



## EDITORIAL

### Freedom

An old post Civil War freedom song goes:  
*Oh, Freedom,  
Oh, Freedom,  
Oh, Freedom over me!  
And before I'd be a slave  
I'll be buried in my grave  
and go home to my Lord and be free!*

**This spiritual expresses the conviction that personal freedom is essential to a good life and something to fight for - and that being enslaved can be looked upon as worse than losing one's life.**

Living in a true democracy we take for granted the basic human rights of equality and liberty for all – the right to education, to choose a profession, to marry a person of our own choice, to travel and move around, to think and express our own opinion without being persecuted, to be treated fairly according to the laws of the land, to be able to shape our own life and our own future.

We tend to forget that “liberty and justice for all” has not always been and still is not the overriding principle everywhere. Former American slaves who were the first to sing the Negro Spiritual “Oh, Freedom”, knew from experience that the only good thing they could hope for was a better life in the next world – “to go home to the Lord and be free.”

Throughout history many people have felt the yoke around their neck. People have lived and died serving masters,

toiling as tenants, as farm-labourers or factory-workers for the enrichment of others; they have been executed, sent to concentration camps or spent good parts of their lives in labour camps as a punishment for opposing a dictatorial regime and have been persecuted or risked their lives for the privilege of expressing their own opinion.

Sadly enough, these crimes against humanity are not yet a thing of the past. Personal liberty and accepted freedoms are still at best a dream for many. Dictatorships hold citizens in a firm grip, and poverty enslaves people in various ways. In former times slave ships transported captured people across oceans and sold them as slaves; today this traffick has a new name for an old concept: it is called human trafficking. People are employed on slave contracts, have their passports taken away from them and suffer under unworthy working conditions with no possibility of

escape or they are forced into the sex-industry to pay fictional debts and with the threat that if they do not comply, their own life or the lives of their family members are at risk.

Not surprisingly, the majority of the victims are women and children. As Andante - an Association of Catholic Women's Organisations – these women and children are of a special concern to us. In our work we are trying to make a voice heard for those women who are not able to do so for themselves. We realise that we are not able to change the world on our own, but we are trying to join forces with those who work for a positive change, and in a small way we are hoping to high-light some important issues today, through our Magazine.

Human trafficking denies people basic freedoms, and it is based upon a system where people are regarded not as individuals with rights but rather as a commodity of value – as something you can trade – buy or sell. As Christian women we want to fight against practices and attitudes that dehumanise and enslave our fellow human beings. Christians believe that people are created in the image of God. They cannot compromise on the obligation to acknowledge the uniqueness and absolute value of each individual.

Mette Bruusgaard

## TRAFFICKING definitions

Human trafficking is a term for activities similar to slavery and is generally used in states where such detention and exploitation is considered an offence. The concept received wide acceptance internationally from the mid -1990s, among others by the United Nations, where it has been used especially for the abduction, sale, forced prostitution and sexual exploitation of women and children who have been trafficked from their home country (so-called transnational prostitution). But the word is also used of other ways of illegal exploitation of human labour or bodies, with the use of force, violence, fraud, or other forms of abuse of power, even in situations where the victim has not been transported from one country to another. Examples include forced labor, illegal adoption and involuntary service in war.

According to UN definitions as seen in the Palermo protocol from the year 2000, there is a clear distinction between human trafficking and human smuggling. The former involves the abuse of power and exploitation of people whereas the second signifies people who are willing to pay to gain illegal entry into a country where they are neither citizens nor permanent residents. In countries that follow the UN guidelines, human trafficking is a crime against the penal code chapter on detention, while human smuggling is a crime against the immigration law.

Because human trafficking takes place hidden from the authorities, but also because there are different definitions involving pimping and social

dumping, it is impossible to provide a secure and universal description of the size and extent of trafficking. Although a number of attempts have been made to estimate the magnitude of the problem, all such calculations must be made with reservations.

Still human trafficking has been projected as the third most lucrative illicit

trading in the world, after illegal trade and smuggling of drugs and weapons. About 2.5 million women and children have been estimated to be trafficked annually. Estimates have shown that in Europe there are between 300,000 and 500,000 driven into the prostitution market every year, and traffickers are taking the bulk of the profits.

## THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONVENTION ON ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings entered into force in 2008 to prevent trafficking, protect victims and prosecute traffickers. It encompasses all forms of trafficking (national/transnational – whether or not linked to organised crime) and covers all victims (women, men and children) and all forms of exploitation. It also includes measures to promote partnerships with civil society and international co-operation.

The focus is human rights. The convention defines trafficking as a violation of human rights and an offence to the dignity and integrity of the human being. This means that national authorities are held responsible if they do not take action to prevent human trafficking, protect victims and effectively investigate trafficking cases. The convention is relevant for countries throughout the world as it is a worldwide phenomenon.

The convention is set up as an independent monitoring mechanism to assess how well its provi-

sions are put into practice. This is based on two pillars: the Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) and the Committee of the Parties.

GRETA is composed of 15 independent and impartial experts from a variety of backgrounds from signatory countries. In carrying out its monitoring work, GRETA uses a variety of methods for collecting information (questionnaires/evaluation) A visit to the country concerned is carried out, allowing discussions with relevant officials. Evaluation visits give an opportunity to visit facilities where assistance is provided to victims of trafficking, making it possible to check on the effectiveness of measures taken to implement the convention.

The report of GRETA, together with any comments from the national authorities, are made public.

The Committee of the Parties is composed of national representatives of countries which have ratified the convention. On the basis of GRETA's

reports, the Committee of the Parties may adopt recommendations addressed to individual countries concerning the measures which should be taken to implement the findings.

The value of the monitoring work carried out under the Council of Europe is threefold:

- it assesses and stimulates compliance with the obligations under the convention
- it provides tailor-made guidance for each country
- it constitutes a forum for international co-operation, stimulating joint action

The results of this monitoring work are available online and have become a reference for all those involved in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

The Council of Europe also supports governments in the implementation of the convention and the recommendations emerging from its monitoring process.

For further information:

[www.coe.int/trafficking](http://www.coe.int/trafficking)



## RATIFICATION OF The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings

Council of Europe member States which have ratified the convention:

*Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.*

Belarus became the first **non member** state to accede to the convention on 26 November 2013.

