

# INTERFAITH TOOLKIT ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Human Trafficking Awareness Month**

---

**January 2019**

*Resources for Worship and Action*

**Compiled by  
The Washington Inter-Religious Staff Community  
Working Group on Human Trafficking**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>About the Toolkit</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Basics of Human Trafficking</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Migration and Trafficking</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Consumerism and Trafficking</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The Impact on Children</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Faith-Based Resources</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Bahá'í</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Catholic</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Jewish</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Muslim</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Protestant</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Taking Action</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Further Resources</b>	<b>16</b>

# ABOUT THE TOOLKIT

The Washington Inter-Religious Staff Community (WISC) is an informal convening of the Washington, D.C.-area offices of national-level religious denominations and faith-based groups. Organizations participating in WISC work on a range of public policy issues, and seek to contribute a moral and faith-informed perspective to the discourse and advocacy around these topics.

WISC has several working groups that focus on issues of particular concern to the faith-based community. The WISC Working Group on Human Trafficking was formed in 2015 in recognition of a growing awareness among people of all faiths regarding the oppression and injustice of human trafficking and a burgeoning movement within the faith-based community to end all forms of modern-day slavery. The Working Group is intended to serve as a resource and a catalyst for the faith community as it seeks to engage more deeply with the issue and work shoulder-to-shoulder with governments and civil society to help end trafficking.

Members of the Working Group collaborated together to compile this toolkit. While it is not exhaustive in the information it presents, the toolkit is intended to be a starting point for faith communities around the country as they seek to educate themselves and take action during Human Trafficking Awareness Month each January.

The toolkit contains basic information about trafficking, as well as specific information on the connection between consumerism and trafficking. We encourage communities to focus on the way in which consumerism and lack of accountability in business supply chains result in millions of people being trafficked or enslaved. The toolkit also contains faith-based resources for several faith traditions, including prayers, scriptures, statements, fact sheets and resolutions. Finally, the toolkit contains ideas for local faith communities to take action against human trafficking, as well as links to additional print and multimedia resources.

We hope this toolkit will help local faith communities across the country raise awareness, promote dialogue, and take moral action against the scourge of modern-day slavery.

# THE BASICS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## Slavery Isn't Dead.

Human trafficking, also known as trafficking in persons, is the illegal trade of people for exploitation or commercial gain. It is a form of modern-day slavery. On any given day, 40 million men, women, and children are victimized by human trafficking.

<b>Old Slavery</b>	<b>Modern-Day Slavery (Human Trafficking)</b>
Legal ownership of human being as property	No legal ownership of human being
High purchase cost	Low purchase cost
Shortage of potential slaves	Surplus of potential slaves
Low short-term profits	Very high profits accrued very fast
Long-term relationship (generations)	Short-term relationship (weeks/months/years)
Encouraged to reproduce	Prevented from conceiving
Slaves maintained	Slaves disposable

**The primary forms of trafficking are labor trafficking, sex trafficking and forced marriage.**

### Examples of Trafficking include:

- Forced and bonded labor
- Child labor
- Debt bondage among migrant laborers
- Involuntary domestic servitude
- Forced sex and sex trade
- Child prostitution
- Child soldiers
- Forced marriage

“From the girl forced into prostitution at a truck stop, to the man discovered in a restaurant kitchen, stripped of his passport and held against his will. All trafficking victims share one essential experience: the loss of freedom.” – Polaris

### Factors that facilitate trafficking include:

- Poverty
- Labor shortages or surpluses
- Corruption
- War and violent conflict
- Organized crime
- Racism
- Abuse and social violence
- Climate change and natural disasters
- Sexual and gender-based discrimination and violence
- Media images and cultural norms that promote internalized oppression

“Modern slaves are rarely held by chains, but instead slaveholders use violent force, fraud, and/or psychological coercion.” – The Free Project

### Trafficking in persons has been outlawed:

- Globally by three UN conventions known as the Palermo Protocols
- In the US by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and other legislation

