



Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops

THE PUBLIC POLICY VOICE OF THE CHURCH

“Human trafficking is a crime against humanity. We must unite our efforts to free victims and stop this crime that has become ever more aggressive, that threatens not just individuals, but the foundational values of society.”- Pope Francis



Catholic Toolkit

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For questions about this toolkit, please contact news@txcatholic.org

Governor's Response Against Child Exploitation (GRACE) Initiative

In 2019, Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott announced an initiative to end child exploitation and sex trafficking in Texas. The Governor's Response Against Child Exploitation ([GRACE](#)) Initiative intends to empower and mobilize communities of faith in the fight against child sex trafficking.

In collaboration with other entities, this toolkit offers resources intended for Catholics to use during a Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking, Jan. 11-17, 2021. January is designated as National Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

For each day, we offer an intercessory prayer, reflection points, and a call to action. Individual Catholics, families, small faith groups, and parishes are encouraged to use material they deem appropriate. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops also provides a more robust toolkit for [National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month](#).

Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of those that have suffered through this affront to human dignity but also comfort, strengthen and empower survivors.

Jan. 11

Pray for an end to human trafficking

Intercessory Prayer

As we begin a week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking, may we be inspired to act in our local communities to support and protect survivors of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

- As Catholics, we believe in the dignity of every human life and vigorously oppose human trafficking and modern-day slavery as it contravenes basic human dignity.
- There are an estimated 40.3 million victims of [modern-day slavery worldwide](#). Of these, 25 million are victims of labor or sex trafficking and 15 million are people trapped in forced marriages. In Texas, *at any given time, there are approximately 234,000 victims of labor trafficking.*
- Human trafficking happens in every community and can involve commercial sex, forced labor or domestic servitude. This [video](#) by the US Department of Homeland Security provides an overview.

Call to action

Distribute this [prayer card](#) dedicated to St. Josephine Bakhita, who was a victim of human trafficking.

Watch [this video](#) produced by the Texas Attorney General's office. How can you "Be the One?"

Jan. 12**Pray for prevention efforts and those who are vulnerable****Intercessory Prayer**

For the innocents who suffer under the sinful abuse of slavery and for conversion of the utterly lost souls who hold them captive and exploit them, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

- Human trafficking happens in every community. That means each of us can do something to stop it. As Pope Francis has stated: “Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ.”
- Human trafficking happens in big cities, in suburbs and small towns.
- Human trafficking is often confused with human smuggling, which involves illegal border crossings. In fact, the crime of human trafficking does not require any movement whatsoever. Survivors can be recruited and trafficked in their own hometowns, even their own homes.
- There are three types of human trafficking: sex trafficking, forced labor and domestic servitude.
- Truck stops, hotels and private homes are among the places where people are sold for commercial sex.
- Forced labor is when victims work for little or no pay. Factories, farms and construction work are all places where people are forced to make products or food we consume with no or little compensation.
- Domestic servitude includes nannies, maids or domestic help. Often women, these modern-day slaves are hidden in plain sight and held against their will because their identification papers and travel documents are taken by their traffickers.

Call to action

Review these Ten Ways to End Human Trafficking: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/about/ways-endtrafficking>. How can you help end human trafficking?

Jan. 13**Pray for all those working on the front line to support survivors****Intercessory Prayer**

For children, especially those in our own community, who are vulnerable to human trafficking and slavery, that loving and caring adults may help them find safety and healing, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

- “It becomes easy for the trafficker to offer his own 'services' to the victims, who often do not even vaguely suspect what awaits them. In some cases, there are women and girls who are

destined to be exploited almost like slaves in their work, and not infrequently in the sex industry too.” -- Pope Benedict XVI “Migration: A Sign of the Times,” Message for the World Day of Refugees and Migrants in 2006

- One of every four victims of modern slavery are children.
- Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labor, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry and 58% in other sectors.

Call to action

Often children who are being trafficked or held in bondage are in plain sight: in our schools. [Learn more](#) about human trafficking in America's schools and how we can stop it.

Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY) Advocacy is a critical component of the Texas approach to addressing child sex trafficking. Review [this flyer](#) more information on CSEY (pronounced “see-say”) Advocates.

Jan. 14

Pray for survivors to find healing

Intercessory Prayer

For survivors of human trafficking, that they might find the support they need to start a new life, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

Helping someone escape from slavery is just a first step in their path toward healing. Often the survivor of human trafficking needs a community to support him/her. Victims may need help to pay off debts, secure housing, learn new skills and find and keep decent employment. Children may need a foster home to escape their abusers.

Call to action

Stop Human Trafficking and Exploitation. Protect, Help, Empower, and Restore Dignity ([SHEPHERD](#)) is a resource which educates lay and religious leaders about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective, equipping them with needed knowledge and skills to combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation at the local level.

Jan. 15**Pray for all those working to bring traffickers and exploiters to justice****Intercessory Prayer**

For law enforcement, that God grant them the wisdom to recognize situations of forced labor and sexual slavery, while working to protect its victims and punish its perpetrators, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

- Victim identification remains a significant challenge to U.S. efforts to prevent trafficking, prosecute perpetrators, and protect victims. The Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force has a comprehensive set of proposals to strengthen Texas law. Learn more by reviewing the [2020 Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force Report](#).
- Calculated as a 150-billion-dollar industry, modern day slavery has become the fastest growing source of illicit profit for criminals worldwide.
- “Such situations are an affront to fundamental values which are shared by all cultures and peoples, values rooted in the very nature of the human person. The alarming increase in the trade in human beings...presents a serious threat to the security of individual nations and a question of international justice which cannot be deferred.” -- Pope John Paul II, Letter on the Occasion of the 2002 Conference: “Twenty-First Century Slavery – The Human Rights Dimension to Trafficking in Human Beings”

Call to action

You can report suspected human trafficking by calling the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 (humantraffickinghotline.org/).

Jan. 16**Pray for an end to demand and societal factors that lead to exploitation****Intercessory Prayer**

For courage to initiate change in our hypersexualized and consumer-driven culture, to end exploitation of others, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection

- Sex trafficking would simply not be profitable without demand. Sex buyers drive the market for the illegal sex trade. From May 2019 – June 2020, CEASE Texas identified over 1 million unique online advertisements for commercial sex across six Texas cities. We should consider the roles of technology, pornography, sexually oriented businesses, and a hypersexualized culture in facilitating an environment that normalizes exploitation and facilitates demand.

- Labor trafficking is also impacted by demand. The demand for cheap goods and cheap labor can result in worker exploitation and slavery in supply chains. In 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor identified 155 goods from 77 countries produced by child or forced labor.

Call to action

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Jan. 17

Pray for discernment on the actions you can personally take to address human trafficking

Every Texas has an opportunity to join the fight against human trafficking, whether by educating friends, mentoring vulnerable youth, being a conscious consumer, financially supporting trusted organizations, or reporting suspicious activity.

International Day of Prayer for Catholics

In addition, Feb. 8 has been designated by the Vatican and the International Union of Superiors General as a World Day of Prayer, Reflection and Action against Human Trafficking.


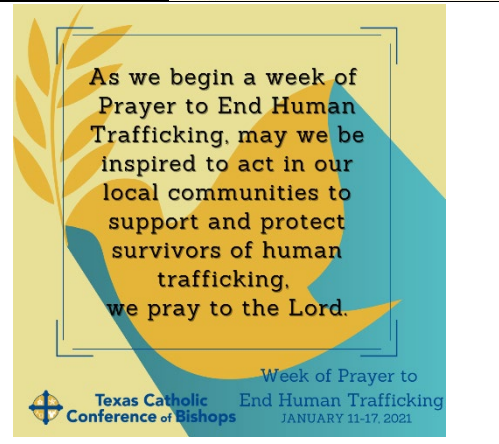

Feb. 8 is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. Eventually taught by Canossian nuns that she was created in the image of God and possessed human dignity, she asserted herself and refused to be enslaved. Josephine became a Canossian sister and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. She was canonized a saint in 2000.

