

# Stop Trafficking !

*Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter*



*Awareness*

*Advocacy*

*Action*

Co-Sponsored by:

- *Sisters of the Divine Savior*
- *Capacitar International, Inc.*
- *Sisters of Mercy International Justice Network*

1 This issue highlights strategies that various congregations of women religious in New York used while networking for passage of state-level anti-trafficking legislation.

December 2005

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## Cases of Traffickers and Victims Found in New York State

### Case One

A 52-year old NY man was arrested in May 2005 on charges that he kept a woman as a sex slave. He met the woman in 1998 and held her captive in Maryland, Long Island and Kew Gardens until 2001, during which time the abuse became increasingly violent. He was already living with another woman under a "dominance and submission" relationship. The victim was kept naked and blindfolded and often forbidden to eat or drink. The two women were forced to operate a web site with photographs of their bondage and torture, spending hours at a time clicking on links on the web site, posting photographs and keeping track of the list of web-site members. If the woman took a break, the man tortured her. He received money based on the number of members who paid to join the web site and according to how many times visitors to the site clicked on sponsored links.

The victim was also ordered to work at a day care center. Her captor either took all of her earnings or forced her to give him cash or to buy things for him. If she didn't have cash ready he beat and tortured her.

Whenever she said she wanted to leave, she was brutally tortured. The first time, in 2000, was after she was ordered to move to Kew Gardens from Maryland. When she refused, he put

her, naked, into a large, clear, plastic bag and choked her. On other occasions he slammed the victim's head against a metal beam, cut her with a knife and suspended her from the ceiling. Photographs depicting this torture were posted on the web site as well, according to the investigator, who saw the photos. If convicted, the captor faces life in prison.

Excerpted: [http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=14555048&BRD=1863&PAG=461&dept\\_id=152656&rfl=6](http://www.zwire.com/site/news.cfm?newsid=14555048&BRD=1863&PAG=461&dept_id=152656&rfl=6)

### Case Two

On April 5, 2005, three NY defendants pled guilty to 27 counts charging them with forcing young Mexican women to engage in commercial sex acts. The prostitution, which occurred in brothels throughout the New York City metropolitan area, spanned a period of approximately fourteen years, from 1991 to 2004.

The defendants, all Mexican nationals, were members of the Carreto family sex trafficking ring that operated between Tenancingo, Mexico and Queens, New York. They admitted to recruiting numerous young, uneducated Mexican women from impoverished backgrounds, smuggling them from Mexico into the U.S. and forcing them to engage in multiple acts of prostitution on an almost daily basis. The defendants used physical force against the victims, causing serious bodily

injury. They beat the victims for hiding money, for failing to earn enough money, and for disobeying the defendants' orders. Half the money earned by the victims was taken by the owners of the brothels and the other half by the defendants, who either kept it or sent it to coconspirators in Mexico.

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April 2005 (pg. 5)

### Case Three

In September, 2005 Port Chester, NY police rescued a 22-year-old Guatemalan woman, who was kidnapped as she was leaving her job at a local restaurant. Once the woman was rescued officials learned the case was much more than a domestic kidnapping - that it might involve human trafficking.

The kidnapper, who repeatedly raped the victim, had earlier kept her as a sex slave for a year. He kidnapped her again after she had escaped.

The captor paid \$5,000 to smuggle the woman into the country from her home in Guatemala. Upon her arrival he allegedly informed her that she was now his personal sex slave. After a year of beatings and rape, she tried to leave him - only to be kidnapped again.

The Port Chester police said, "*She was in fear for her life. She had been*

Cases cont. pg. 2



## Awareness

### Cases *cont. pg. 1*

*told many times that if she left him that harm would be done to her sister in Guatemala or once she got to the United States that her mother would be harmed."*

An immigration attorney said, "It's almost certain that there are similar victims throughout the region because the punishments for the crime of trafficking people are not as severe as they are for trafficking drugs. Hopefully, this case will raise people's awareness of this problem, which has been around for a long time but just hasn't been talked about because these aren't people you run into every day, or if you do, you probably don't know about their situation."