<b>ACT</b> (one or more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment</li> <li>▪ Transport</li> <li>▪ Transfer</li> <li>▪ Harboring</li> <li>▪ Receipt of Persons</li> </ul>	+	<b>MEANS</b> (one or more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Threats or use of force</li> <li>▪ Coercion</li> <li>▪ Abduction</li> <li>▪ Fraud</li> <li>▪ Deception</li> <li>▪ Abuse of power</li> <li>▪ Payments or benefits</li> </ul>	+	<b>PURPOSE</b> (one or more) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Slavery or similar practices</li> <li>▪ Force labor</li> <li>▪ Removal of organs</li> <li>▪ Sexual exploitation</li> <li>▪ Other exploitation</li> </ul>
<b>= TRAFFICKING</b>				

# MIGRATION & TRAFFICKING

*“The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. They make one story become the only story.”* – Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie

Over 40 million men, women and children are victims of modern slavery around the world<sup>1</sup>. Also known as human trafficking, modern slavery takes many forms including sex slavery, forced labor, debt bondage, and domestic servitude. The most common type of human trafficking is forced labor, which can involve jobs such as construction, manufacturing, agriculture and fishing. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), almost 25% of victims of forced labor were living outside of their home countries, demonstrating migration’s significant role in human trafficking.<sup>1</sup>

Although victims of human trafficking span all demographics, there are particular vulnerabilities that lead to a higher risk and susceptibility of trafficking<sup>2</sup>. The Polaris Project reports individuals fleeing war or conflict, victims of domestic violence, runaway and homeless youth are frequently targeted by traffickers.<sup>3</sup> Driven by desperation to flee violence, persecution, or human rights violations, immigrants and refugees often leave home without any paperwork, trust all of their finances with smugglers who promise to bring them to their desired destination and travel to countries where they do not know the language or have local contacts<sup>4</sup>.

This was the reality for Kyi and his family, who fled Burma to escape the Burmese military’s suppression of the Rohingya. While staying in a refugee camp, an agent offered good paying jobs in northern India to him and his family as an opportunity to rebuild their lives. However, once they arrived in Agra, they knew they had been deceived. They found themselves forced to work long hours for no wages as garbage pickers and plastic bottles collectors.”<sup>5</sup>

Immigrants and refugees who have paid significant recruitment and travel fees often become highly indebted to traffickers or other intermediaries. Traffickers use their financial debt as leverage to control and manipulate their victims, particularly resulting from their lack of familiarity with their surroundings, the local laws and their rights, the language and cultural understanding.

To address the global epidemic of human trafficking, particularly as it impacts immigrants and refugees, we must support prevention measures, such as strong migration governance, as well as increase awareness of both the prevalence and signs of trafficking.<sup>5</sup> Although the issue of human trafficking is large, there are tangible ways to make a difference! Educating your community on the presence and signs of trafficking by hosting trainings and distributing educational resources can significantly impact vulnerable individuals nearby and abroad.

---

<sup>1</sup> 2016 Global Estimates of Modern Slavery. International Labor Organization. 2017.

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms\\_575479.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_575479.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The Victims. National Human Trafficking Hotline. N.d. <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/what-human-trafficking/human-trafficking/victims>

<sup>3</sup> The Victims & Traffickers. Polaris Project. N.d. <https://polarisproject.org/victims-traffickers>

<sup>4</sup> Human Trafficking, Migration and Refugees. End Slavery Now. April 2015. <https://www.endslaverynow.org/blog/articles/human-trafficking-migration-and-refugees>

<sup>5</sup> Trafficking in Persons Report. US Department of State. June 2018. <https://www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/>

# CONSUMERISM & TRAFFICKING

*“We must rapidly begin the shift from a ‘thing-oriented’ society to a ‘person-oriented’ society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.” – Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

The words above were spoken by Dr. King over fifty years ago on April, 4 1957. Instead of reversing the “thing-oriented” trend that Dr. King warns of, our increasingly globalized world has intensified and expanded it. The rate and ways in which we function as a “thing-oriented” society have increased without concern for the impact this has on fellow human beings around the world.