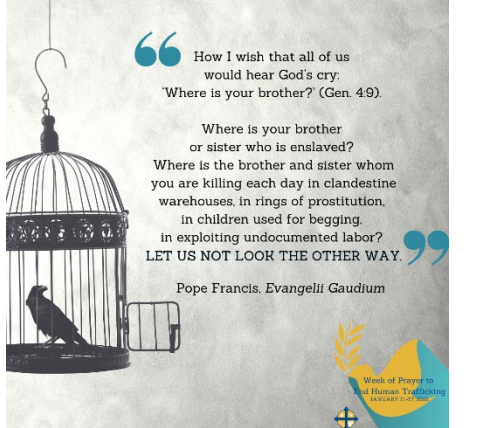



An international organization of Catholic religious women, [Talitha Kum](#), provides resources on how to commemorate the World Day of Prayer and stop human trafficking. “There have never been as many slaves in the world as there are today,” Gabriella Bottani, the international coordinator of Talitha Kum, reports. “Only together we can break the chain of trafficking and slavery.”





Social Media Graphics

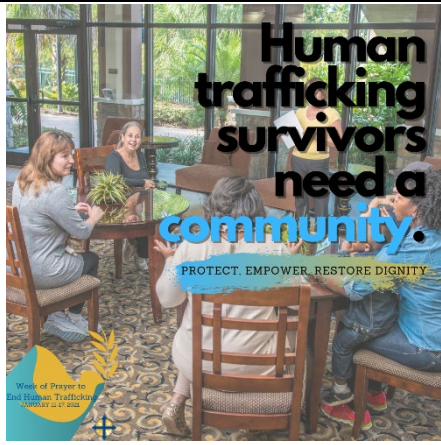

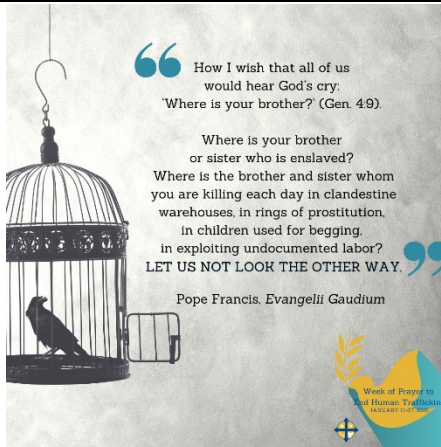

These are for illustration only; full size are available at <https://txcatholic.org/pastoral-resources/week-of-prayer-to-end-human-trafficking/>.



Please use the hashtag #TexasPraystoEndHT and tag @TXCatholic as much as possible in your social media posts.

Banner for Facebook or Website	 <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking JANUARY 11-17, 2021</p>
Day One	<div data-bbox="389 806 885 1247">  <p>As we begin a week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking, may we be inspired to act in our local communities to support and protect survivors of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.</p> <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops JANUARY 11-17, 2021</p> </div> <div data-bbox="885 806 1391 1247">  <p>In Texas, at any given time, there are approximately 234,000 victims of labor trafficking.</p> </div>
Social Media posts	<div data-bbox="389 1247 885 1782"> <p>Facebook & Instagram: As Catholics, we believe in the dignity of every human life and vigorously oppose human trafficking and modern-day slavery as it contravenes basic human dignity. Join us in prayer this week to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Join us in prayer this week to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> </div> <div data-bbox="885 1247 1391 1782"> <p>Facebook & Instagram: Human trafficking happens in every community and can involve commercial sex, forced labor or domestic servitude.</p> <p>Watch this video from the Department of Homeland Security to learn more: www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/videos/general-awareness #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Watch this video to learn about how human trafficking occurs in every community: www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/videos/general-awareness #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> </div>

