards of the palace would be no less.

As a child, I dreamed of beauty treatments at the spa, feeling like a pampered princess. This illusion dissipated after a visit to the local aesthetician months before my wedding ceremony. I was told that my skincare lacked adequate regularity and substance. My defense was that I kept my face clean with specialized facial wash and though I did not have a four or five-step routine, I was caring for my skin. Nothing was satisfactory for the aesthetician who analyzed from top to bottom and concluded weight loss was crucial for a "beautiful bride." It was amusing and disturbing that our society associates degrees of beauty with the achievement of a dress size, not considering the individual in a holistic sense.

This experience made me realize the delicate line between being chosen or discarded during an outward beauty selection process. Physical attributes play significant and discriminating roles, not only do in selecting queens, but in the sex trade where beauty and youth become bargaining tools and negotiating factors. We need to appreciate beauty as we find God's handy-work in it and to celebrate creation as a whole, because God saw that it was "very good."

Returning to the young virgins who have spent 12 months preparing to come before the king. Their qualification as candidates for queen might have taken the form of a competition to demonstrate etiquette, speech and education. Or perhaps it was a beauty pageant where each participant modeled before the king, desperately hoping to be chosen as queen. Yet, none of these took place. Each of the women were "*given whatever she asked for to take with her from the harem the king's palace*" (Esther 2: 13) where they took turns spending the evening with the king. "*In the evening she went in; then in the morning she came back to the second harem eunuch, who was in charge of the concubines; she did not go in to the king again, unless the king delighted in her and she was summoned by name*" (Esther 2:14).

For a moment, let us consider the experience of the young women who have been anticipating the selection process being guided to the chambers of the king. It was particularly amusing to read that the women were "given whatever they desired" before going to see the king. Were they gifts or equipment for a special talent that a woman wanted to perform for the king? I had difficulties imagining what type of items I would request to bring into the chambers with me. Perhaps if I had a musical talent, I would request a lyre, or ribbons for dancing in case the king was in the mood for some musical entertainment.

In all honesty, there was one agenda item for the young women to visit the king in the evenings and so, Esther was wise to "ask for nothing except what Hegai the king's eunuch had advised" (Esther 2:15b). She brought with her the good favour of the king's eunuch and that would have significant impact on the king's preliminary impression of her. Furthermore, Hegai served the king very closely and knew his preferences. This information is powerful because Esther was able to make a memorable appearance before the king who looked on her with favour. Without it, Esther would experience the same fate as the other women who became disposable and were stored away until the king requested for them.

Concubines remind me of women who suffered under the patriarchal marriage system of polygamy, where men acquired wives as they bought other objects. Young women from impoverished families sought to establish a marriage arrangement with wealthier ones in order to provide social and financial security for the girl-children. Although these young women were often treated as domestic workers, the parents could only place them in situations where their basic needs would be met in exchange for either marriage or manual labour. Sometimes very young girls were sold to be servants of the master's daughter, who would be the same age. Due to the lack of opportunities and available alternatives, parents and families offered their children for sale and trade because in choosing between starvation and oppressive lives, they would rather their children live.

Perhaps this is the same mentality when the king's commissioners gathered up the young virgins. They offered the young women a chance to become something beyond their imagination. To be a concubine and live within the courts of the king where being ignored for the rest of their natural lives seemed better than to struggle for mere survival. The life of solitude provided materialistic fulfillment even though emotionally they remained abandoned and devalued as relationship partners.

I wanted to use this account of Esther and the young virgins to address the silent individuals who suffer in the shadows, without the capacity or space to voice resistance against an exploitative system. During a conversation about advocacy and the mission work of the Christian churches, I was reminded that we do not need to speak for the vulnerable and silenced, but rather to stop dominating the conversation and open our ears to hear the message of the oppressed and exploited. Jesus walked among the suffering communities to offer solidarity in presence and actions, living a witness of restorative accompaniment for the excluded and stigmatized.

### **Questions for Reflection and Dialogue**

- 1) What are ways our churches can be active in advocacy against human trafficking and the commoditization of human beings?
- 2) Within your own community, what may be some ways to explore further the topic of human trafficking in Canada?
- 3) Name some venues and opportunities to explore human trafficking incidents present in Canada. What are some effective/non-effective measures to fight against trafficking and to establish Canada as a trafficking-free zone?

## *Behold a Woman...*<sup>48</sup>

*Camilla Burns, Ph.D., SNDdeN*<sup>49</sup>

The usual translation of Luke 13: 10-17, “there appeared a woman,” weakens the idiomatic force of Luke’s biblical diction: “behold (*idou*) a woman.” I use the this translation as the title of this reflection because in his message for the 92nd World Day of Migrants and Refugees (2006) Pope Benedict XVI comments on the feminization of migration. The feminine face of migration leads to the flourishing of trafficking where, the Pope reminds us, “Women and girls are destined to be exploited almost like slaves in their work, and not infrequently in the sex industry, too.”