We live in a world of great wealth and great inequality, in which greater consumption demands lower cost. Our demand for more products and low prices comes at a high price – that of the slave labor of men, women, and children around the globe. As Americans, we must ask ourselves: “Do we really care under what conditions our products are made?”

Many do not see the connections between consumption and the issue of human trafficking. Globally, there are over [14.2 million people trapped in forced labor](#) in industries including agriculture, construction, domestic work and manufacturing. The International Labor Organization estimates that over 75% of human trafficking is forced or state-imposed labor exploitation, while slightly less than 25% of human trafficking is forced prostitution. Yet forced labor represents only 10% of trafficking convictions.

What can be done?

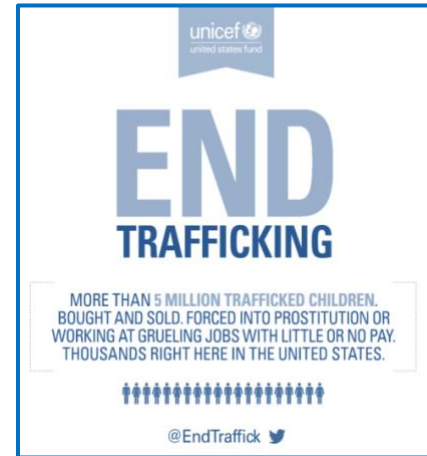
While the [2000 UN Palermo Protocols establish a global consensus against modern-day slavery](#), and 173 nations have laws against human trafficking, trafficking in persons remains widespread. Stronger laws should be passed to ensure transparency in supply chains – the complex process that corporations use to transform raw materials into consumer goods. The enforcement of existing supply chain transparency legislation is also a challenge. [The Better World Shopper](#), a research organization that ranks corporations based on a corporation’s social and environmental practices, publishes information on more than 1,000 corporations; Walmart, Chevron, GE, Citibank and Nestle, turn up on its worst offenders list. Systems of certification have been developed to allow consumers to immediately identify, through labeling, whether a product has been certified as living up to specific labor and supply chain standards, but such practices must become more widespread and universally mandated.

Since companies are highly sensitive to consumer demand, consumers have an important role to play by [encouraging companies](#) to take steps to prevent human trafficking in their supply chains. By using our purchasing power and company shareholder activism, we can greatly reduce forced labor exploitation. As King noted fifty years ago, a “true revolution of values” is needed. Let us commit ourselves again to this vision.

# THE IMPACT ON CHILDREN

**Of the more than 40 million victims of human trafficking globally:**

- **at least 10 million are children**
  - 17,000 of those children are from the United States (46 children every day).
  - 5.7 million are living in forced marriages.
  - Child trafficking victims could be anyone, including relatives, neighbors, or friends.



**Protecting children requires:**

- Timely victim identification.
- Placing children in a safe environment.
- Providing children with social services, health care, psychosocial support.
- Reintegration of children with family and community, if it is in their best interest.
- Training professionals working with children, including social workers, health workers, police and border officials to help stop trafficking and rehabilitate survivors.
- Strengthening laws and policies to prevent future trafficking, including:
  - Establishing minimum labor standards to protect against child labor.
  - Supporting access to education for children.

**Homeless Youth in the United States**

- Approximately 1.68 million U.S. youth experience homelessness each year.
- Unsheltered youth are more likely to fall victim to sexual exploitation.
  - 28% of youth living on the street trade sex for basic needs, such as food or shelter, a practice known as “survival sex.”
- 21 – 40% of runaway and homeless youth were sexually abused before leaving home.
- As many as 75% of runaway youth drop out of school, limiting employment opportunities and wage earnings.
- Street Outreach Programs help 25,000 youth find shelter each year.
  - Between 2009 and 2012, approximately 37,000 youth were turned away due to a lack of resources and space.
- Upwards of 40% of all American homeless youth identify as LGBT, yet only 7% of the overall U.S. youth population is LGBT.
- LGBT homeless young people are disproportionately likely to be young people of color, compounding the risks and impact of stigma and violence.