The Port Chester Police Chief said his department will more closely investigate such incidents as the recent spate of prostitution arrests, in which three houses of prostitution were found in the village, to determine if any women are in similar situations. "We're absolutely interested in hearing from anybody who's been a victim, in terms of being forced into labor, prostitution or threatened for money owed for bringing them into the country. I feel there's a need for us to ask questions. This case definitely highlights that potential."

The director of the NY state Bureau of Refugee and Immigration Affairs said, "I feel very encouraged that the DA identified this as human trafficking, and that the Port Chester police are saying, 'Let's learn from this and take a closer look at what's going on in the community.'"

Excerpted: <http://abclocal.go.com/wabc/>  
and <http://www.thejournalnews.com/>

### Case Four

Four young women arrested in mid-November 2005 in Spring Valley, NY at two houses of prostitution were working off debts to an international smuggling ring that illegally brought them to the United States, police said. Their two local bosses and six male customers were also arrested.

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, an arm of the Department of Homeland Security, took the women, ranging in age from 17 to 24, into custody. Police indicated that the four, from Mexico and Guatemala, were brought to the Spring Valley locations from Union City, N.J., where they had been living.

The two men accused of running each prostitution house were charged with a felony, while the six male customers were charged with a misdemeanor.

Although Spring Valley has used undercover operations to crack down on street prostitution and massage parlors over the years, these two operations involved a broader organization, police said. "These houses are part of a much larger, organized operation spanning numerous states."

The women came into the United States through a "large, human smuggling, white-slavery ring that has become a major law enforcement concern," police said.

The women had numerous "so-called bosses" in Maryland, Washington D.C., New York and Connecticut. After the women were smuggled into the United States, the upper-level bosses provided them with housing and then transportation to prostitution

Cases *cont. pg. 7*

## Trafficking Awareness: Northern NY State

In early December the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary, the Sisters of St. Joseph, the Sisters of Mercy, Women Against War, and the Peace & Justice Commission of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, NY organized and co-sponsored a conference, open to the public, on human trafficking: "Human Trafficking, How Can We Respond?" The organizers and a representative from Pax Christi videotaped the presentation.

The principle speaker was Dr. Leslie Wolfe, President of the Center for Women Policy Studies. Panelists included: Daniel Werner, Esq., Legal Director, Worker's Rights Law Center of New York, Inc.; Ken Franzblau, Anti-Trafficking Director, Equality Now; Maud Easter, Director, Voices for Change: Immigrant Women and State Policy - Center for Women in Government & Civil Society of the University at Albany; Janice Treanor, Director, Domestic Violence Program, Unity House, Troy; Assembly Member Deborah Glick, Chair, Social Services Committee; Lindsay Copeland, Labor Committee Assistant from the office of Assembly Member Susan John, Chair of the Labor Committee, and Daniel Katz, representing Assembly Member Jeffrey Dinowitz.

The organizers arranged interviews for Leslie Wolfe with two local radio stations. A member also wrote an article for the religion section of the *Albany Times Union* (see page 6) and another submitted a Letter to the Editor referring to a recent newspaper article on human trafficking. During the conference attendees had the opportunity to sign letters of support of anti-trafficking legislation addressed to State legislators.



## Awareness

# New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition

The Coalition (comprised of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women; Equality Now; GEMS; inMotion; My Sisters' Place; National Organization for Women—NY State; National Organization for Women—NYC; and Sanctuary For Families) has worked assiduously to support the passage of bill A.1898-a (pending).

This legislation would ensure that New York State has a strong and effective framework to combat human trafficking. The strength of this legislation lies in its comprehensive approach, covering all aspects of human trafficking. The penal law amendments proposed in the bill would target traffickers and their networks, as well as those who create the demand for trafficked women and children by patronizing prostitution.

In October, 2005 the Anti-Trafficking Coalition held informational meetings, inviting a wide range of people from parishes, religious orders, organizations, interdenominational church groups, and local politicians.