“Behold a bent woman” becomes “behold the bent women of trafficking.” Behold the victims of the third most lucrative criminal activity in the world after arms and drugs.

### **Gospel neighbours**

She has been bent for 18 years and we wonder what invisible force bent her spirit and her body. In the 13th chapter of Luke, she stoops between a passage about a fig tree, fruitless for three years, yet given one more year to mature and produce, and a passage about the Kingdom of God that compares it to a tiny mustard seed that grows into a tree large enough to give sanctuary to the birds of the air. The bent woman is caught between a tree that produces nothing nourishing and a tree that provides sanctuary. This is the only healing miracle in the Gospels where Jesus heals on his own initiative. All of the other stories begin with a request of the one who needs healing.

*The bent women of trafficking are caught between systems that produce no fruit for them. The tree is spared to give it more time to mature and produce. We have limited time to change the systems that entrap these women. Our prophetic voices must be heard in the halls of political power. At the same time, we must follow the good example of the Union of Major Superiors of Italy and Companion of Mary Sister Eugenia Bonetti in providing the sanctuary of the mustard tree. The branches of the tree must broaden and widen to other Congregations of both men and women. These women of trafficking are slaves unable to escape from their bondage. Like Jesus, we must approach them with healing hands.*

“There is a need for renewed solidarity in the Church and among religious congregations, lay movements, institutions and associations in giving greater ‘visibility’ and attention to the pastoral care of women exploited by prostitution, without forgetting the good news of full liberation in Jesus Christ.”<sup>50</sup>

### **Questions for Reflection and Dialogue**

- 1) What made the woman bent and what separated her from society?
- 2) Discuss the systems that push people (especially women) today into trafficking.
- 3) What are obstacles for us to seeing the reality of exploitation?

<sup>48</sup>Conferences by Sisters Eugenia Bonetti, MC, and Camilla Burns, SNDdeN, were given at the meeting of the Council of “16” (Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, International Union of Superiors General (women’s congregations), Union of Superiors General (men’s congregations) held in Rome on January 13, 2006. “Compassion, Heart of the Mission,” *UISG Bulletin* No. 131. 2006. pp. 31-37.

<sup>49</sup>Rome, January 13, 2006. Sister Camilla Burns was Superior General of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur from 2002 to 2008. At the 2004 UISG Assembly, she was elected to the Executive Committee for a three-year term. Her apostolic experience includes teaching at the elementary, secondary, college and university levels, including being the Director of the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University, Chicago, Illinois.

<sup>50</sup>“First International Meeting of Pastoral Care for the Liberation of Women of the Street.” Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People. Rome, 20-21, June 2005.

### **Name based on disability**

The woman doesn't have a name, other than the one given to her by the town, a name based upon her disability. She doesn't have an identity other than that of a victim. We know nothing of her family or occupation, nothing other than her deformity. She is the one who is bent, stooped, bearing upon her shoulders an invisible yet heavy burden, the burden of being different, the burden of not looking like everyone else, the burden of not being able to do what everyone else does. She is the crooked woman, the bent woman.

*Identity is a critical issue with the Bent Women of Trafficking. They have many names to hide their distinctiveness rather than proudly claiming one. They often don't have papers and therefore no legal identity. They are ashamed of their present situation and suffer humiliation and guilt for years. The system has stripped them of their legal rights and offered them the ignominious name of "Women of the Street."*

"Once a person is trafficked, escape from that situation is always very difficult and often fraught with danger. Survivors of trafficking almost invariably face a multitude of challenges, if they manage to escape the clutches of those that are trafficking or exploiting them:

- denial of access to legal rights and basic human rights;
- criminalisation, persecution and penalisation;
- denial of access to legal protection;
- denial of access to medical protection and counselling services;
- making assistance conditional upon cooperation with authorities, regardless of the danger that this may expose the trafficked person to;
- stigmatisation and discrimination, not only of the trafficked person but also of his or her family and environment."<sup>51</sup>

"On the street, the 'prostitute' must live in absolute secrecy and in strict obedience to their traffickers and *mamans* [women who move from being exploited themselves to exploiting others]. In addition, they are liable to the dangers of the street maltreatment, abuse, road accidents and even death. Every year several girls experience martyrdom on our streets, either from clients, maniacs or traffickers."<sup>52</sup>

### **Questions for Reflection and Dialogue**

- 1) Have you ever experienced having to change your name? If so, what impact did that have for you? If not, how important is it for you to keep your name?
- 2) Try to put yourself in the position of a person who has to give up their name for concealment. What does that do to a person?

<sup>51</sup>"Created in the image of God, treated like slaves..." Caritas International. 89th Session CI Executive Committee. 14-16 November, 2003

<sup>52</sup>Eugenia Bonetti, MC. "The Strength of Networking Against 'Trafficking' in Human Beings: The Experience of the Italian Women Religious." A paper presented to Caritas International, Inter-Regional Workshop on Anti-Trafficking. September 12-13, 2005.

