



SUORE MISSIONARIE DI SAN CARLO BORROMEIO (SCALABRINIANE)  
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Rome, February 8, 2020

Prot. n. 016/2020

Subject: World Day of reflection and prayer against human trafficking

Dear Sisters, Candidate and Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries,

***“I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly”*** (Jn 10, 10).

Today, February 8th, we celebrate the 6th World Day of reflection and prayer against trafficking in persons. In this day we commemorate the liturgical memory of Saint Giuseppina Bakhita, a Sudanese Sister who, during her adolescence, lived the tragic experience of being a victim of trafficking. This day, established by Pope Francis in 2015, on the proposal of a group of religious sisters committed against ‘human trafficking’, is focused this year on the theme: ***“Together against human trafficking”***.



According to Pope Francis, trafficking “in its many forms, constitutes ‘an open wound on the body of contemporary society’ a profound injury to the humanity of those who suffer it and to its perpetrators. Trafficking profoundly disfigures the humanity of the victim, offending his or her freedom and dignity. Yet at the same time, it dehumanizes those who carry it out, denying them access to life in abundance. Finally, trafficking seriously damages humanity as a whole, tearing apart the human family as well as the Body of Christ”.<sup>1</sup>

Trafficking is a scourge that affects all people without distinction, especially those who are in situations of poverty and vulnerability. The most affected, without any doubt, are women and children, victims of injustice and abuse. Today, trafficking, because of the numerous migratory movements, occurs in almost all parts of the world, places which can be the origin, the transit or the destination of the victims. Trafficking in persons is the third most lucrative, illicit trafficking after that of drugs and weapons; it is the most invisible one.

Having in mind the mission we have received from the Church, by virtue of our charism “the evangelical-missionary service to migrants, preferably the poorest in situations of vulnerability” (Cf. NC 113), we are constantly invited to reach out to the persons who are victims of trafficking, according to the directions of the XIV General Chapter: *to live the joy of prophesying*, since “consecrated life is called in this world to witness to the Word of God and His will as the prophets did”.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His Holiness Pope Francis, Address to participants at the International Conference on Human Trafficking, 11 April 2019

<sup>2</sup> XIV General Chapter, Final Document, p. 8

We can see with joy that in many countries where we work, significant initiatives already exist, in connection with ecclesial and civil institutions, which work against the trafficking of human beings, raising awareness and denouncing the causes and the networks of traffickers, and committing themselves to promote social policies which fight traffic crime; at the same time they accompany and protect the victims fostering their social reintegration. Once again we are invited by the Church to commit ourselves to being the voice of these our brothers and sisters, humiliated and wounded in their dignity.

We invite all the communities of the Congregation and the Scalabrinian Lay Missionaries to join in prayer against the trafficking of human being; to intensely celebrate this day using the material prepared for it, which we are sending attached to this letter, or using other material prepared in their own places and joining the initiatives and programs which will take place in different areas.

We entrust each Sister, Candidate and Scalabrinian Lay Missionary to the intercession of our founder, Blessed Giovanni Battista Scalabrini, and of our co-founders - Blessed Assunta Marchetti and Venerable Servant of God Fr. Giuseppe Marchetti. On their example, may we have the same courage and audacity in defending and promoting the life of the persons in situations of migration and in search of refuge, so that *the earth may be a place of fraternity, sharing and gratuitousness, where everyone is called by name by the same Father.*<sup>3</sup>

In communion of prayer,

Sr. Neusa de Fátima Mariano, mscs  
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Superior General and Council

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<sup>3</sup> Traditio Scalabriniana, n. 1, p. 9