**The Convention on the Rights of the Child**

- The convention is a global treaty that sets international standards for protecting children from abuse, violence, and exploitation.
- As of 2015, the US is the only country in the world that hasn't yet ratified the Convention.

# FAITH-BASED RESOURCES



LISTED BY FAITH OR DENOMINATION  
IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER



# BAHÁ'Í

## Excerpts on Slavery and Trafficking from the Bahá'í Sacred Writings

It is forbidden you to trade in slaves, be they men or women. It is not for him who is himself a servant to buy another of God's servants, and this hath been prohibited in His Holy Tablet. Thus, by His mercy, hath the commandment been recorded by the Pen of justice. Let no man exalt himself above another; all are but bondslaves before the Lord, and all exemplify the truth that there is none other God but Him. He, verily, is the All-Wise, Whose wisdom encompasseth all things.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

We have been informed that thou hast forbidden the trading in slaves, both men and women. This, verily, is what God hath enjoined in this wondrous Revelation. God hath, truly, destined a reward for thee, because of this. He, verily, will pay the doer of good his due recompense, wert thou to follow what hath been sent unto thee by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

~ Bahá'u'lláh (in a tablet addressed to Queen Victoria)

You must show forth that which will be conducive to the welfare and tranquility of the helpless ones of the world. Gird up the loins of effort; perchance the slaves may be emancipated from bondage and find freedom. In this day, the cry of justice is raised and the lamentation of equity is heard.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou chooseth for thyself.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

Blessed is the ruler who succoureth the captive, and the rich one who careth for the poor, and the just one who secureth from the wrong doer the rights of the downtrodden, and happy the trustee who observeth that which the Ordainer, the Ancient of Days hath prescribed unto him.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

The entire human race are servants of the Lord of might and glory, as He hath brought the whole creation under the purview of His gracious utterance, and hath enjoined upon us to show forth love and affection, wisdom and compassion, faithfulness and unity towards all, without any discrimination.

~ `Abdu'l-Bahá

Be generous in prosperity, and thankful in adversity. Be worthy of the trust of thy neighbor, and look upon him with a bright and friendly face. Be a treasure to the poor, an admonisher to the rich, an answerer to the cry of the needy, a preserver of the sanctity of thy pledge. Be fair in thy judgment, and guarded in thy speech. Be unjust to no man, and show all meekness to all men. Be as a lamp unto them that walk in darkness, a joy to the sorrowful, a sea for the thirsty, a haven for the distressed, an upholder and defender of the victim of oppression. Let integrity and uprightness distinguish all thine acts. Be a home for the stranger, a balm to the suffering, a tower of strength for the fugitive. Be eyes to the blind, and a guiding light unto the feet of the erring. Be an ornament to the countenance of truth, a crown to the brow of fidelity, a pillar of the temple of righteousness, a breath of life to the body of mankind, an ensign of the hosts of justice, a luminary above the horizon of virtue, a dew to the soil of the human heart, an ark on the ocean of knowledge, a sun in the heaven of bounty, a gem on the diadem of wisdom, a shining light in the firmament of thy generation, a fruit upon the tree of humility.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.

~ Bahá'u'lláh

O Thou kind Lord! Thou hast created all humanity from the same stock. Thou hast decreed that all shall belong to the same household. In Thy Holy Presence they are all Thy servants, and all mankind are sheltered beneath Thy Tabernacle; all have gathered together at Thy Table of Bounty; all are illumined through the light of Thy Providence.

O God! Thou art kind to all, Thou hast provided for all, dost shelter all, conferrest life upon all. Thou hast endowed each and all with talents and faculties, and all are submerged in the Ocean of Thy Mercy. O Thou kind Lord! Unite all. Let the religions agree and make the nations one, so that they may see each other as one family and the whole earth as one home. May they all live together in perfect harmony.