## Daughter of Abraham

Jesus encounters the bent woman. Jesus heals her and she is able to stand up straight, to look straight ahead, to be restored. But perhaps just as wonderful is the way Jesus speaks to her, what Jesus says about her. He does not call her disabled, or hindered, or a victim of life's unfairness, though from most points of view, she is. Jesus seems to have no need to make her a professional victim, so that her disability defines her whole life.

Jesus calls her "a daughter of Abraham." Jesus calls the crooked woman, the bent woman "a daughter of Abraham." The daughter of one who is given a great promise on a starry night. The one through whom God promised to make a great nation through which all the nations of the earth would be blessed. The bent woman is an heir to the blessings of God. Moreover, as a daughter of Abraham, she is called to be a blessing to the whole world. She is meant for more than superficial, cruel, limiting labelling. She, bent over though she is, is part of God's great salvation of the whole world.

She stands up straight. Even if Jesus had not healed her, I think she would have stood up straight. Her life had been caught up in God's promises to the world. Her life had been renamed, not as a long story of injustice, victimization, and sadness, but as part of the great drama of God's liberation. Let us therefore remember her, not as just one more sad victim, not as the woman with a bent back, but as a daughter of Abraham.

*We must call the Bent Women of Trafficking by name. They are our sisters with the same inheritance as ours. We are their sisters and brothers who share their inheritance. Their former identity (they often use many names for concealment), country of origin and family have been taken away from them. Their identity has become their disability – "Bent Women of Trafficking." Let us devote our efforts to calling them by name – Regina, Gladies, Patricia, Rita and Gloria. They are beneficiaries of the same astounding promises that sustain us in our daily lives. These "Bent Women of Trafficking" have a right to know their identity as recipients of the Love of God. They will not know this good news until another human person calls them by name and offers a healing hand.*

"An existence transfigured by the evangelical counsels becomes a prophetic and silent witness, but also an eloquent protest against an inhuman world. It commits us to the promotion of the person and awakens a new 'fantasy of charity.'"<sup>53</sup>

### Questions for Reflection and Dialogue

- 1) Can you see/identify yourself as a son/daughter of Abraham? If yes, what does it mean to you?
- 2) What change does it make (if any), if we try to view trafficked women not only as victims, but as daughters of Abraham?

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<sup>53</sup>"Starting A fresh From Christ: A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium." Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. May 19, 2002, No.33.

### **You are set free**

The first recorded words of Jesus in this story of healing are “Woman, you are set free from your ailment.” Only then does Jesus lay his hands on the woman and heal her. “When he laid his hands on her, immediately she stood up straight, and began praising God.” You are set free from the spirit that bent your body. You are set free from the malady that has replaced your name. You are set free from being a victim. You are free to claim your upright identity as a daughter of Abraham.

*The Bent Women of Trafficking belong to a slave trade where women and minors are for sale. “Prostitution is not a new phenomenon; what is new is that a global and complex trade currently exploits the situation of poverty and vulnerability of many women: The twenty-first century slaves.”<sup>54</sup> They have been promised freedom, employment and endless opportunities only to be tricked into the slavery of prostitution. These women are bent by a system that is one of the most lucrative criminal activities in the world. Globalization has strengthened the network that entraps these women. The globalization of our Congregations can create a network that becomes a force for counter-trafficking.*

“The Trans-national dimension of the global crime of trafficking in human beings requires the combined efforts of responsible actors in the countries of origin, the countries of transit, and the countries of destination of the trafficked people.”<sup>55</sup>

### **Questions for Reflection and Dialogue**

- 1) “Woman, you are set free from your ailment”. What is your ailment that you want to be set free from? What is the ailment that the trafficked persons want to be set free from?
- 2) “The globalization of our Congregations can create a network that becomes a force for counter-trafficking.” What could such a network look like?

### **Behold a woman – behold a man**

We began this reflection with “Behold (idou) a woman.” In another story we hear Pilate proclaim “Behold the man” – behold the man who took on the vulnerability of a human being on our behalf (John 19: 5). When we reach out a healing hand to the Bent Women of Trafficking, we are motivated by the love of the One who accepted the brutality of human degradation. We anticipate the day when the Son of Man will come in a cloud with power and great glory. “Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21: 28).

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., Eugenia Bonetti, MC

<sup>55</sup>Ibid. “Created in the image of God, treated like slaves...”

## *Created in His Image*<sup>56</sup>

*Music: Joshua Ivany; Lyrics: Joshua and Kirsten Ivany*

We were created in His Image  
In the image of God (x2)  
Every woman, child, and man  
Designed for His sovereign plan  
To live lives of freedom and of truth (x2)

### Chorus

Break the chains of injustice  
Set the captives free  
Teach us how to live lives of purity  
We fix our eyes and our hearts  
On things that are above  
Come fill us Holy Spirit  
With Your mercy and Your love

We are Your beautiful children  
Children of the King  
More precious than silver  
Worth more than anything.