Signatures not followed by ratification: Three Council of Europe member States have signed but not yet ratified the convention: *Estonia, Greece and Turkey.*

## PARLIAMENTS UNITED AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

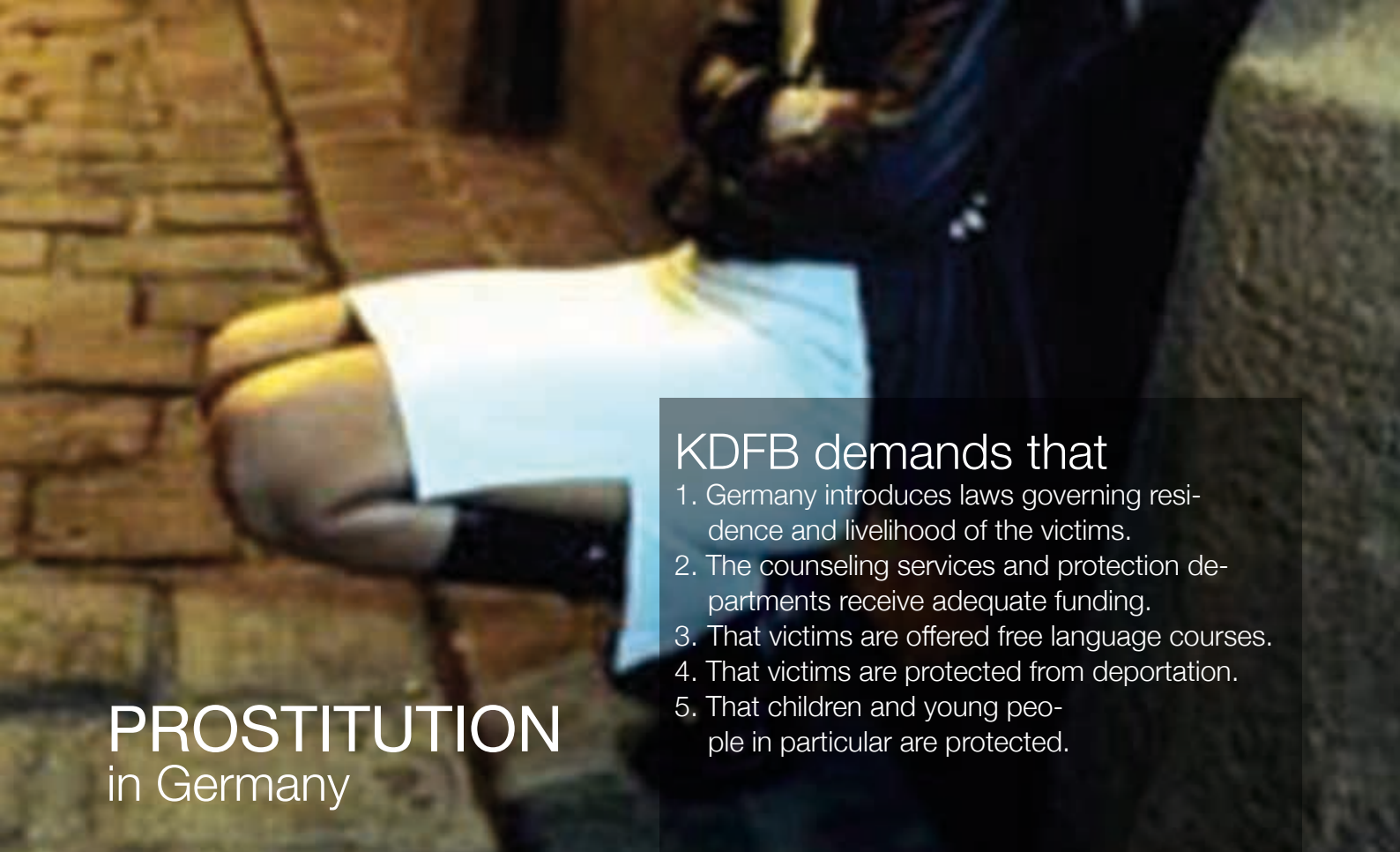
At a meeting held in Paris on Jan. 25, 2014, the Parliamentary Assembly expressed the following: “Trafficking in human beings is a human rights violation affecting thousands of people in Europe, from which no Council of Europe member state is immune.

*They expressed a*

“resolve to promote the further signature and ratification of the Convention by all Council of Europe member states, and its accession by non Council of Europe member states.

*They agreed that*

“accession by the European Union (EU) to the Convention would ensure that its high standards and human rights approach are uniformly applied throughout Europe”... and decided “to take up this issue further in their relations with EU institutions, in particular the European Parliament.”



# PROSTITUTION in Germany

## KDFB demands that

1. Germany introduces laws governing residence and livelihood of the victims.
2. The counseling services and protection departments receive adequate funding.
3. That victims are offered free language courses.
4. That victims are protected from deportation.
5. That children and young people in particular are protected.

From the website of KDFB:

### A woman of commodity

**It happens in the midst of Germany: In a brutal manner young women are forced to become submissive and pushed into prostitution.**

They are called Elena, Natalia and Svetlana. They are 16, 20, rarely more than 25 years old. They come from Belarus, Bulgaria and Ukraine, and are destitute. Their biggest wish: to work in "Europe". At home, they see no future.

Also Elena, 20, has made her way to a foreign country. She has gained nothing but rather lost everything: her self-confidence, her zest for life, her hopes. As a child Elena was abandoned by her father and mother and grew up with her grandparents in Minsk, the capital of Belarus. With Petar she wanted to start a family, but as soon as she had brought their child into the world, she was left by her boy-friend. How would she support herself and

the baby? She grabs a straw, answers an advertisement that promises her work in Germany, leaves her small child with her grand-parents, and travels west. In Hamburg she is expected by compatriots who remove her passport on the pretext to get her a work permit. She is immediately taken to a brothel. There she is told that she has no alternative to working in prostitution because she is in Germany illegally and because of the travel costs she is indebted to the brothel-owner. When Elena refuses, she is tied up for days, locked in chains in the basement. When the brothel-owner threatens to kill their grandparents, including her child, Elena sees no other way than to do what is expected of her. In the following years she has every night nine to ten customers; sometimes they come in pairs.

Actions against Trafficking helps!

