

The reality of Argentina with regard to human trafficking

What is human trafficking?

“Human trafficking means the capture, transport, transfer or reception of people by force or other form of coercion, abduction, fraud, deceit, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability or by delivery of payments or benefits in order to obtain the consent of a person having control over others for purposes of exploitation. This operation includes, in any case, prostitution of others or other forms of sexual abuse, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”¹

Situation and perspective of Trafficking

In relation to the flow of trafficking that is being observed on the international level, in Africa, the Middle East and Asia Pacific, we see a higher number of forced labor, while in Latin America, Europe and Central Asia, cases of sexual exploitation dominates. Concretely, the situation in Latin America stands out as an area where human trafficking, mainly women, children mostly girls or adolescents, is centered on sexual exploitation.



In Argentina, according to the information received at the Office of the Liberation and Support of Victims of Human Trafficking dependent on the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights of the Nation, since the penalty of the National Law N.26.364, in April, 2008, until December, 2011, there were 2.753 saved victims (402 minors and 2.351 adults). Consequently, 80 % were adults and 20 % were minors. This distribution in percentage between grown-up and minor victims was the same every year.

True story of sexual abuse

They offered me a job in a restaurant in the capital city, 400 km. from my house. Since there is no work in my village, I agreed. They advanced me 200 dollars and paid my trip by bus. When I arrived at the address they had given me, I was told that the restaurant was a few blocks away and I was given a ride by car. Once there, it was not a restaurant but a tavern. I was locked up, beaten, raped and forced to prostitute. Moreover, they told me if I talked, the same thing would happen to my daughters now that they knew where they lived...I never thought such a thing would happen to me...

Source: International Organization for Migration

Shedding light on this reality. Biblical References:

- Read each text with background music. Invitation is made to share situations from around us or our country that reflect the theme of human trafficking.

¹ Definition of the United Nations in the “Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish human trafficking, especially women and children” Compliment of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, Palermo, Italy, 2000.

⊕ Cain said to his brother Abel: “Let us go out;” and while in the open country, Cain set on his brother Abel and killed him.

The Lord asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I do not know”, he replied. “Am I my brother’s guardian?” “What have you done?” The Lord asked. “Listen to the sound of your brother’s blood, crying out to me from the ground.” **Gn 4: 8-10**

⊕ Pope Francis reflects on this text from Genesis:

*I have always been distressed at the lot of those who are victims of various kinds of human trafficking. How I wish that all of us would hear God’s cry: “Where is your brother?” (Gen 4:9). Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting undocumented labor? Let us not look the other way. There is greater complicity than we think. The issue involves everyone! This infamous network of crime is now well established in our cities, and many people have blood on their hands as a result of their comfortable and silent complicity. **Pope Francis, (Joy of the Gospel, no. 211)***

⊕ “And again I saw all the cruel things which are done under the sun; there was the weeping of those who have evil done to them, and they had no comforter: and from the hands of the evil-doers there went out power, but they had no comforter.” **(Ecclesiasticus 4, 1)**

✚ Charism, Marie Louise and Montfort:

- Let us begin this prayer with the Hymn “O Wisdom, come”
- To what do our Founders invite us today?

*Daughters of Wisdom, by our entire life we express the ardent love of Wisdom, who proposes a way of true happiness to everyone. **RL 1***

*With creative fidelity to the spiritual and apostolic experience of Montfort and Marie-Louise, we give priority to wounded humanity... We respond with “active love” and strive to address the causes of injustice. **RL 5***

Hymn 29
Contempt of the World

16. He so cleverly covers up
Sin with virtue itself;
So sin can enter easily
He flatters them, asserts his love
By his smiles, this great deceiver
Thrusts a dagger to the heart

Its bait so luscious and tender
We can barely escape it,
We can barely be safe
Happy those who have fled
To some far desert place.

36. The world, so skillful at deceiving

37. It promises its followers
Honors, pleasures, rotting goods
Which are basically deceiving

And make people awfully wretched
O Vanity of vanities
The greatest of truths!

All the days of its life
Are wasted or preoccupied
With nothing but stupidities
If not lost in idleness
It is busy with wrongdoing.

70. How deceived is this cursed world!

Letter 16 - To the Daughters of Wisdom

"If the Lord hears my prayers, my dear Daughters, you will receive an increase of graces and fervor...let us work harder than ever at our perfection, by faithfully fulfilling the details of our Rule and in accomplishing out humble duties to the best of our ability.

... The most comforting news I could receive would be to learn from you or from your Superior, that there is not one among you without an ardent desire for her perfection."

Petitions:

Response: **Jesus, Wisdom, we desire a better world**

- ⊕ For the millions who suffer in the world, caught in the nets of human trafficking.
- ⊕ For women deceived by false promises and who remain chained in prostitution.
- ⊕ For sexually abused children, submitted and mistreated who no longer smile and are condemned to a life without future.
- ⊕ For migrants abused and forced into unworthy and slave labor.
- ⊕ For those who are kidnapped for extraction and trade of organs.
- ⊕ For the authorities so they pay attention and deal with this problem with appropriate seriousness and persistence.
- ⊕ For the persecutors and pimps, so that upon seeing the horror and inhumanity of their actions put an end to these horrible activities of marketing of human beings.
- ⊕ For families who suffer the daily anguish of the disappearance of loved ones abducted by human traffickers.

➤ *Our Father*



Final prayer:

Give us, Lord, mercy and strength to become visible instruments of your love and to illuminate our actions, in order to cut the chains of slavery of millions of persons and to open for them paths of hope. In fulfilling this duty, may we follow Jesus who came to give freedom to the oppressed. May Mary, Queen of Peace accompany us. Amen.²

² Against Human Trafficking Team – National Commission of Justice and Peace, Episcopal Conference of Argentina