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<sup>56</sup>Available in MP3 format at <http://salvationist.ca/action-support/human-trafficking/resources-2/>  
See also <http://www.salvationist.ca/docs/Trafficking/Created-in-His-Image.pdf>

# *A Workshop on Trafficking*

*Michelle Miller and Ruth Magnuson*<sup>57</sup>

Place a sign with this warning outside the door or at the front of the workshop space:

## **WARNING:**

**This workshop contains stories of violence, nudity and obscene language.  
Please prepare yourself for understanding the world of human trafficking.**

## **PREPARATION**

- 1) Have case study cards available and hand out to those who are willing to volunteer to read cards. It's best to have an unlikely person read the role (men read women's roles and vice versa, clergy read the role of a pimp, etc.).
- 2) "Demand" DVD<sup>58</sup>. Requires computer and projector, screen or white wall, possibly extension cord. Optional extension: Show 45 minute version of "Demand" and have short discussion rather than doing the whole workshop.
- 3) True/False quiz: enough copies for everyone.
- 4) Handout: Push / Pull Factors

## **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To acknowledge that exploitation is occurring by people we know in our workplaces, neighbourhoods, churches and perhaps even by ourselves.
- 2) To reinforce the need for faith communities to engage with human trafficking and its relationship to pornography and prostitution and other forms of exploitation.
- 3) To celebrate the beauty of creation that God has given in each human being.

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<sup>57</sup>Michelle Miller is the Executive Director of Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity (REED), a faith-rooted organization working to end the sexual exploitation of women and girls. Ruth Magnuson has been active with Evangelical Lutheran Women and human trafficking.

<sup>58</sup>Shared Hope International investigated the commercial sex markets in Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States. For the Demand Report and video, visit <http://sharedhope.org/resources/>.

## PROPOSED AGENDA (~ 90 MINUTES)

- 5 min Introduction of Facilitators and Participants; Purpose and Outline of the Workshop**
- 7 min Stories of International Trafficking**  
As soon as the introductions are over, 'Gabriella' could stand up and begin the script. Take time. Listen and feel the stories.
- 10 min True False and Discussion**  
See Handout.
- 7 min Stories of Domestic Trafficking**  
Stories of domestic, middle class family, may or may not be of Aboriginal ancestry. Take time. Listen and feel the stories.
- 15 min Push and Pull Factors**  
Distribute the handout, invite the learners to circle the most potent factors. What factors would you add? Consider drawing on the earlier socio-cultural, economic and political factors listed elsewhere in this kit.
- 15 min Video—*Demand*<sup>59</sup>**
- 10 min Situation in Canada**  
See the earlier sections of this kit to provide a summary of human trafficking in Canada. You might include the 2013 Human Rights Watch report on violence against indigenous women and girls along the “Highway of Tears” in British Columbia, a summary of statistics on sex trafficking and labour trafficking in Canada.
- 15 min A Solution? Brief Presentation of the Nordic Model**  
The Nordic Model of law and social policy, based on gender equality, has been very successful in decreasing sex trafficking. There are three important components. First, it decriminalizes the person being sold and penalizes those profiting from their exploitation. Second, the model provides robust services for women seeking to exit that bolster their already strong social safety net. Third, the Nordic model actively enforces the law. This solution has dramatically reduced trafficking in Sweden and has recently been adopted by Norway, Iceland and South Korea. Other European countries are considering this progressive model.
- 10-15 min Questions for Reflection and Dialogue**
- 1) Within your own communities, what may be some ways to explore further the topic of human trafficking in Canada and to increase the engagement of Christian churches to eradicate the treatment of human beings a form of commodity?
  - 2) What are some theological misconceptions about gender that support men's entitlement to the sex of prostitution?
  - 3) How are we indirectly participating in exploitative practices in your daily lives? Have your faith communities embraced the corporate and individual responsibilities for abusive treatment of individuals and peoples and what can be some ways our churches can be active in the advocacy against human trafficking and the commoditization of human beings?
- 10 min Closing and Prayer**  
Spend time in sharing and prayer. You may want to select an appropriate prayer, song or blessing from this kit.

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<sup>59</sup>Shared Hope International investigated the commercial sex markets in Jamaica, Japan, the Netherlands and the United States. For the Demand Report and video, visit <http://sharedhope.org/resources/>.

## STORIES OF INTERNATIONAL TRAFFICKING

*Each person stands up one by one as they speak and then remain standing.*

### **Gabriella**

My name is Gabriella. I know my name but I haven't always known who I am. As a young girl I lived with my mother and brother in Lima, Peru. The slum was my home and I had many friends there. Our favourite games were skipping rope and hide and seek. My girlfriends and I would laugh and laugh until our sides hurt, especially when we saw boys that we liked. My mom didn't have much money and sometimes we would get very hungry. But she always tried to feed us and she would make us take a bath when we had some water available. She wanted us to take care of ourselves. When I was about 17 my mother got sick (...*pause*...) those were hard days. I had to take care of my brother and find food. I had to beg.