Read more about this on:

[www.Frauenbund-bayern.de](http://www.Frauenbund-bayern.de)

(Themen – Gegen Frauenhandel)



## SOLWODI

SOLWODI is a short form for SOLidarity with WOMen in Distress.

Sister Dr. Lea Ackermann, foundress and president, laid the foundation for this charitable organisation in October 1985 in Mombasa, Kenya.



As a nun there, she encountered women and girls who were forced into prostitution as a result of poverty. Today, SOLWODI has 10 Counselling centres along the Kenyan coast.

Since 1987 SOLWODI has been active in Germany with 15 counselling centres, one reception centre and 7 shelters for foreign women and girls in distress or who are victims of human trafficking and forced prostitution, domestic violence or forced marriage. A new SOLWODI counselling centre in Romania was opened in 2010.

SOLWODI was also established in Austria in 2012.

SOLWODI offers holistic psychosocial care and counselling, shelter, legal intervention and medical assistance as well as support in returning to their home countries when migrants return. In order to help effectively, they have a close network with other counselling centres and organisations in Germany and abroad. In addition, they strive to increase public understanding for

these women and girls by organising awareness-raising publicity events.

In cases of trafficking or enforced prostitution, the victims are often transferred to SOLWODI by the police who found those women during swoops. To help the women needs quite some time. First of all they will be accommodated in a safe flat. When they agree to act as witnesses against the men who forced them into prostitution, an advisor will make sure – in cooperation with the police – that their livelihood will be paid for during the time of the courtproceedings and also thereafter.

During that time, SOLWODI will also provide social and psychological support. An advisor will always accompany the witness, wherever she goes, for example to see a doctor or lawyer. Since these women often suffer from a trauma, advisors will see to that they get the necessary help. In the time before the courtproceedings start, SOLWODI will also make sure that the women take German language courses. Furthermore, SOLWODI will provide a female lawyer, specialized in such cases, supporting the victims during the courtproceedings and as well accusing the abusers.

During the courtproceedings it is most important that the victims get good support, when they are confronted with the culprits since the defence counsels normally will try to convince the court that the women became prostitutes voluntarily. Here the support of the specialized female

lawyer, supporting the victim, is of great importance. During breaks in the court proceedings, it is also important that an advisor is available with whom the witness can discuss her emotions and anxieties.

Many women are afraid of the time following the court proceedings. The advisor will therefore try to support the woman in developing perspec-

tives for the future – both in terms of work and in their private life. SOLWODI also offers numerous ways of help to the women who have to stay in Germany, because they are threatened in their home countries, but also to those women who wish to go home.

[www.solwodi.de](http://www.solwodi.de)

[www.solwodi.at](http://www.solwodi.at)

[www.solwodi.ro](http://www.solwodi.ro)

## RENATE Background

RENATE was established in 2009 by a group of religious, representing several different Congregations, who work against Human Trafficking in Europe. Now in 2014, RENATE is firmly established under the aegis of UISG through TALITHA KUM, the International network of Religious.

### Mission

RENATE is a European network committed to work together against human trafficking and exploitation. RENATE shares the responsibility for various aspects of this ministry. RENATE aims to empower those whose voices are not being heard. RENATE has a prophetic role in the struggle for human rights for all people. RENATE is committed to the social teaching of the Church which considers this work as the mission of God.

### Membership

Membership of RENATE is open to:

- all religious female or/male – working/or living in Europe
- any lay person working with or for religious in the field of anti-trafficking in Europe.



*Imelda Poole  
( IBVM,  
president of  
RENATE )*

Friends of RENATE:

- all are welcome to support in different ways: financially, and with skills, expertise, and prayer
- they may come from all faith traditions or none
- they will receive updates and newsletters.

RENATE invites others to join this mission of God.

### Motivation

In the Vision of RENATE all people are created in the image of God. RENATE believes in a world where everyone has a right to human dignity. Human dignity cannot be compromised. Therefore RENATE labours to free the world from trafficking and exploitation.

### Analysis of Needs

Trafficking in human beings takes many different forms, and evolves with changing socio- economic cir-

cumstances. It targets women and men, girls and boys in vulnerable positions. The latest estimates from the International Labour Organization of June 2012 covering the period 2002- 2011 put the number of victims of forced labour, including forced sexual exploitation, to 20.9 million at a global level 2, with an estimated 5.5 million children being trafficked. However, this estimate is also believed to be conservative. The trends, patterns and working methods of traffickers are changing in all the different forms of trafficking in human beings, adapting to changing patterns of demand and supply. Forms of exploitation are often merged and intertwined, making it hard to detect the exact form of exploitation victims are subjected to. This makes it even harder to identify victims. It is necessary to be able to understand such trends quickly and ensure an effective response. Trafficking in human beings is specifically prohibited by Article 5 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. RENATE is responding to all of these issues whilst at the coal face they work with the victims and at the same time keep abreast of the latest trends. The members work in the field of training, advocacy, research and cross cultural cooperation to ensure that congregations working in this field in East Europe and who are outside the European Union, work alongside and receive an equal level of support and network involvement, as all European countries in West and Central Europe. This is a responsibility which RENATE embraces.

## General Objective

The goal of RENATE is to respond, in the light of Gospel values, to the issue of the trafficking of women, children and men.

## Specific Objectives

The main goal can be accomplished by working on the specific objectives of RENATE which include:

- Development of awareness-raising activities against Human Trafficking and the growing demand for this within all levels of society in Europe, using all forms of modern technology and communications.
- Networking and sharing resources, skills, knowledge.
- Research and implementation actions against the growing demand for such abuse in the countries of origin and destination.
- Working where possible against the root causes of Human Trafficking

**Awareness Raising** contains all activities which enable society to become familiar with human trafficking and exploitation problems. These include e.g.: website development and campaigns. **Networking** includes actions inside the network to make it stronger in its mission . These include e.g.: one main training each year focusing on a particular area of interest (social media, labour trafficking), cross cultural experiences and on-going English training for members who need it. **Advocacy and Research** section is composed of operations to enable the network's mission to be made visible to other authorities and networks, as well as to relevant actors who influence public opinion. It includes also a programme of research for RENATE and the publishing of tool-kits and other materials. All three sections are united by **Theological Reflection** which accompanies any action of RENATE. This



is the core that determines the way of working within the network and directs the attention to the values which are important for RENATE Members.