The Dominican Sisters of Sparkill's Women's Committee had gathered in September 2005 with individuals and representatives of other groups in Rockland County. They formed a coalition to address the issue of trafficking and prostitution in Rockland County, NY. Their coalition then connected with the *New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition* to collaborate in getting a NY State Trafficking Law passed. Even though at a distance,

the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill NY residing in Missouri suggested their Congregation draft a public statement that would allow all members to stand in solidarity on the issue of supporting the NY bill.

In mid-November, following public hearings on the bill, 34 organizations submitted a letter to the NY State Assembly in support of bill A.1898-a. They wrote:

*"The undersigned organizations (Ed. Note: 34, including UNANIMA) and individuals call for the passage of A.1898-a, as introduced on May 23, 2005, to ensure that New York State has a strong and effective legal framework within which to combat human trafficking. The undersigned, many of whom have extensive experience in fighting the harms of trafficking and working with victims of trafficking, recognize the particular need to combat trafficking in New York, which is an entry, transit, and destination point for large numbers of trafficking victims.*

*The strength of this legislation lies in its comprehensive approach, covering all aspects of human trafficking. It includes provisions which 1) comprehensively defines sex and labor trafficking; 2) create the possibility of effectively prosecuting those who create the demand for trafficking; 3) recognize the link between sex tourism and sex trafficking; 4) impose enhanced penalties for the trafficking of minors; and 5) seek to ameliorate*

*the harm done to trafficking victims by providing them with information about rehabilitative and legal services, restitution, a civil cause of action for damages against their traffickers, and immunity from prosecution. These provisions are essential in creating an effective deterrent to traffickers, addressing the unique harms experienced by trafficking victims, and ensuring the prosecution of all those who perpetuate and profit from the trafficking industry."*

In addition the New York State Anti-Trafficking Coalition prepared a letter addressed to the NY Legislature's Codes Committee with suggested revisions to Bill #1989-a, based on what had been expressed at the hearings.

The first revision redrafted the part of the bill that deals with 'johns'. Instead of creating a separate offense for patronizing a trafficking victim, the revision would raise the level of the offense for all crimes of patronizing a prostitute.

The second suggested revision redrafted the section covering sex tourism to make it clearer and easier to prosecute.

Finally the letter re-emphasized the importance of retaining a comprehensive definition of trafficking based on the real experiences of trafficking victims, and underscored the importance of not watering down or narrowing the definition of sexual servitude or labor servitude.

Letters to the Editor (see pg. 6) served as a further strategy in pushing for anti-trafficking legislation in New York.

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### Ed. Note:

In the September issue (ST39) the Women's Committee of the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill, NY was incorrectly cited as based in PA.

If you wish information about this Committee and its work with the NY Anti-Trafficking Coalition, contact Jeanne Shary OP at: [jeannebean70@hotmail.com](mailto:jeannebean70@hotmail.com)

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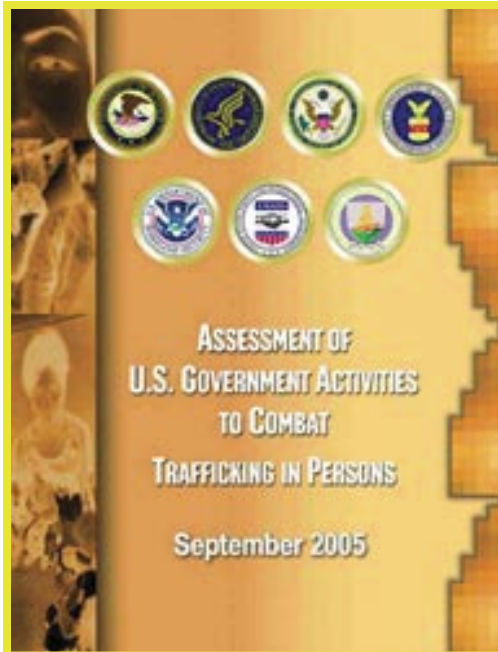