### **Mother** (*spoken with resignation/fatigue*)

Life was not always easy in the slums but I enjoyed talking to the other mothers. We would sing and talk while we prepared food and washed clothes. Our children would run and play and laugh. It was hard, though, to get enough food to feed Gabriella and her brother. And then I got sick, so sick I ended up in the hospital. The hospital bills were getting bigger. I couldn't take care of my children.

I was released from the hospital and sent back to my home. I was so weak, so tired. This nice man kept coming and visiting. He listened, brought some food for the children and sometimes brought me my medication. It was so nice having a man take care of me. One day he said that he could get work for Gabriella in Canada and that would be the solution to my money problems. He showed me pictures of his family and friends and places in Canada. It looked like a beautiful country. He paid me some money in advance. I miss Gabriella, but I know that she is living a better life.

### **Gabriella**

I was excited about leaving for Canada. It was my first time on an airplane. I even had my own passport that Mr. Curtis arranged for me. I felt very grown up.

### **Mr. Curtis – Trafficker** (*spoken with disdain, arrogance, as if in deep thought*)

The slums are such great places to find sluts. That mother was so worn down from her illness that acquiring Gabby was like being dished up a roast on a silver platter. Something they've never seen before! Ha.... That girl is a clever one. She's going to catch quite a price. Her thick hair, long lashes and that perfect, little virgin body ... ummm um. Me as her uncle? Yeah, right. Can't wait till "the relatives" see her in the Philippines. A perfect piece of candy as an alternative to those Asian girls. I'll be able to make a bundle of dough with this one.

### **Gabriella**

The airplane ride was so fun but I got tired. It was hard to sleep. When we landed we were in a place that didn't look anything like the pictures of Canada Mr. Curtis showed me and my mother. We drove for a couple of hours on bumpy narrow roads. There were cows and chickens on the roads, kind of like at home.

We went to this hotel room. I had never been in a hotel room before. (...*pause*...) I was drowsy and ready to just fall into that bed. But ..... Mr. Curtis all of sudden started being very mean. He pushed me and told me to give him my passport and everything I brought with me, even the picture of my mom and brother. Who am I? Where am I? That night four or maybe five or maybe six men raped me, over and over and over (...*fade out*...).

## Narrator

Gabriella was forced to have sex with many, many men. Some days there were 15 visitors at her door. She wasn't able to shower and clean herself between johns, and no one spoke her native Spanish language. The johns were Filipinos as well as sex tourists. She was later told that she owed \$8,000 to cover the costs of meals, flight, accommodation and the nights she didn't appear eager enough for sex. Later while in transit to Montreal via Vancouver she was picked up by immigration, treated like a criminal and placed in a Canadian jail cell. She did eventually get released into the care of an NGO but has since disappeared. Since she had the name of her trafficker, it was discovered that this was an international sex trafficking ring feeding the demand for paid sex in both Asia and Canada.

## TRUE OR FALSE QUIZ PLUS DISCUSSION

1. Most women's first contact with traffickers is with strangers..... **True/False**

*False.* It is most often someone they already know and trust. A relative, family friend, acquaintance, etc.

2. You can only claim to be trafficked when you have been taken away by force. .... **True/False**

*False.* Coercion takes many forms and does not always involve physical or even overtly psychological forms of force. A person can be lured by false promises and/or the exploitation of vulnerabilities.

3. There is no consensus about the definition of trafficking. .... **True/False**

*False.* See the UN Palermo Protocol: recruited, coerced through taking advantage of a person's vulnerability, and exploited. Internationally, there's agreement, but there are different practices and not everyone is aware/educated.

4. Trafficking is largely rooted in gender inequality. .... **True/False**

*True.* both on the **push** and **pull** side of things. Push factors are things that place women in a state of vulnerability to trafficking. Women:

- make up 70% of the world's poor;
- have less access to jobs and education;
- lack property rights;
- are often expected culturally to be caregivers and providers for their families. (Manila – squatter area called “New York”);
- get work globally in unregulated sectors like rag-pickers or cooks or domestics;
- are victimized by sexual abuse or domestic violence.

Pull factors, all of which are based on gender inequality, include:

- thriving local sex industries that demand a product and a large market for sexual access to women's bodies;
- men seeing women as commodities they can buy, sell, trade, pay to do what they want with them;
- hyper-sexualization of women and girls.

5. The key element in trafficking is movement across a border. .... **True/False**

*False.* It involves recruitment, coercion, and exploitation. A person can be trafficked domestically or internationally.

6. If you consent to go with another person, you can't claim to be a victim of trafficking..... **True/False**

*False.* Although this is controversial (see #2 above). Often a person will consent under extreme duress or without a full picture of what they will be forced to do.

7. Trafficking and prostitution would not exist without a demand for paid sex. .... **True/False**

*True.* The demand for prostituted sex is the first step in the trafficking process. It is market-based on supply and demand. When there is a large local sex market, product must be found. Trafficking could be called globalized prostitution. The same factors are at play. Global trafficking feeds the local prostitution market.