### Members of Core Group RENATE

[www.renate-europe.net](http://www.renate-europe.net)

The Co-ordinating Committee of Andante has nominated RENATE for the Václav Havel Prize 2014. Individuals or non-governmental institutions active in the defence of human rights can be nominated for the Prize.

## TRAFFICKING IN SCANDINAVIA

help me

There is no uniform attitude to prostitution in European countries. In legal terms the selling and buying of sexual services is handled quite differently in various countries. It is also a fact that this has influenced the type of problems that each country is facing. Some countries – especially the poorer countries within or outside Europe – are exporters of prostitution. Others are transit countries – places where the trafficked women pass through on their way to a certain destination – whereas some of the richer countries find themselves in the position as final destination.

The Scandinavian countries belong to the latter group. A few years back the calculation was that 15-1600 prostitutes operated in Oslo (a city of some 600.000 people) – many from Nigeria and Eastern Europe. Economic problems in the South resulted in a growing market in the North and the opening up of borders as a consequence of the Schengen agreement has made it easier for traffickers to operate freely.

Looking for ways to combat traffick-

ing, many countries have looked to the so-called “Scandinavian model”. In short the essence of this model is the introduction of laws to criminalise buyers of sexual services. This means that a person who is caught/observed as a customer will be taken in by the police and sentenced to six months of prison or fined according to circumstances. The prostitute - who is considered a victim - will never be fined or sentenced. The aim is instead to criminalise the people behind prostitution and those who profit from it, and secondly to help women in need. These laws were first introduced in Sweden in 1999, in Norway in 2008 and in Iceland in 2009. Denmark and Finland – where “the market” has been growing since their neighbouring countries introduced these policies – are considering adopting the same laws.

Arguments in favour or in opposition to these laws have been strong on both sides. In Sweden they point out that between 1998 and 2008, prostitution has diminished by 50%. It has been calculated that in 2005 there were between 200 and 400 trafficked women

and young girls in Sweden – whereas the neighbouring country Finland with a much smaller population – had 15 000 - 17 000. Stockholmers praise themselves, saying that “prostitution is no longer visible on their streets.”

Visibility is a key word for those opposing the laws. They argue that as a consequence of the new policies, prostitution has left the streets but is still flourishing in apartments, massage studios or the like where the trafficked women are just as much – or sometimes even more – in the hands of criminals since there is less visibility and thereby less control. In Norway there is a group from the Right-Liberal Party working to abolish the laws of 2008 for this reason, but up until now, the laws seem to stand firm.

Various groups in Scandinavia have been active in the work to help victims of forced prostitution, and the police have its own force, STOP, working specifically towards this goal. Much effort is put into trying to approach women who seem to be victimised, hoping to make them talk and eventually

report their situation before the court. Many fear to report on pimps and traffickers, fearing repercussion for themselves and their families – despite the fact that once the police and the court are processing such a case, the victim is granted asylum in the country till a sentence is passed. In the meantime different institutions are ready to care for the material needs of victims, and later help them to find a new future in the country.

A trafficker may be sentenced to 10 years of prison, a pimp to 5 years and advertising may result in a sentence of 6 months. When an organised group is behind the exploitation, the consequences are stricter – which is also the case when the victim is younger than 18. Despite a focused effort, however, the police have difficulties producing the necessary evidence to get the right people convicted, partly because the efficient network of the traffickers but also because victims are afraid to speak up, unfortunately, estimating that keeping silent is the lesser of two evils.

## FORCED LABOUR and other types of exploitation

Trafficking has become a very profitable business, enriching private recruitment agencies, intermediaries and employers. There is a growing demand for cheap labour in the developed world, and at the same time legal labour migration has diminished because of restrictive visa regulations, giving traffickers the opportunity to lure potential migrants into exploitive employment. Victims naively dream of

a better future, only to find themselves having to do menial and degrading work under slavlike conditions.

One form of force is the use of a bond, or debt, to keep a person in subjugation. This is referred to in law and policy as “bonded labour” or “debt bondage.” Many workers around the world fall victim to debt bondage when they assume an initial debt as part of the

**In addition to sexual exploitation, trafficking has many different arenas. Examples of trafficking can be as various as**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. forced labour                            | 6. forced marriages                          |
| 2. the sale of organs                       | 7. false/illegal adoption                    |
| 3. the sale of babies                       | 8. sex tourism and entertainment             |
| 4. exploitation of house-<br>maids/au pairs | 9. begging – placing<br>people on the street |
| 5. illegal employment                       | 10. exploitation for criminal activities     |

terms of employment. They then feel trapped, fearing that an escape will result in physical reprisals or deportation.

Domestic service is often unregulated by public authorities, and domestic workers may be trapped in servitude through the use of physical (including sexual) or emotional abuse. There is great demand in some wealthier countries for domestic servants, and the employers do not always pay decent wages – nor do they respect normal working hours.

Child labour has been under scrutiny for many years but despite improvements in some places, the problem is still urgent as examples flourish about sale and trafficking of children who are entrapped in bonded and

forced labour. Forced conscription into armed conflict is another brutal practice affecting children, as armed militias recruit some children by kidnapping, threat, and the promise of survival in war-ravaged areas.

Victims of trafficking for forced labour lose their freedom, becoming modern-day slaves. They usually experience permanent physical and psychological harm, isolation from families and communities, reduced opportunities for personal development, and restricted movement. Victims are often wary of law enforcement and psychologically dependent on their traffickers. Child victims are denied educational access, which reinforces the cycle of poverty and illiteracy.

(Information partly from UNODC 2014)

**HEARTS MOLESTED** by Virginia

Children – Sisters – Daughters – Sons: Lost. Taken. ENSLAVED to greed, abuse and twisted desires. Exploited but not discarded. Used again and again. Hearts crushed. Bodies violated. Minds bruised. Chains of despair – ALL is darkness. Cries muffled in the night	No chance to dream, living in nightmares. There is no Light There is no Hope There is no Love Cries of hearts – hearts molested. Who will hear them?  Courage: to care, to act, to do. Restore dreams of life unfettered: Beauty unveiled. Love revealed.	There is Light There is Hope There is Love Soldiers of Light, listen. Break chains crippling hearts and minds - The victims AND the victimizers. Cries of hearts – hearts molested... Who will help them?  YOU.
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# VATICAN SEMINAR ON TRAFFICKING

**1** In November 2013 the Vatican organised a seminar on how to combat human trafficking and slavery. More than 100 experts attended the seminar that was organized by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations.