## Advocacy

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# Assessment of US Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons

In September 2005 the US Government issued its third annual report, "Assessment of US Government Activities to Combat Trafficking in Persons." The 27-page document discusses the benefits and services offered domestically to victims by the Departments of Health and Human Services, Justice, Labor, Legal Services Corporation, and Agriculture, as well as the immigration benefits granted victims. The report explains what has been done to investigate, prosecute and sentence traffickers during 2004. It names the localities and agencies that received grants to train law enforcement, medical staffs, and social services personnel and the international agencies that received funding for similar training. The Report attempts to explain why so few victims have been rescued. The reasons cited include: victims often suffer from paralyzing fear and are reluctant to seek out help...or they simply run and hide or leave the country, without ever contacting law enforcement or social services help. Traffickers perversely use the specter of American law to exploit their victims, using coercion and deception, often forcing victims to engage in illegal activities. They exploit destitute people who are already in the US – including those who are vulnerable because they lack proper immigration status. Traffickers impose debts on their victims for having brought them here, for having found them



“work,” and for providing them with room and board. Victims from some countries distrust all law enforcement, since those from their native countries are often corrupt and heavy-handed. Also victims fear that traffickers will exact revenge on family members back home if the victims cooperate with law enforcement.

*“Trafficked children are even more vulnerable than adults and more susceptible to believing the threats and promises of their traffickers. Often, social workers and other helpful people have a short window of opportunity in which to help a trafficked child. Most youth shelters face*

**Toll-Free Hotline:  
(Trafficking Information  
and Referral)  
1.888.3737.888**

*state-mandated reporting requirements after the lapse of specified time-periods. Once trafficked children are apprised of the reporting necessity and deadline, they frequently elect to run.” (Report pgs.9-10)*

*(See pg. 5 for statistics on convictions as cited in the Report.)*

### Recommendations for Action:

“The U.S. government recognizes that it should take the following action:

- The U.S. government, its state and local partners, and NGOs need to improve their ability to find and rescue victims.
- The U.S. government should conduct more research to determine an accurate figure for the scope of the trafficking problem in the United States, including both domestic and foreign victims.
- The U.S. government should attempt to measure the impact of its anti-trafficking activities both domestically and internationally, including, enhancing U.S. embassies’ abilities to monitor and evaluate anti-trafficking projects; requiring grantees to provide self-assessments of their anti-trafficking projects; and conducting more site visits.
- The U.S. government should ensure that its Task Forces are well-functioning and should encourage states to adopt and aggressively implement their own anti-trafficking laws.”

*(Report pgs. 26-27)*



Advocacy

Prosecutions and Convictions

The Report shows comparative figures on prosecutions to date:

Trafficking

Prosecutions by Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Cases Filed	2	6	3	10	10	13	29
Defendants Charged	19	19	5	38	41	32	59
Convictions	25	13	10	23	28	26	43

The Report explains, “In order to present data regarding sentences, the DOJ’s Bureau of Justice Statistics reviewed the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AOUSC) criminal case database to preliminarily calculate average sentence length for cases completed in Fiscal Year 2004 that involved the trafficking offenses of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1581 (peonage), 1583 (entertainment for slavery), 1584 (sale into involuntary servitude), 1589 (forced labor), 1590 (trafficking with respect to peonage/slavery/involuntary servitude/forced labor), 1591 (sex trafficking of children or by force, fraud or coercion), 1592 (unlawful conduct with respect to documents in furtherance of trafficking), and 1594 (general provisions). This calculation differs from the case statistics presented in the charts, because the AOUSC database tracks the statutes involved in a court case rather than the underlying

ing facts of each case. As a result, the AOUSC database search was unable to determine sentences in trafficking prosecutions in which defendants pleaded guilty to non-trafficking offenses, such as immigration violations or visa fraud. In addition, the AOUSC database chronicles only the top five offenses charged, and not the universe of charges brought.”