8. Most trafficking is for the purpose of prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation. .... **True/False**

*True.* There are enormous amounts of money to be made through selling the bodies of women, girls, boys and some men. When you sell drugs, you sell them once and they're gone. But women and girls can be sold over and over and over again until they are too sick or old to be marketable.

9. Canada is actively working to prevent trafficking in our country. .... **True/False**

Trafficking is the fastest growing industry in the world.  
A National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking has been established.  
Canada is a signatory to the Palermo Protocol which binds us to work to reduce demand.  
Canada is considering normalizing men's demand for paid sex through abolishing our current prostitution laws.  
Human Rights Watch has released a report on violence against indigenous women and girls, especially in Northwest British Columbia and has recommended that Canada participate in a United Nations inquiry on the topic.

10. Human trafficking happens in your community. .... **True/False**

The nature and extent of trafficking will vary depending on the size of your community, but this injustice touches each of our communities. If you are in a large city there is most definitely a market for the sex of prostitution that fuels trafficking. Even if you are in a very small, rural community women can be accessed via the internet.

Vancouver's free weekly entertainment newspapers make an estimated \$75 thousand per week profit (nearly \$4 million annually) on ads selling women. Vancouver markets women as if they were a commodity. They could be shoes or jeans or an iPhone. They are racialized and infantilized to appeal to fantasies of subordination: Erotic Sweet Japanese Doll; New Asian Baby Vivian; Busty East Indian; Super Hot Korean; Pretty Petite Asian; Smoking Hot Persian Princess; Dark and Sweet.

## STORIES OF DOMESTIC TRAFFICKING

*Each person stands up one by one as they speak and then remain standing.*

### **Pimp**

All I have to do is hang around the group homes. They think no one knows where these are in our cities, but I do. They are my market and I have so many asses to choose from. Shit, I look good. I am *irrr...reee...sis...tible*. Come on baby, show yourself to me today. Come make your daddy some good money. Ah there's one. .... Yeah, she's the one. Time for a little romancin'.

### **Sherri**

He used to hang around my foster home. I noticed him because he was quite cute, and one day he invited me out for ice cream. It was such a hot day, it seemed like a great idea. We met a lot after that. He was so nice. Bought me clothes sometimes and he knew just what I liked. I hated being in the group home. It was nice being with him.

He was different from my dad. My dad made me feel like shit. He would yell at me all the time and at night he would come into my room and touch me – all over. I don't know if my mom knew. I would just tune out and pretend I wasn't in the room.

About a year after I met Lucky, we decided to escape for a weekend. He found this great little hideaway. He promised me a fabulous weekend. I loved him.

The first night changed my life – again. His “friends” joined us. He made me take off my clothes in front of them and then they joked about how much I was worth and they would hand him money and then one by one they banged me up. The next morning he told me I owed him for everything he ever bought for me. He beat me when I tried to talk or even kiss him. It wasn't like that before. He said he'd kill my sister if I tried to leave.

He sold me to another guy after a while. I figured this is the way my life is, you know – my purpose in life is to provide sex to men. Every guy I have ever known has touched me, beat me, hurt me, burned me. I was taken to another city, I'm not sure where, and parked in a hotel room and was told not to leave. My pimp posted an ad on Craig's list and he made all the arrangements for them to come to where I was. To make more money, he set up a camera in the room and started streaming sex live on the internet. I would get beaten if I tried to get some fresh air.

### **Sherri's mother**

I tried so hard to raise Sherri but life was hard on the reserve. The most painful thing for me was to have her apprehended and placed in a foster home. But I couldn't take care of her any more. I have my own problems. And really, it is for her benefit. She needs to learn to be a good girl. But that's not happening any time soon. Friends of ours have seen her out being a prostitute. How did I ever raise a daughter like that? I'm ashamed.

### **Narrator**

In Canada, Aboriginal women and girls are highly over-represented in prostitution due to the ongoing effects of colonization. Girls placed in foster care are also high-risk persons for trafficking. When their lives include a dysfunctional family and abuse, the young women are prime set-ups for further exploitation through trafficking and prostitution.

The majority of women are recruited into prostitution at age 14, before the age of consent. Most want OUT of prostitution. Families even in Canada will stigmatize these women and believe that the girl is at fault, when in fact, she has been exploited and betrayed by those who are closest to her, as well as by the men buying her.

## HANDOUT: PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

You may refer to the socio-cultural, economic and political factors listed elsewhere in this resource. Here is also a relevant summary. What would you add to the list and what do you see will be the result of these factors?