In a preparatory statement for the seminar, it was pointed out that nearly 30 million people live in slavery across the globe – many of these trafficked by gangs for sex work and unskilled labour. The prospect is that human trafficking could well overtake drugs and weapon trafficking to become the world's most lucrative criminal activity, bringing in an estimated \$32 billion annually from illicit activities.

Pope Francis has made defending the poor and the vulnerable a cornerstone of his papacy. While he was an archbishop, he was a strong supporter of local activists and initiatives fighting human trafficking, and the seminar on how to combat this evil was held at his initiative.

50 recommendations made to the Pope by the expert group included that “trafficking should be defined as a crime against humanity in national and international legislation.” A statement said that “International or regional courts ... should be created because human trafficking is an international phenomenon that cannot be properly prosecuted and punished at the national level.” The idea is that “it should be something along the lines of European courts that go beyond borders.”  
*(Reporting/editing: Philip Pullella/Alistair Lyon)*

**2** A group of women religious, headed by Sr. Eugenia Bonetti, asked the Pope to raise greater awareness in the church about the issue of human trafficking by establishing a worldwide day of prayer and fasting because “we need to do something that joins us together.” She told Catholic News Service “that the Pope was very interested in our suggestion and asked us what date we would like the day to be. We told him Febr. 8 – the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese slave who found freedom in Italy and became a nun in the late 19th century”.

Sister Eugenia Bonetti has spent the past two decades fighting the illegal sex trade and helping victims – together with some 250 women religious through the Union of Major Superiors in Italy.

Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, chancellor of the academies, admitted that “The Church as a whole is not sufficiently aware of the problem – or has not focused deeply enough on how serious a problem it is.”

He told journalists that the November meeting was the first time the Vatican academies had dedicated a session to studying human trafficking. Now they will have another meeting next year in the run-up to a larger gathering in 2015.

*(From: Carol Glatz/Catholic News Service)*

**3** ‘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 labour? 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 - Evangelii Gaudium 211.)*

## THREE RELIGIOUS SISTERS REPORT ON THE SEMINAR (excerpts)

Three members of RENATE attended this workshop, Sr Marie H el ene Haligon, (Good Shepherd - Paris), Sr Patricia Mulhall, (Brigidine – UK), and Sr Imelda Poole (IBVM – Albania). The ‘observers’ were mainly from grassroots mission and working in the field of anti-trafficking, representing a variety of organisations such as social services, the police, law and the justice system, people working in shelters in direct action with victims, members of Parliament desiring to make changes in the law on the side of the victim, NGOs working in the field, and bishops and clergy from the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Every continent in the world was included and all continents reflected on their experiences of trafficking in human persons within their own cultural differences. It really exposed the manner in which traffickers are sharp in using the culture to traffic people according to the weaknesses in the law and the levels and kinds of poverty within the local reality.

Many statistics were shared regarding the extent of this evil. Many million have been identified as trafficked in the EU yet the number of victims declared as trafficked in the courts had fallen in the recent past by 32%. The issue of corruption was explored both at the level of government and within other statutory systems. Global poverty and a breakdown of values were seen to be the root causes for the increase in the trafficking in human persons. Many of the vulnerable were being led to succumb to the wiles of the traffickers who promise a way out of poverty



which would lead to a better life for their families and for themselves. We reflected on the phenomena of the movements of peoples around the globe which has reached momentous proportions and which is truly historic. Globalisation and the issues of cross border protection laws were impacting on the journey taken by the migrant. The migrant is also suffering from a global culture which rejects the migrant and which has lost the concept that all people are made equal and all are created in the image of God. This has forced the migrant into the underworld of the illegal market and often into the hands of the trafficker. The secularisation of many societies and the challenge for the people on the edge facing an inhuman and undignified life has created an ambience ripe for the trafficker to be successful in their trade. The change in the numbers living below the poverty line plus this explosion of secularisation in many countries has led to a growth in the culture of individualism. This culture has replaced a fair and just society which emphasises care of the vulnerable and which puts the community at its heart. The sug-



gestion that we have a global crisis of values was discussed at length. Many would see this as being one of the prime reasons for the growing phenomena of human trafficking today.

Many questions were asked: Where do we stand in the midst of this evil practice. Are we on the side of the victim? Do we look for compensation for the victim? Has every country, including the Vatican State, signed the European Convention Against trafficking? How do we view the immigrant? Are we aware that the only way forward is to build partnerships to combat this crime? Are we in partnership and networking with others in the field or are we working in isolation? Are illegal employment agencies operating in our vicinity? Who is making checks and who cares about the exploitation of the migrant worker. What about the question of 'The Demand'. The trafficking in organs was also an important issue discussed during these two days.

Several organisations were represented and some shared the fruit of their work in prevention or direct action against trafficking. Two organisations stood out. One was called ProKids and was based on the science of DNA to ensure that lost children could be repatriated with their families. One case story had its roots in Haiti. Children were stolen from Haiti by traffickers during the time of the earthquake. These children travelled by bus and were tracked down in Columbia and all except 7 children were restored to their families due to the scientific DNA testing and matching of each of these children by the organisation 'ProKids'. Another organisation called 'Walk Free'" is making a scientific analysis of those trafficked and the countries from which they are trafficked, the roots

they take and the destination they reach. They are looking at the methodology of the traffickers. They are also looking at the issue of 'Demand, a very important issue discussed many times at this forum. 'Walk Free' is an organisation which campaigns against trafficking, raises awareness and is advocating on behalf of the victim. The website called 'Walk Free' encourages all to join in this world wide campaign to end modern day slavery and now over 1 million people have joined the campaign to date.