O God! Raise aloft the banner of the oneness of mankind. O God! Establish the Most Great Peace. Cement Thou, O God, the hearts together. O Thou kind Father, God! Gladden our hearts through the fragrance of Thy love. Brighten our eyes through the Light of Thy Guidance. Delight our ears with the melody of Thy Word, and shelter us all in the Stronghold of Thy Providence.

Thou art the Mighty and Powerful, Thou art the Forgiving and Thou art the One Who overlooketh the shortcomings of all mankind.

~ `Abdu'l-Bahá

**For more information on the U.S. Bahá'í Office of Public Affairs and its engagement on trafficking and other human rights issues, please visit <http://publicaffairs.bahai.us>.**

# CATHOLIC

*“One of the most troubling of those open wounds (in the world) is the trade in human beings, a modern form of slavery. It violates the God-given dignity of so many of our brothers and sisters and constitutes a true crime against humanity.”*

– Pope Francis, November 7, 2016, RENATE Conference (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation)

## Scripture

- Genesis 1:27 “...in the image of God they were created; male and female God created them.”
- Matthew 25:35-40 “Whatever you did to one of the least of these, you did to me...”
- Matthew 19:13-15 “...Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.’”
- Mark 12:31 “...You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:16 “...the Spirit of God dwells in you.”
- Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free...”

## Coalitions of Catholic Anti-Trafficking Organizations

- [US Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking](#) (USCSAHT) is a collaborative, faith based network that offers educational programs and materials, supports access to survivor services, and engages in legislative advocacy and other work.
- [Talitha Kum Program](#) is an international network of Consecrated Life against trafficking in persons which facilitates collaboration and the exchange of information and training for consecrated men and women in 70 countries.
- [Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking](#) (CCOAHT) operates under the auspices of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and includes representatives of twenty Catholic organizations - national and international - that focus on Anti-Trafficking. The coalition produces materials, mounts campaigns, provides training programs and advocates with Congress.

## Prayer Resources

- [The Beatitudes: A Contemporary Version](#), composed by the International Sisters of Mercy Global Action Opposing Human trafficking Working Group, February 2015.
- [A Prayer to End Human Trafficking](#), Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ: prayer card in several languages.
- See several prayer resources on the website of the [Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center](#), Seattle, WA.

## **Educational Resources**

- The [Catholic Health Association](#) offers many valuable resources to assist health care organizations and health care professionals to identify and assist victims of human trafficking.
- The [USCCB Anti-Trafficking Program](#) educates about human trafficking as an offense against the fundamental dignity of the human person and provides to provide training and technical assistance on this issue.
- [U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#) offers educational modules on many human trafficking topics including: Human Trafficking and the Objectification of Women; Reducing the Demand for Human Trafficking; Human Trafficking & Pornography; Human Trafficking for the Purpose of Organ Removal.
- The [Stop Trafficking](#) newsletter serves as a forum for exchange among religious congregations and their collaborating organizations to promote awareness about human trafficking.
- [Against Humanity](#) is a project of the Center of Concern which strives to inform the public about the realities of human trafficking and to provide resources for educating and acting in the fight against this terrible scourge.

## **Take Action!**

In America, 60,000 men, women, and children are enslaved at this very moment. Worldwide, human trafficking is the second largest and fastest-growing organized crime in the world. There are an estimated 21 million people enslaved today, 4.5 million of which are in the sex industry. Estimates for revenues in all forms of exploitation and slavery total upwards of \$32 billion a year, and profits from sex slavery amount to nearly \$10 billion. Nothing degrades another human being more than being treated as an object, as a commodity. Let's act today to end this scourge.