### **PUSH**

#### *Feminization of poverty*

- Women make up 70% of the world's poor
- Lack property rights
- Limited access to education and jobs
- Cultural expectations to care for family
- Unjust global economic policies
- Expansion of transnational sex industries and increasingly predatory recruitment techniques and networks.
- Childhood sexual abuse/domestic violence
- Gender inequality/power imbalance
- Lack of opportunity
- Armed conflict, military occupation, and concentration of military in certain parts of the world.
- Displacement
- Lack of safe pathways to migration

### **PULL**

- Male demand for sexual access to the bodies of women and children
- Consumer Mentality where people are reduced to commodities to be bought, sold and traded.
- Patriarchy = institutionalization of gender inequality and power difference
- Thriving local sex industries
- Hyper-sexualization of women and girls

## *Prayer to End Human Trafficking<sup>60</sup>*

O God, our words cannot express what our minds can barely comprehend and our hearts feel when we hear of women, children and men deceived and transported to unknown places for purposes of exploitation and abuse because of human greed and profit at this time in our world.

Our hearts are saddened and our spirits angry that their dignity and rights are being transgressed through threats, deception, and force.

We cry out against the degrading practice of trafficking and pray for it to end. Strengthen the fragile-spirited and broken-hearted.

Make real your promises to fill these our sisters and brothers with a love that is tender and good and send the exploiters away empty handed.

Give us the wisdom and courage to stand in solidarity with them, that together we will find ways to the freedom that is your gift to all of us.

Amen.

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<sup>60</sup>Adapted from a prayer by the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Used with permission. Slide 11 from “Being a Global Village.”

## *More Information and Resources*

### **WEBSITES**

#### **International Convention and Protocols**

The United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) promotes the global fight on human trafficking on the basis of international agreements reached at the UN. [www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/](http://www.ungift.org/knowledgehub/)

The United Nations (UN) Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (TOC). [www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_eng.pdf)

#### **Transnational Organized Crime protocols**

- The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (the Trafficking Protocol). [www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_%20traff\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_%20traff_eng.pdf)
- The Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (the Smuggling Protocol) [www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final\\_documents\\_2/convention\\_smug\\_eng.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_smug_eng.pdf)

**Convention and its Optional Protocols on the Rights of the Child** (Lists the nations that have signed and ratified those documents). [www.unicef.org/crc/index\\_30203.html](http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30203.html)

**Convention 182 of the International Labour Organisation.** Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour-1999. Came into force November 19, 2000. [www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ilolex/english/convdisp1.htm)

### **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS**

**Beyond Borders** (ECPAT in Canada) advances the rights of children to be free from abuse and exploitation without regard to race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. It advocates for vulnerable children who cannot speak for themselves, monitors the prosecution and sentencing of individuals charged with crimes against children, including crimes such as sex tourism and Internet pedophilia. ECPAT educates the public on the dangers of the internet and proposes practical solutions on ways to ensure that no child will be harmed via this medium. [www.beyondborders.org](http://www.beyondborders.org)

**The Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children** (CCRC) works to achieve full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Canada and globally. [www.rightsofchildren.ca](http://www.rightsofchildren.ca)

**The Canadian Council for Refugees** (CCR) is a non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees and immigrants in Canada. [ccrweb.ca/en/trafficking](http://ccrweb.ca/en/trafficking)

**Canadian Religious Conference** (CRC) offers a number of resources on the issue of trafficking. [www.crc-canada.org/en/node/468](http://www.crc-canada.org/en/node/468)

**CATHII (Comité d'Action contre la Traite Interne et Internationale)** was founded in 2004 by Catholic religious congregations. It works mainly in French to fight against trafficking. CATHII offers communities or organizations engaged in this issue background documents, analysis, videos, tools to sensitize and call to action, workshops and special projects d'engagements. [www.cathii.org/](http://www.cathii.org/)

The **Coalition Against Trafficking in Women** (CATW) is a non-governmental organisation working internationally to combat sexual exploitation in all its forms, especially prostitution and trafficking in women and children, particularly girls. [www.catwinternational.org/about](http://www.catwinternational.org/about)

The **International Bureau for Children's Rights** is based in Montreal. See *Child Trafficking in Canada: Preliminary Assessment*, March 2004, at [www.ibcr.org/editor/assets/thematic\\_report/3/2004\\_trafficking\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://www.ibcr.org/editor/assets/thematic_report/3/2004_trafficking_report_en.pdf)

**International Organisation for Migration** (IOM) promotes counter-trafficking activities are geared toward the prevention of trafficking in persons, particularly women and children, and the protection of migrant's rights. [www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/lang/en/pid/1](http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/lang/en/pid/1)

**Human Rights Watch** is dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world, investigating and exposing human rights violations and holding abusers accountable. See its web site section on trafficking: [www.hrw.org/en/category/topic/women](http://www.hrw.org/en/category/topic/women).

**Native Women's Association of Canada** (NWAC) is founded on the collective goal to enhance, promote, and foster the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nations and Métis women within First Nation, Métis and Canadian societies. [www.nwac.ca](http://www.nwac.ca)

**Not For Sale** (NFS) is an international organization fighting human trafficking. [www.notforsalecampaign.org/about/](http://www.notforsalecampaign.org/about/)

The **Polaris Project** is a multicultural, grassroots non-profit agency combating sex trafficking and modern-day slavery. [www.polarisproject.org/](http://www.polarisproject.org/)

**REED (Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity)** has been standing in solidarity and struggle with women who have been sexually exploited and trafficked into the sex industry since 2005. They consider it a privilege to share in mutual transformation with women who are surviving the affects of a sexualized and violent culture. [www.embracedignity.org](http://www.embracedignity.org)

**STOP** is an Anti-human Trafficking Newsletter co-sponsored by the Sisters of the Divine Saviour and Capacitor International. [www.stopenslavement.org/index.html](http://www.stopenslavement.org/index.html).