[www.walkfree.org](http://www.walkfree.org)

[www.dna-prokids.org](http://www.dna-prokids.org)

*Imelda Poole (IBVM), Marie Hé-lène Halligon (Good Shepherd), Patricia Mulhall (Brigidine)*

## SPIRITUAL RESPONSE TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**The Bible has much to say about equal treatment and justice – especially in regard to vulnerable groups like orphans, widows, foreigners and the poor.**

Here are some quotes to reflect upon:

**God's attitude toward injustice and the oppressed:**

1. "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing." (*Deuteronomy 10:18*)
2. "The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble." (*Psalms 9:9*)
3. "You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the op-

pressed, in order that man, who is of the earth, may terrify no more.” (Psalm 10: 17-18)

4. “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling.” (Psalm 68:5)
5. “For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in His sight.” (Psalm 72: 12-14)
6. “The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.” (Psalm 103:6)
7. “He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free...” (Psalm 146:7)
8. “”...He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.” (Luke 4:18,19 – Isaiah 61:2)

### God commands to us regarding justice:

1. “Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge.” (Deuteronomy 24:17)
2. “When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.” ( Deuteronomy 24:19)
3. “Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed.” (Psalm 82:3)
4. “Do not move an ancient boundary stone, or encroach on the fields of the fatherless.” (Proverbs 23:10)
5. “Learn to do right! Seek justice, en-

courage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” (Isaiah 1:17)

6. “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chain of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?” (Isaiah 58:6)
7. “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” (James 1:27)

The most famous story in the Bible that deals with helping the oppressed is the story of how Boaz helped his relative Naomi and her daughter-in-law, Ruth in the Book of Ruth in the Old testament.

Key words here are: awareness – opportunity – response – protection.

Aware of the plight of Naomi and Ruth, Boaz had the opportunity to help them, and responded by taking definite steps to provide for them and protect Ruth from other workers.

## CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

These are also key words in the effort to help victims of human trafficking.

Experience with victims of trafficking has revealed that almost every victim has two essential spiritual questions they are asking:

- Why did God allow this to happen to me?
- What does God think of me now?

As Christians, we are specifically

able to tangibly show them the answer to the second question through our own acts of love. While a theological discussion about suffering may not be useful, several key assurances will lay the foundation for healing: validate that they have suffered a great evil and assure them that God the Father loves them.

Often trafficking victims have been betrayed by those closest to them. (Parents may have sold them – their only relationship is often their pimp or Madame...), and the ability to have a trusting relationship must be rebuilt. The concept of a trustworthy, caring Father must be demonstrated by compassionate care. If they appear to be closed, angry and hostile, sympathize with and validate their feelings. Affirm that they are the victims of a great evil, and encourage that God promises justice to the unrighteous, and provides care for victims. A majority of these survivors will benefit from having access to a spiritually mature mental health professional who is able to help them process the evil that has occurred to them. In addition, spiritually mature believers who have a strong understanding of why evil exists in the world, can be of great benefit to survivors as they process their experience.

As Christian believers motivated by the love of God to help these survivors, we must be careful to continually see them as fellow human beings in need of God’s love, and not to make them into a “project” that needs converting. This means that we should never “push” our beliefs onto survivors. Instead, we should allow them to seek answers in their own time and at their own pace.

Our spiritual goal should simply be to love them with the love

of Christ, and allow His Spirit to draw them to Himself.

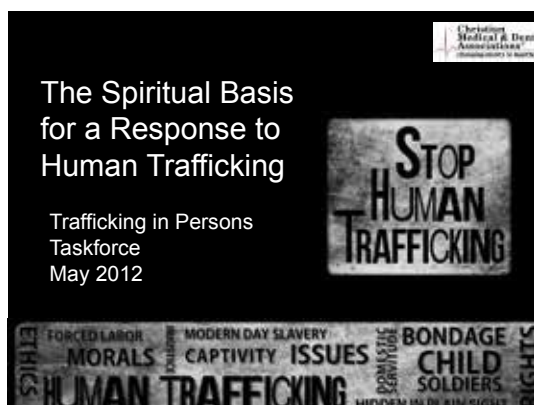
*The texts are an excerpt of a presentation: Changing hearts in Healthcare at a meeting for Christian Medical and Dental Associations in the UK sent by Renate.*

**Additional resources:**  
**Caring for Trafficked persons**  
<http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/CTHandbook.pdf>

**I Thought it could never happen to boys**  
<http://bit.ly/VIN5At>

*Good News About Injustice*  
**by Gary Haugen**

*The Wounded Heart*  
**by Dan Allender**



## FROM NBCW:

### 'A vicious trade in women and girls'

was a headline in the 2004 Autumn edition of Catholic Omnibus - quarterly paper of NBCW. The article referred to a television drama '**Sex Traffic**' after which journalists and members of the public called to ask whether the programme was an accurate portrayal of what was happening to women and girls in Europe, or just sensationalism. In 2005, during a meeting with the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, the NBCW reported concerns about the construction of cabins for men to use to buy sex during the World Cup in Germany. This brought a new and disturbing potential for trafficking to be associated with international sport. Perhaps, as a result of European wide concern expressed at this time, greater efforts were made to provide safeguards against trafficking during the British Olympics in 2012. In 2006, the Middlesbrough Diocesan Women's Commission of the NBCW invited Barnardo (a British charity) to talk about the work they were doing to raise awareness of the sexual exploitation of children (boys and girls) on the streets. Their knowledge and experience raised awareness of the shocking reality of grooming and child prostitution in every town and village. The work of the NBCW on raising awareness on trafficking has also been informed and guided by the experience and expertise of two remarkable women: Sr Imelda Poole and Sr Lynda Dearlove. Sr Imelda was a member of the Middlesbrough Diocesan Women's Commission before being asked to go to Albania. As a result of her work at home and abroad, Imelda brings invaluable insights to the many situations and circumstances

that can lead to the trafficking of boys and girls, men and women. Sr Lynda Dearlove established 'Women at the Well' a place of refuge for women in London. Through this work she also brings hands on experience and understanding of trafficking and the exploitation of women and young girls.

In 2011, a new partnership was established between the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the Metropolitan Police. On a pod cast available on the Bishops' Conference web site there is a discussion on the partnership with Scotland Yard's Trafficking and prostitution Unit.

In May 2012 the Bishops' Conference and the Vatican Justice and Peace Office hosted a Conference on combating human trafficking. For more information go to [www.cbcew.org.uk](http://www.cbcew.org.uk) (Office for migration and policy). Following this, the Bishops' Conference has encouraged every diocese to raise awareness of Human trafficking.

The Diocese of Middlesbrough have already invited the Women's Commission to take up this task and they are in the process of planning an event for September 30th, working with Middlesbrough Council Cohesion Partnership, Barnardo's (The Sexual Exploitation of Children on Our Streets (**SECOS**) and **Unchosen** - a very effective anti-trafficking charity raising awareness of human trafficking through short clip film campaigns nationwide. Each film clip is based on a real life trafficking situation.