<p>Day Two</p>	 <p>“ How I wish that all of us would hear God's cry: 'Where is your brother?' (Gen. 4:9).</p> <p>Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting undocumented labor? LET US NOT LOOK THE OTHER WAY.”</p> <p>Pope Francis, <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i></p> <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking January 10-16, 2020</p>	 <p>Human trafficking happens in every community.</p> <p>LEARN THE SIGNS</p> <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking January 10-16, 2020</p>
<p>Social Media posts</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: Pope Francis says, “Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ.” Please join us in praying to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: Human trafficking happens in every community. Learn about 10 ways you can help #EndHumanTrafficking: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/otip/about/ways-endtrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>
<p>Day Three</p>	 <p>One of every four victims of modern slavery are children.</p> <p>LEARN HOW TO STOP TRAFFICKING IN OUR SCHOOLS</p> <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking January 10-16, 2020</p>	 <p>Lord, we pray for children, especially those in our own community, who are vulnerable to human trafficking and slavery, that loving and caring adults may help them find safety and healing, we pray to the Lord. Amen.</p> <p>Week of Prayer to End Human Trafficking January 10-16, 2020</p>
<p>Social media posts</p>	<p>Facebook & Instagram: Women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labor, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry and 58% in other sectors- Often children who are being trafficked or held in bondage are in plain sight: in our schools. Learn more about human trafficking in America's schools and how we can stop it: https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools. Twitter: Learn about human trafficking in our schools: safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/human-trafficking-americas-schools. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: One of every four victims of modern slavery are children. Please pray to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>

<p>Day Four</p>		
<p>Social Media posts</p>	<p>Facebook & Instagram: Helping someone escape from slavery is just a first step in their path toward healing.</p> <p>SHEPHERD is a resource which educates lay and religious leaders about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective, equipping them with needed knowledge and skills to combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation at the local level. Learn more at brycs.org/become-a-shepherd #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Helping someone escape from slavery is just the first step. Be a part of the community: brycs.org/become-a-shepherd #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: Be a part of the healing community: brycs.org/become-a-shepherd . #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>
<p>Day Five</p>		
<p>Social media posts</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: You can report suspected human trafficking by calling the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 (humantraffickinghotline.org/). #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram: The Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force has a comprehensive set of proposals to strengthen Texas law. Pray for those working to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Pray for those working to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>

<p>Day Six</p>		
<p>Social Media posts</p>	<p>Facebook & Instagram: Helping someone escape from slavery is just a first step in their path toward healing.</p> <p>SHEPHERD is a resource which educates lay and religious leaders about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective, equipping them with needed knowledge and skills to combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation at the local level. Learn more at brycs.org/become-a-shepherd #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Helping someone escape from slavery is just the first step. Be a part of the community: brycs.org/become-a-shepherd #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook & Instagram: Human trafficking happens in every community and can involve commercial sex, forced labor or domestic servitude.</p> <p>Watch this video from the Department of Homeland Security to learn more: www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/videos/general-awareness #TexasPraystoEndHT</p> <p>Twitter: Watch this video to learn about how human trafficking occurs in every community: www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/videos/general-awareness #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>
<p>Day Seven</p>		
<p>Social Media posts</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: Pope Francis says, "Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ." Please join us in praying to #EndHumanTrafficking. #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>	<p>Facebook/Instagram/Twitter: Be a part of the healing community: brycs.org/become-a-shepherd . #TexasPraystoEndHT</p>

		
	<p>Facebook & Instagram: Today is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. Eventually taught by Canossian nuns that she was created in the image of God and possessed human dignity, she asserted herself and refused to be enslaved. Josephine became a Canossian sister and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. She was canonized a saint in 2000.</p> <p>St. Josephine Bakhita, we ask for your prayers and intercessions for those enslaved among us. #EndHumanTrafficking</p> <p>Twitter: Today is the feast of St. Josephine Bakhita who was born a slave and dedicated her life to comforting the poor and suffering.</p>	