In 2004 there were 18 defendants in cases concluded where a trafficking statute was indicated. All 18 defendants were convicted and, of these, 14 received a prison term and four received probation. The average prison term for the 14 defendants was 86 months and prison terms ranged from 27 months to 168 months ...Two defendants received a probation term of 12 months and one defendant received 36 months of probation (information on the fourth ...is not available).”

Second-Largest U.S. Trafficking Prosecution

The June 2004 discovery of 69 Peruvian nationals held in indentured servitude in Suffolk County made Long Island, NY the site of the second-largest human trafficking ring prosecuted in the United States. Their captors arranged for them to enter the United States with fraudulent immigration documents, then threatened them with deportation if they did not work two and three jobs a day and hand over their pay. A husband and wife pleaded guilty to smuggling in November 2004, facing up to 87 months in prison. Federal officials began the *Rescue & Restore Victims of Human Trafficking* program in NY in September 2005 to raise public awareness and train local police and social service agencies to combat trafficking.

<http://www.newsday.com/news/local/longisland/ny-lismugo923,0,2168633.story?>

New York’s legislation would follow that enacted in other states

- Washington, Texas, Florida, Missouri, Kansas, Arizona and California –

all of which have adopted anti-trafficking laws. Connecticut, California and Washington have also created commissions to monitor the issue.

U.S. v. Garcia (W.D. N.Y.)

On May 26, 2005, a female agricultural crew leader was sentenced in Buffalo, NY. She received 46 months in prison after pleading guilty to forced labor (18 U.S.C. 1589). She and her accomplices recruited young undocumented Mexican aliens from the Arizona border and transported them to New York with false promises of good wages, only to force them to work in the fields upon arrival for little or no pay, and to subject them to overcrowded and filthy conditions.

U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division  
ANTI-TRAFFICKING NEWS BULLETIN Volume 2, Issue 2 August 2005 (pgs. 5)

U.S. v. Paoletti-Lemus (E.D. N.Y.)

On May 27, 2005, Paoletti-Lemus was extradited to the United States after serving eight years in a Mexican prison. In 1997 and 1998, he and eighteen of his cohorts pled guilty to recruiting and smuggling approximately sixty deaf Mexicans to the United States with the promises of good jobs. Instead they exploited and abused them for profit. The Mexican aliens were forced to work under conditions of servitude, peddling key chain trinkets on the streets and subways of New York City.

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August 2005 (pgs. 5-6)



Action

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## Human Trafficking Hits Home

Article submitted by Jane Pattison, Troy to the Albany, NY Times Union Religion Section, December 3, 2005

Anyone who values human life certainly wants to protect the safety and wellbeing of those among us who are vulnerable. That is why an increasing number of groups have decided to raise awareness about the horrendous crime of human trafficking that exploits, demeans and abuses women, children, workers and immigrants around the globe.

This crime against humanity is an obvious affront to women and men of faith who along with other people of good will regard human life as sacred. The model for Christians is Jesus, who consistently reached out to lift up the poor and marginalized, the suffering, alien, lost and broken, offering to all of humanity healing, compassion and wholeness.

The Sisters of the Holy Names, an international community of religious women with a presence in Albany, have been dedicated to education in the faith along with academic excellence since the Order's founding in 1846. Called as prophetic witnesses to the Gospel, the sisters have committed themselves to work to change institutions and systems that oppress life wherever it is threatened.

Joining them in an effort to bring about justice in the area of human trafficking are the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Sisters of Mercy, who share a similar vision of the dignity of people and serve the Diocese of Albany in education, health care and other ser-

vices to people in need. These orders of religious women, among many more, have identified trafficking as an issue on which to focus.

Trafficking — the movement of people away from their normal environment in order to exploit them — comes in many forms. It includes prostitution, sex entertainment and labor exploitation in domestic servitude, sweatshops, restaurants and migrant agricultural work....

The problem is that most of us don't know much about this crime and tend to think it doesn't exist, certainly not in our own cities and neighborhoods. Trafficking crimes are hidden from public view or misrepresented as the "choice" of the victim. Incidents of trafficking are beginning to surface in our own State of New York however, such as the arrest of five people last year for staffing a restaurant chain with illegal immigrants in Albany and Troy and making them live in unsafe and overcrowded apartments.