# THE COCOA 2013-2016



Picture of the CoCoA taken in Bonn, January 2014.

*Front from left to right:*

- Traudl Deckelmann
- Mette Bruusgaard
- Mary McHugh
- Vroni Peterhans
- Gisela Hoeve

*Back from left to right:*

- Zsuzsa Lacz-kóné Huszka
- Maria Demeterova
- Inese Augskalne

A short presentation of the CoCoA members (in the order mentioned)



**WALTRAUD (Traud)  
DECKELMANN (74)**

Traudl is German, lives in Bavaria and comes from the *Katholischer Deutscher Frauenbund (KDFB)* where she has held a number of executive positions.

Traudl is a dentist with a varied background from both a dental clinic and from teaching at a vocational college. Although retired she is still periodically engaged in dental work in kindergartens and schools.

In April 2013 she was elected to the CoCoA. She is one of two vice-presidents and has had The Secretariat as a special responsibility. She is also part of a Project Group within

the CoCoA that is looking into the future needs of organisations belonging to Andante.

Standing as candidate to the CoCoA, she expressed that she *“would like to contribute, through the work of Andante, to the strengthening of the role of women in politics, in the Church and society.”*



**METTE  
BRUUSGAARD (69)**

is Norwegian, lives in Oslo and comes from *Norges Katolske Kvinneforbund (NKKF)* where she was the former president, now the editor of the newsletter.

Mette has retired from teaching upper-secondary school (English, French and History of Religions).





She has been on the CoCoA since 2010, and is today “the other” vice-president. Mette has as her assigned responsibilities the Andante Magazine and the translation service.

Mette has focused on Andante for “its profile as a grass-roots organisation of Catholic women, creating a valuable network and a voice for Christian women in Europe”.

She was elected to the CoCoA in 2013 and is part of the Project Group.

Vroni’s motivation for her work for Andante is “to work for the network of Europe’s women and to be a link between Andante and SKF” and she sees her work as “using her expertise and strength as part of the team to further the concerns of women”.



**MARY  
McHUGH (65)**

is English, lives in Durham and comes from the *National Board of Catholic Women (NBCW)* where she has held both leadership and other executive positions.

Mary is a medical doctor and presently works part-time in a hospital.

In 2010 she was elected to the CoCoA, and then in 2013 she succeeded Marie-Louise van Wijk van de Ven as president (chair).

In addition to being chair of the board of Andante and organising activities, Mary has duties of representation and contact with the Council of Europe.

Mary’s goal is “to serve the member organisations of Andante and to make Andante more widely known in Europe.”



**GISELA  
HOEVE (68)**

is Dutch, lives in Amsterdam and comes from *Unie Nederlandse Katholieke Vrouwenbeweging (Unie NKV)*

Gisela is a theologian and has held a number of Church-related positions – among others in the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women. She was elected to the CoCoA in 2013 and is today responsible for Finances. She has also been engaged in developing a new website for Andante.

Gisela has stated that her motivation to stand as a candidate was based on the fact that she “likes to work together with women from different cultures/backgrounds” and to take part in work that can help others “in their daily life, in their positions, in their families, in their churches.”



**VERONIKA (Vroni)  
PETERHANS (50)**

is a German-speaking Swiss and comes from the *Schweizerischer Katholischer Frauenbund (SKF)* where she is co-president of the Canton association and member of the SKF executive committee.

Vroni is a primary school teacher as well as a farmer and a catechist.



**ZSUZSANNA (Zsuzsa)  
LACZKÓNE  
HUSZKA (47)**

is Hungarian, lives in Budapest and comes from *Keresztény Női Felhőtképzési Egyesület (KNFE)*. She has been working as a volunteer group leader for her organisation both in Hungary and in Romania.

Zsuzsa is an economist and has held various positions within the banking system



where today she has the position as deputy director in the Risk Department.

She has been on the CoCoA since 2010 and has had several tasks in connection with finances and the treasury as her responsibility. Today she is also part of the Project Group.

Zsuzsa says that she is “*very keen to enrich the European co-operation in women’s issues and to “serve as a bridge between Andante, the European organisations and KNFE.”*”



**MARIA DEMETEROVA (64)**

is Slovakian, lives in Bratislava and comes from the Katolicke hnutie zien Slovenska (KHZS) where she is the president.

Maria holds degrees in both Chemistry and Physics as well as Journalism and has had a number of important positions in politics – such as Deputy Lord Mayor of Bratislava and member of the Slovak Parliament.

She was elected to the CoCoA in 2010 and is today part of the Project Group.

Maria wants to be able to contribute with her experience “*in the field of bridge-building between Catholic Women’s organisations – particularly in Central and Eastern Europe*”.



**INESE AUGSKALNE (57)**

is Latvian, lives in Riga and comes from *Latvijas Kaolu sieviešu apvienība (LKSA)* where she is the vice-president.

She has a background of teaching in vocational and secondary schools (History, philosophy, religion) as well as being a lecturer and deputy director at an institute of Religious Sciences.

Inese was elected to the CoCoA in 2010 and has among other things been engaged in data-related tasks. She is today the skype-manager and responsible for the data-base.

Inese hopes to “*learn from the experience of other women’s organisations*” and together with others use her “*understanding of the tasks and responsibilities of women’s organisations in Church and society*”.

## JANUARY SESSION of The Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe 27-30 January 2014 in Strasbourg.

The Conference of INGOs is recognised as an institution of the Council of Europe. Andante – together with 400 INGOs – holds participatory status at the Conference which meets officially twice a year during the ordinary sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. At this year's meeting in January, Andante's permanent representative, Marie-Louise van Wijk-van de Ven, together with the chair, Mary McHugh, and board member, Mette

Bruusgaard, represented Andante.

The main committees of the Conference (Education and Culture Committee, Democracy, Social Cohesion and Global Challenges Committee and Human Rights Committee) all presented work and results since the last meeting. Between sessions representatives met in work groups with themes such as: *Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Education to new technologies,*

*Living Together, History Teaching and Relations with the European Union.*

Between other programmes participants were invited to attend side-events on “A Europe without torture” and antisemitism. The Parliamentary Assembly which was debating the situation in Syria and smaller groups of the Parliamentary Network focusing on “Sexual exploitation of girls” were open to everyone.