- Go the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops webpage and learn how to [identify human trafficking and how to provide assistance](#).
- If you are in the United States and believe someone may be a victim of human trafficking, report your suspicions to law enforcement by calling 911 or the 24-hour [National Human Trafficking Resource Center](#) line at 1-888-373-7888. Trafficking victims, including undocumented individuals, are eligible for services and immigration assistance.
- Be a conscientious and informed consumer. Discover your [slavery footprint](#), ask [who picked your tomatoes](#) or [made your clothes](#), or check out the Department of Labor's [List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#). <http://www.humanthreadcampaign.org/>
- Meet with and/or write to your [local, state, and federal government representatives](#) to let them know you care about combating human trafficking, and ask what they are doing to address it.
- Encourage your local schools to partner with students and include modern slavery in their curricula. As a parent, educator, or school administrator, be aware of how traffickers [target school-aged children](#).
- Join the [Polaris Project](#) for updates in what is happening in your community, your state, and at the national and international level and learn what actions you can take.

# JEWISH

## Jewish Values

### Human Trafficking

Maimonides wrote that redeeming captives is the greatest mitzvah of all, taking precedence over all others. Read more [here](#) from the Religious Action Center.

“From where do we learn that it is forbidden to steal a human being? Rabbi Yoshiya taught: From ‘Thou shalt not steal’ (the Ten Commandments).” (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 86a)

“The Torah teaches, ‘For the Israelites are My [God’s] slaves’ (Leviticus 25:25)--they are My slaves and therefore not slaves to slaves.” (Babylonian Talmud, Bava Metzia 10a)

“Thou shalt not deliver unto his master a bondman that is escaped from his master unto thee; he shall dwell with thee, in the midst of thee, in the place which he shall choose within one of thy gates, where it liketh him best; thou shalt not wrong him.” (Deuteronomy 23:16-17)

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (Germany, 1808-1888), in his commentary on these verses, observed that this law applies to both Jewish and non-Jewish slaves, and that “The Israelite authorities are obligated to extend to such a slave their patronage and concern, and according to Maimonides’ system (Laws of Slaves 8:10), which is affirmed in the Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh De’ah 167:85), they must bring about the freeing of the slave, and towards this purpose they must offer the owner these options: either he writes the slave a bill of manumission and accepts in return an IOU for the slave’s monetary worth, or if he refuses the court will annul the enslavement and the slave will go free.”

### Commodification: The Consumers’ Responsibility

“One may not buy stolen goods from a thief; to do so is a great transgression because it strengthens the hands of those who violate the law and causes the thief to continue to steal, for if the thief would find no buyer he would not steal, as it says, ‘He who shares with a thief is his own enemy.’ (Proverbs 29:24)” (Maimonides, Laws of Theft, 5:1)

## Resources

T’ruah; The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights and the National Council of Jewish Women are co-conveners of the Jewish Coalition Against Trafficking.

[\*Fighting Modern-Day Slavery: A Handbook for Jewish Communities\*](#) (2013) is an accessible overview of the problem of trafficking, including Jewish resources and action steps.

[\*The Other Side of the Sea: A Haggadah on Fighting Modern-Day Slavery\*](#) (2015) connects modern trafficking to the ancient Jewish story of enslavement in and redemption from Egypt.

Visit [www.truah.org/slavery](http://www.truah.org/slavery) for more information about T'ruah's work on human trafficking, including T'ruah's role as the main Jewish ally of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers, the Florida-based farmworker organization that is revolutionizing agricultural workplaces in America.

## **Divrei Torah**

[Slavery and Human Trafficking: Shemot, Exodus 1:1-6:1 by Rabbi Jarah Greenfield](#)

[Three Plagues: Bo, Exodus 10:1-13:16 by Rabbi Pam Frydman](#)

## **Jewish Communal Resolutions on Combating Human Trafficking**

[Resolution on Combating Human Trafficking in the United States, adopted by the 2014 JCPA Plenum](#)

[Resolution on Human Trafficking, adopted by the 2006 JCPA Plenum](#)

[Resolution on Human Trafficking, adopted by the 2004 Central Conference of American Rabbis Convention](#)

## **Prayers**

[Mi Sheberach for Survivors of Human Trafficking](#); can be recited during Torah service after the prayer for healing.

# MUSLIM

The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) is the first Islamic religious organization in the world to elect a Muslim woman to the position of president. This was done through authentic scriptural understanding and interpretation, and has led to other local and regional mosques and organizations opening doors to women in leadership positions.