It hit home for me when my husband and I used to walk by the restaurant near our home in Troy and see fear in the faces of the Asian workers who looked away when we smiled to greet them.

Other examples include a group of farmhands in western New York who filed a lawsuit charging that growers mistreated them, and a Russian

Pattison *cont. pg 7*

## 'Letter to the Editor'

To the White Plains NY Journal News

## It's 'human trafficking'

By Sr. Eileen M. Cunningham, OP  
Orangeburg, December 4, 2005

"'Local Sex Ring Broken.' This headline, well-placed on page one of the *Journal News* caught my attention and made me question if the women involved are victims of trafficking.

I belong to a group that has been studying the causes, effects, and the magnitude of trafficking and what I have learned about this world-wide practice made me read the headline and the article from a more informed perspective.

Trafficking is the recruitment, harboring, transportation, or provision of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude, debt bondage or slavery. This practice reaches every corner of the globe. Every year more than 700,000 women and children are trafficked. Of this number approximately 50,000 are trafficked into the U.S..

Victims of trafficking, mainly women and children, are lured from their families and homelands by promises of job training. Instead, they find themselves working as sex slaves, unwilling prostitutes. Their documents are taken, leaving them without recourse to escape. When sex rings are raided, these victims are arrested as prostitutes. While we don't know the status of the women who were arrested in last week's raid, we do need to ask the question and encourage the authorities to treat them accordingly.

As stated in the article, federal law does provide stiff penalties for trafficking and although New York is a point of entry for the victims of trafficking, the State has no law concerning

Cunningham *cont. pg 7*



## Action

### Cunningham *cont. pg 6*

it. However, a bill (#A-1898-a) is pending passage in the New York State Assembly. Passage of this bill is not guaranteed. Traffickers and their local accomplices, who engage in the multi-million dollar trafficking enterprise, would not want to see it passed.

Our representatives to the Assembly need to be encouraged to support passage of bill #A-1898-a and we citizens need to encourage them to do so. May we take this opportunity to do our part to create a more just society, which guarantees the human dignity of all."

<http://www.thejournalnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051204/OPINION02/512040340/1016>

### Pattison *cont. pg 6*

woman in New York City who was flown to this country thinking she had a job as a baby sitter and instead was forced to choose between working as a stripper or in a massage parlor.

In addition to educating ourselves and raising people's awareness, our organizing includes urging elected officials to support effective state legislation that identifies trafficking as a serious crime, distinct from prostitution and labor law violations. Such measures would protect the victims and help residents work with local law enforcement to identify what is really going on in our communities.

*Jane Pattison is a lay associate of the Sisters of the Holy Names.*

<http://www.timesunion.com/AspStories/story.asp?storyID=426007&category=REGION&newsdate=12/3/2005>

### Cases *cont. pg. 2*

houses. When the women arrived at the houses, a "house boss" controlled their lives for the duration of their stay. At the two Spring Valley houses, men paid \$25 to the bosses to have sex with the women. The bosses keep \$12 per customer and the women got \$13.

A Rockland spokesperson for an international women's human rights group said, "Many women arrested at massage parlors and houses of prostitution are paying off debts to get into the United States, though many citizens probably don't believe such activity happens in their area." He said the federal government would be the proper authority to investigate because it could protect and help the women, since very rarely do local police investigate the larger organizations that are exploiting such women. "New York state does not have a law concerning trafficking in human beings."

Excerpted: <http://www.thejournalnews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20051119/NEWS03/511190358/1023/NEWS07>

*Stop Trafficking!*  
is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!*  
<http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanschafer/sds/stoptraffic/index.html>

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**Informative Web Sites:**  
(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

**Campaign to Rescue and Restore Victims of Trafficking:  
Tool Kits to Train Personnel:  
Police / Health Care / Social Service**  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/>