The Conference of INGOs adopted texts on hate speech, the situation in Ukraine and human rights and religions.

### Hate speech:

On the background of growing racism and intolerance in Europe, the Human Rights Committee felt that civil society must play a role in tackling this problem since hate speech can have harmful consequences for democracy, social cohesion and human dignity. For this reason they decided to include the fight against hate speech in their 2014-2016 programme – with the aim to prepare a “Civil Society White Paper to combat hate speech” as well as a “Civil Society forum” together with the media and political parties in order to draw up a Charter of good conduct for tackling hate speech more effectively.

### The situation in Ukraine:

At the initiative of the Conference of INGOs, a group of civil society representatives from Ukraine participated in several meetings at the Council of Europe both at the Conference of INGOs and with the Secretary General and the Commissioner for Human Rights. Great concern was reported regarding the current situation, in particular in terms of Human Rights violations. The Conference of INGOs adopted a Resolution urging Council of Europe bodies to monitor the ongoing situation and

offered to be the platform to promote dialogue and civil society involvement to help resolve the crisis in Ukraine.

### Human Rights and religions:

Recognising that violence is infecting community life, and certain religious groups are contributing to the problems even though the religions themselves promote peace, the Conference of INGOs proposed avenues of approach and action for members and leaders of religions and made as well an appeal to “all European NGOs and each and every citizen of Europe, whatever their family background, whatever organisation they belong to and whatever their status, beliefs, professional or other responsibilities” to be guided by the five key principles, namely

- 1) freedom of conscience,
- 2) non-discrimination,
- 3) mutual autonomy and separation of the state and religious institutions,
- 4) state neutrality in relation to religions and belief systems,
- 5) education in intercultural dialogue, with due regard for its religious and philosophical dimension.

### CINGO meeting 29/01

The Christian INGOs have formed a small, informal network that meets one evening during the Strasbourg sessions and otherwise keep in touch on the net. The theme of this meeting was “La réciprocité” (Reciprocity) which is an important theme in regard to inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue. It is a concept that deals with spiritual rather than political aspects of human interaction – where people recognize “the other” not as part of a labelled entity, but as a person like themselves. As Christians we are obliged to treat each and everyone as human beings. Instead of asking: “If we are not for ourselves, then who is?”, we should say: “If we are for ourselves, then who are we?”

## NEXT ISSUE OF THE ANDANTE MAGAZINE

is planned for the month of September 2014.

One topic that we would like to highlight is the upcoming Synod of the Bishops on the Family. As you all know, there has been a questionnaire sent to key persons in some countries and more widely distributed in others. The CoCoA would like to have feedbacks from our different member organisations regarding how this has been handled in various dioceses and how it has been received and discussed by lay-people. Please, fill us in on information from your country! Underneath you will find a letter composed by kfd that you may find inspirational.

### PASTORAL CHALLENGES TO THE FAMILY IN THE CONTEXT OF EVANGELIZATION

The Catholic Women's Association of Germany (Katholische Frauengemeinschaft Deutschlands - kfd) welcomes the initiative of the Holy See to question the bishop conferences on the "Pastoral challenges to the family in the context of evangelization" before the Synod of Bishops about family in autumn 2014. Many bishops in Germany have decided to pass the preparatory document to the pastoral councils on all levels and furthermore to all the faithful with the request to contribute their opinion. The Catholic Women's Association of Germany (kfd) takes up the invitation taking into account its own fundamental programs and positions and the experiences of women.

kfd adds its opinion along the issues of the preparatory document.

### Marriage and family

Marriage of woman and man are fundamental forms of human companionship as well as family. The marriage of a baptized woman and a baptized man bear the characteristics of sacramentality and indissolubility. Thus and in their mutual love and faithfulness God's love and faithfulness of man may be experienced. This Christian understanding of marriage and family is the foundation and model of the whole working of the Catholic Women's Association of Germany. The experiences of our members show the tension between the teaching of the church and the reality of life: the failure of married couples, the separation and/or the civil divorce are social facts the church in particular has to recognize. kfd knows the specific affliction of divorced and remarried women and men who suffer from being excluded from the sacraments of reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist. Under this aspect we find it encouraging and right that Pope Francis writes in the apostolic letter "Evangelii gaudium": "The holy Eucharist is not a reward for perfection but a generous remedy and nurture for the weak." The Catholic Women's Association of Germany (kfd) supports a church in which women and men are unconditionally accepted and feel at home regardless of their living situation and their way of life. Women and men who are living separately and/or divorced should talk freely and

without taboos about their life situation in church. kfd expects that the experiences of separation and divorce appear in the life of parishes and in services. kfd stands up against the exclusion of divorced and remarried couples from the sacraments

## To the situation of children

The forms of family life have changed a lot due to social changes. Children grow up in a variety of family constellations. For the Catholic Women's Association of Germany each child as a gift of God is to be welcomed in our society and church. Children need the experience and the acceptance that their family is "good and all right" and not "irregular and imperfect". The consequences of the social changes should not be put on the children and should not be an obstacle for growing familiar with the church. kfd considers especially the growing number of single parents.

## Homosexual couples

The Catholic Women's Association of Germany knows about the special topic of homosexual ways of life in society and church. kfd offers all women the experience of community and value orientation and gives home regardless their way of life and life situation. kfd pursues the goal that women are no more discriminated, despised, wounded or exploited because of their way of life.

## Sexuality

kfd sees sexuality as a vitality created by God which sets women and men in relation to oneself and to others. The church must talk about physicality and human sexuality in a relieving and esteeming way and depict an ethic of sexuality today and in future which takes woman and man seri-

ously in her/his shaping of sexuality in responsibility and respect of the other.

## Transparency

kfd asks the German Bishop Conference to put the utmost transparency on the passing on of the statements to the Holy See. It expects that the German statements will be published. Participation in the Bishop's synod and in other committees kfd wishes and expects that women will be consulted in the extraordinary Synod of Bishops – as well as in future in other committees of the church - so that their experiences and life realities which are distinct from men's can be taken into account. The Catholic Women's Association of Germany (kfd) as the biggest catholic women's organization in the Catholic Church in Germany is ready to contribute its great richness of experiences of women's life in the discussions and considerations.

Board of Catholic Women's  
Association of Germany  
Düsseldorf,  
12th December 2013



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