**UNANIMA** is an international coalition founded in 2002 by representatives of seven congregations of women religious. It is an NGO committed to work for justice at the international level in harmony with the charter of the United Nations for the economic and social advancement of all peoples. Presently they work hard on the issue of trafficking. [www.unanima-international.org](http://www.unanima-international.org)

## GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

**Applications of International Law in Canadian Courts:** [www.lawsite.ca/femlaw/VC\\_Traffick.htm](http://www.lawsite.ca/femlaw/VC_Traffick.htm)

**Department of Justice Canada**, [www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fs-sv/tp/canada.html](http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/fs-sv/tp/canada.html), has many documents on trafficking, including those at the Policy Centre for Victim Issues: [canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pcvi-cpcv/brochure.html](http://canada.justice.gc.ca/eng/pi/pcvi-cpcv/brochure.html).

**Parliament of Canada LEGISinfo** provides information about the legislative stages of House of Commons government bills. [www.parl.gc.ca/common/bills.asp?Language=E](http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/bills.asp?Language=E)

The **RCMP** has established a **Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre** (HTNCC) at RCMP Headquarters in Ottawa. The Centre works in partnership with domestic and international agencies to develop an extensive network of partnerships, monitors investigations from a national perspective, facilitates the central processing of requests from international law enforcement agencies, and provides intelligence to domestic law enforcement. <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ht-tp/index-eng.htm>

**United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention**, Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings - An outline for action. [http://www.uncjin.org/CICP/traff\\_e.pdf](http://www.uncjin.org/CICP/traff_e.pdf).

**United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols**, [www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/treaties/CTOC/index.html).

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## FILMS

### **Not For Sale** (2006)

This compelling film features five survivors of prostitution and others discussing prostitution as violence against women, the links between trafficking and prostitution, and the male demand for prostitution that promotes trafficking. Director: Marie Vermeiren.

### **Lilya 4-Ever** (2002)

A teenager in the former Soviet Union is abandoned by her family and is entrapped in sex trafficking in this frank drama from Sweden. Director: Lucas Moodysson.

### **Lives for Sale**

A one-hour investigative documentary exposes the painful, rarely seen human side of illegal immigration, including the growing black market trade in human beings. [www.livesforsale.com](http://www.livesforsale.com)

## OTHER RESOURCES

### **The Oldest Oppression**

This play was written, produced and performed by the drama students of St. Mary's Academy in Winnipeg to raise awareness and offer a voice to the many victims of sex trafficking, 2005.

### **Torn Women**

The Action Committee Against National and International Human Trafficking (CATHII), through its members in Trois-Rivières, has produced a tool for raising awareness against trafficking in women. It includes a 20-minute DVD of the play *Torn Women* and a facilitator's guide. The DVD is available in French with English subtitles. The guide is available in both languages. For information, visit [www.cathii.org](http://www.cathii.org).

## RESOURCE PERSONS

- Julia Beazley, Policy Analyst at the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, focussing on issues of Canadian and International Poverty and Homelessness, Prostitution and Human Trafficking
- Diana Bussey, Chair of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory Anti-Human Trafficking Network
- Savelia Curniski, President of NASHI: Our Children
- Louise Dionne, Coordinator of The Action Committee Against National and International Human Trafficking (CATHII)
- Lise Gagnon, SNJM, member of CATHII
- Michelle Miller, Executive Director of Resist Exploitation, Embrace Dignity (REED)

## **RCMP CONTACTS: WHERE TO TURN WHEN ENCOUNTERING HUMAN TRAFFICKING<sup>61</sup>**

**Royal Canadian Mounted Police**  
**Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre (HTNCC)**  
1-855-850-4640

**National Capital Region**  
613-993-8888 or 613-952-4200

**Alberta**  
403-276-5794

**British Columbia**  
Contact your local RCMP detachment or municipal police agency

**Manitoba**  
204-983-5462

**New Brunswick**  
1-888-506-7267

**Newfoundland and Labrador**  
1-800-709-7267

**North West Territories**  
867-669-1111

**Nova Scotia**  
1-800-803-7267

**Nunavut**  
867-979-1111

**Ontario**  
1-800-387-0020

**Prince Edward Island**  
902-566-7112

**Quebec**  
1-800-771-5401 or 1-866-227-2124

**Saskatchewan**  
306-780-5563

**Yukon**  
867-667-5555

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<sup>61</sup>For more information, see the RCMP's Human Trafficking National Coordination Centre web site at <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ht-tp/index-eng.htm>





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