Dr. Ingrid Mattson –  
First Muslim woman  
President of ISNA

There are Muslim women scholars of Islamic Shariah and jurisprudence on the Board of the Islamic Fiqh Council of North America, a body that issues fatwas (religious legal opinions on important issue). These new roles for women in the American community have empowered American Muslims to express opposition to traditions within the Muslim world that have resulted in a narrow interpretation of the Quran and the traditions of our Prophet and in some cases may have been falsely considered to be integral to Islamic tradition.

For example, some Muslim immigrants coming from countries like the Sudan, Egypt and Somalia thought that the prevailing custom of genital mutilation in their countries had its roots in Islam and therefore saw it as an Islamic religious obligation to continue this practice in the U.S. ISNA was clear from the beginning that genital mutilation may have been a practice in some African countries, but there is no basis for it in the Quran or in the traditions of the Prophet. The Muslim community in North America has also taken a position against child marriage and forced marriage. Our Fiqh Council scholars took a position against polygamy and reinforced commitment to monogamy by arguing that the prevailing law must be followed and that polygamy made it impossible to treat all wives equally as the Quran requires. The Prophet Muhammad declared clearly that Almighty Allah will not accept the prayers and fasting from a believer who enslaves free human beings. The enslavement or exploitation of the helpless is considered a sin of highest order, in fact a rebellion against the divine law.

The Muslim community in the United States and around the world has also been involved directly and indirectly in fighting against human trafficking. They are involved in various efforts, including providing role models and enhancing awareness and education about the evils of human trafficking. [Many Muslim activists, men and women, are involved in advocacy and charity through various interfaith and Islamic organizations.](#)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime published a document, “[Combating Trafficking in Persons in Accordance with the Principles of Islamic Law](#)” which serves as a point of reference for many Muslim organizations. According to this document, “the Islamic prohibition of trafficking in persons is therefore based on a comprehensive set of principles is solidly grounded in the Islamic legal tradition that, taken together, not only criminalize the act of trafficking in persons but also prevent such an act, and protect victims of that crime.” And further, “the rules of international law and the principles of Islamic law are clearly complementary to each other in effectively and comprehensively combating trafficking in persons.”



# PROTESTANT

*I'll tell you what it really means to worship the Lord. Remove the chains of prisoners who are chained unjustly. Free those who are abused! Isaiah 58:3, 6 (CEV)*

Human Trafficking is a crime against humanity and ultimately a sin. Human trafficking denies the values of human life, exposes victims to serious health risks, endangers the mental well-being of victims and impedes the ability of victims to reach their full God-given potential. As Christians, we believe that "all human beings are made in the image of God, that every person is of intrinsic worth before God and that every individual has a right to the fullest possible opportunities for the development of life abundant and eternal" (*NCC Human Rights Policy Statement, 1995*). It is our responsibility to use the resources at our disposal to end human trafficking and to advocate for global policies and practices that would bring the activity we now know as human trafficking to a conclusive and absolute end. (NCC Resolution on Human Trafficking)

Protestant denominations and affiliated organizations are active in addressing human trafficking in all its manifestations. This work includes spiritual formation, poverty relief, education and advocacy. Many denominations have work or offices that call for strengthening local, state, national, and international policy. Below is a list of websites and resources that reflects such commitments.

## **Denominational resources/links (not exhaustive):**

### **Worship Resources: [Protestant worship resource packet](#)**

American Baptist International Ministries [Resolution Against Slavery](#)

Disciples Home Missions [Webpage on Human Trafficking](#)

Episcopal Church [Human Trafficking Website](#)

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [Human Trafficking Website](#) and [Guide](#)

Global Ministries (Christian Church/Disciples of Christ & UCC) [Human Trafficking webpage](#)

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office [Resources on Human Trafficking](#)

National Council of Churches' [Resolution on Human Trafficking](#)

Presbyterian Mission Agency [Human Trafficking Website](#) and [toolkit](#)

