

UNITED IN MISSION

Atlantic-Midwest Province • Transforming the world through education

April 2016

Dear Colleagues,

In the January 2016 United in Mission newsletter, I presented two of the four commitments of the



A message from Judith Schaum, SSND

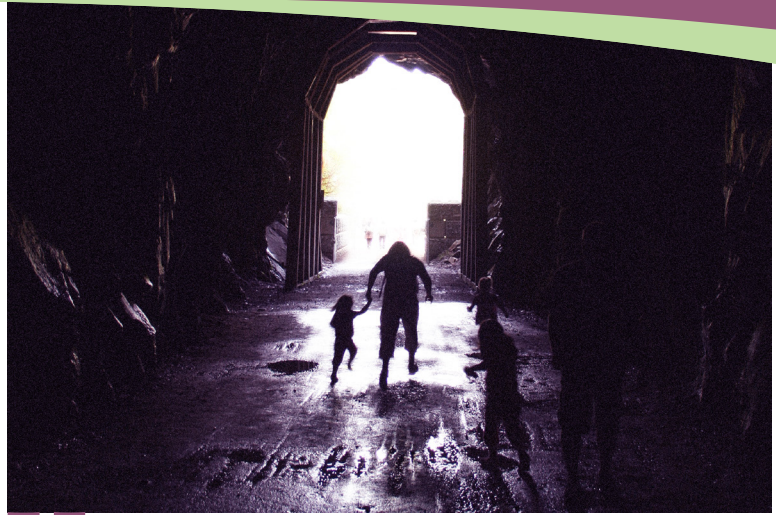
Atlantic-Midwest Province. These commitments were made in response to the SSND directional statement called “Love Cannot Wait.” The four commitments are

Water, Immigration, Trafficking and Haiti. In this newsletter, we will examine more closely our commitment to end human trafficking.

Why do School Sisters believe they should commit to combatting human slavery?

In 1855, a priest by the name of Father Olivieri brought slave girls to Germany to be educated. He had purchased them from a slave market in Cairo, freed them and hoped that various religious congregations would help educate these young girls. Mother Theresa gladly accepted three of the girls and helped

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Human Trafficking

The United Nations defines human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” We know that trafficking is a world-wide problem, a serious crime and a violation of human rights. Yet, thousands of children, women and men fall into the hands of traffickers.

Often when we think of human trafficking we limit our ideas to the sexual exploitation of women. But there are other types: trafficking for forced labor, sexual exploitation of children, trafficking of person in order to harvest their organs. Annually, an estimated 20.9 million people become victims of trafficking. In fact, human trafficking is the third largest source of profit for international organized crime. And there are more slaves in the world today than ever before.

The Atlantic-Midwest Province has opted to focus our commitment on two types of trafficking: sexual exploitation and unjust labor situations. Some examples follow.

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educate them. Two of the girls died at a very young age. However, one lived, was educated and worked as a receptionist in the Motherhouse in Germany. This desire to help those who are enslaved is part of the deep SSND story. It is only natural that SSNDs of today would want to work towards the enablement of all people.

You Are Sent, the Constitution of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, General Directory #33 B, states:

“We call ourselves and others to embody Gospel values and to live the social teachings of the church. Working toward the enablement of persons and the promotion of human dignity, we contribute to positive systemic change in society.”

In this spirit and after a great deal of prayer, education and dialogue, the sisters of the Atlantic-Midwest Province have taken a corporate stance against human trafficking. You are invited to join us in addressing this societal division with audacity and hope.

May our Risen Lord continue to bless you with joy and renewed faith.

Sincerely,

Judith Schaum, SSND
Associate Director of Ministry Services



A group of participants at the recent Love146 workshop

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Love146 Prevention Education program was designed to equip students to understand the realities of human trafficking, better protect themselves and their peers from risk, and get help when necessary. This program teaches youth how to recognize recruitment tactics, understand vulnerabilities, and develop skills to safely navigate potential and existing exploitative situations. The Justice and Peace Office of the Atlantic-Midwest Province provided one of these training programs for staff of our three sponsored high schools. The participating staff will implement the program in their respective high schools.

The sisters in Ontario, Canada have developed an educational program to combat sexual exploitation.

The program includes training police officers and health personnel to recognize the signs of sexual exploitation. They also make presentations

to local youth groups, schools parishes and the general public.

One way in which we will live out the AMSSND Corporate Stance is by “growing our influence as consumers and investors by insisting on slave-free supply chains while supporting those companies that engage in good practices. We will use only hotel chains who have adopted the Elimination of Child Prostitution and Trafficking (ECPAT) Code or similar policies to combat sex trafficking.”

Through this program, hotel staff is trained to recognize the signs of human trafficking and to report it. When traveling, you may want to inquire from your hotel whether or not they have adopted the ECPAT Code.

To locate businesses who have approved the code, [click here.](#)



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With regard to human labor trafficking, Fair Trade, USA, is a non-profit organization that seeks to empower farmers around the world by ensuring that their working



conditions are safe and they receive a fair price for their harvest or their labor. Through the efforts of this organization,

working families are able to eat better, keep their children in school and improve their health. To learn more about fair trade, visit www.fairtradeusa.org.



Left to right (clockwise):

Members of the cooperative voted to use some of their Fair Trade community development premiums to build a health center offering basic care that was previously several hours away. Nebulizers and other equipment are now on hand to accommodate everyday health needs.



Adela Caligua, migrant worker from Tehuipango, Veracruz, preselects recently harvested Fair Trade-certified organic asparagus.



Shirley Suarez Sisa, daughter of employee Luz Sisa, draws at the complementary nursery and daycare center provided by the company, Agrocoex in Ecuador.

Photos from top to bottom (clockwise): © 2012 Fair Trade USA. All Rights Reserved. James Rodriguez; Bennett Welch.

Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger once prayed:

“O Holy Spirit, enlighten us, strengthen us, so that we may comprehend our divine call and recognize what we are, what we should be, what we must and really want to do in order to reach this goal.”

May this prayer of Blessed Theresa be our prayer as we seek ways to respond to the evils of modern-day slavery.

Sisters of the Atlantic-Midwest Province are committed to work actively to eliminate the root causes of injustice, including human trafficking. Recently the sisters took a corporate stance against human trafficking.

Here is how you can support us in our efforts.

- Study and pray about the evils of modern slavery.
- Learn about fair trade products and make an effort to purchase them when possible.
- Calculate your slavery footprint at www.slaveryfootprint.org.

(No need to sign up to do the survey, just click the X to close the sign-up box.)