Southern Baptist Convention [Resolution Condemning Trafficking](#)

United Church of Christ [Human Trafficking Website](#) and [synod resolution](#)

United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society [Human Trafficking Website](#)

United Methodist Women [Human Trafficking: a Resource for Preventing, Protecting,](#)

[Prosecuting](#) and [Intercept the Traffickers](#)

[World Council of Churches Consultation on Human Trafficking](#)



# TAKING ACTION

- **Pray individually and with others.**
  - Convene prayer gatherings with those in your faith community, with local interfaith organizations, and with the wider community for justice and healing for all those who have been affected by human trafficking.
- **Raise awareness.**
  - Share news stories, videos, blog posts, and other forms of media that highlight the issue of human trafficking with your family, friends, and contacts.
- **Hold workshops and informational meetings.**
  - Educate and mobilize your faith community around the issue of trafficking and consider how to support vulnerable members in your community.
- **Involve children and youth.**
  - Create spaces for young people to dialogue about trafficking. Empower them to inform and protect themselves and others, and to help end this injustice.
- **Support legislative action.**
  - Organize groups to write, call, or meet with your elected representatives.
  - Examples of anti-trafficking legislation could include legislation designed to:
    - Create a global fund to receive money to combat trafficking around the world;
    - Require companies to disclose the measures they're taking to address forced labor and human trafficking within their supply chains; and
    - Ensure that all runaway and homeless youth have access to services and that agencies have training to help prevent youth trafficking.
- **Contact the National Human Trafficking Resources Hotline.**
  - Call 888-373-7888 if you suspect that someone is being trafficked.
  - Share this number with others and encourage them to use it if necessary.
- **Encourage companies to promote fair labor practices.**
  - Helpful websites include: <http://chainstorereaction.com>.
- **Help law enforcement map and investigate where trafficking is happening.**
  - Contribute to websites such as <http://slaverymap.org>.
- **Consume wisely and ethically.**
  - Educate yourself and your community about ethically made products and supporting these products whenever possible. <http://www.betterworldshopper.org>.
  - Look for organizations that support victims or sell gifts made by survivors. Examples include: <http://www.madebysurvivors.com>.
- **Fight sex tourism.**
  - Ask travel agencies, hotels, and tour operators to sign the Code of Conduct for the Protections of Children in Travel and Tourism: <http://www.thecode.org>.

# FURTHER RESOURCES

- [Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking \(ATEST\)](#)
- [United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons](#)
- [U.S. State Department Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons](#)

## Stories & Testimonies

- [BBC: Human Trafficking: The Lives Bought and Sold](#)
- [Huffington Post: Human Trafficking Survivors Open Up About Horrors](#)
- [NPR: Beyond Brothels: Farms and Fisheries are Frontier of Human Trafficking](#)
- [New York Times: The 21st Century Slave Trade](#)
- [CNN: Sex Trafficking: The New American Slavery](#)

## Videos

- [Not My Life](#)
- [“Selling the Girl Next Door” CNN Documentary](#)
- [Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking film list](#)
- [A Heart for Justice film list](#)
- [Free the Slaves Video Library](#)
- [Polaris Video Library](#)
- [Child Labor Coalition Video Library](#)
- [CBS Documentary on Religious Response to Human Trafficking](#)
- [Hearing: Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing & Urban Development: Efforts to Prevent & End Youth Homelessness \(testimony of Cindy Lauper\)](#)

## Campaigns, Toolkits & Other Resources

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
  - [Child Victims of Trafficking](#)
  - [Homeless and Runaway Youth Programs](#)
  - [Rescue & Restore Campaign](#)
  - [Services Available to Victims of Human Trafficking: A Resource Guide](#)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security
  - [Blue Campaign](#)
- U.S. Fund for UNICEF
  - [Child Trafficking: End Trafficking Campaign](#)
- International Justice Mission
  - [The Freedom Commons](#)
- True Colors Foundation
  - [Serving our Youth 2015: The Needs and Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Questioning Youth Experience Homelessness](#)