



# **ALLIANCE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

Founded and Supported by U.S. Catholic Sisters

## **Feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita National Human Trafficking Awareness Month**

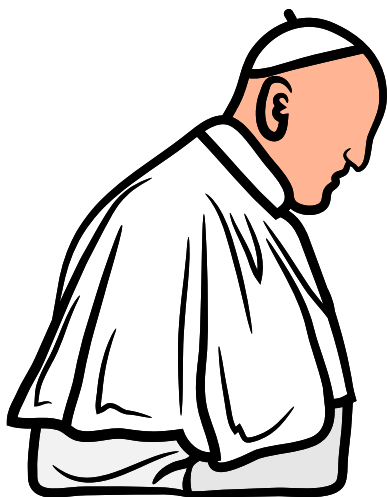
# **2025 TOOLKIT**





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"Saint Bakhita encourages us to open our eyes and ears to see those who go unseen and to hear those who have no voice, to acknowledge the dignity of each person, and to fight trafficking and all forms of exploitation."

--Pope Francis  
February 8, 2024





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## Introduction

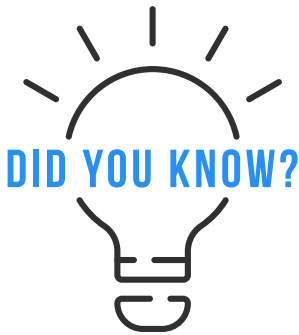
National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11 raises awareness of the persistent issue of human trafficking. This day is specifically dedicated to awareness and prevention of the illegal practice. Since the Senate established this day of observance in 2007, it has drawn massive public support from individual donations to government-organized events. The horrific injustice of human trafficking can affect people of any race and background, and on this and every day we are all called to work to end human trafficking wherever it exists. Learn more [here](#).





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## Human Trafficking Background and Overview

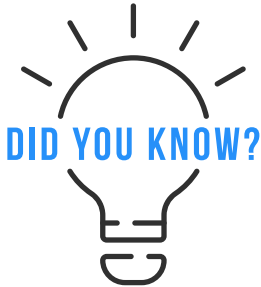
- Human Trafficking is a \$150 billion world market that impacts an estimated 50 million people worldwide.
- Victims of human trafficking are hidden in our neighborhoods. They are being recruited from our schools. They are growing our food, working in our nail salons, and they are there when we go on vacation and stay in hotels. They are hidden in plain sight.
- This affront to human dignity happens through force, fraud, and coercion.
- Traffickers thrive where vulnerability is high; where people are desperate and their options are limited or nonexistent. People on the move and recent immigrants are at particular risk of exploitation by traffickers because of their precarious social and economic circumstances. The International Organization for Migration estimates the number of international migrants to be at least 281 million people. They are refugees, asylum seekers, labor migrants, and those displaced by conflict or natural disasters. They are fleeing floods, famine, war, violence, endemic poverty, organized crime, political corruption, and the effects of climate change. They are both desperate and resilient. The adverse circumstances that force people to flee their homes can lead migrants to be deceived in exploitative recruitment abroad. Migration routes too often lead migrants into the hands of organized trafficking networks, exploitative employment, or situations of extortion.
- However, immigrants are not the only ones who are forced into a life of servitude. It's happening to our youth in our communities.
- Human trafficking is the fastest-growing criminal industry in the world. It is the second most lucrative and is soon expected to surpass the illegal drug trade. Drugs can be sold once, but people can be sold multiple times, with many victims being sold 15 to 30 times a day.
- Child online sexual exploitation is rampant. Furthermore, it's hard to detect, threatens lives, especially of the most vulnerable, and if unaddressed, will have daunting and irreversible impacts on families and society.





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## What Does the Church Say?

- The Catholic Church has a long history of speaking out on the rights of workers officially began with Leo XIII's papal encyclical *Rerum novarum* in 1891.
- The Catholic Church teaches that each person is made in the image and likeness of our God. Human trafficking is an affront to that dignity. Catholic social teaching (CST) further develops this idea through the seven themes of CST found here.
- Written during the Second Vatican Council, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) states "slavery, prostitution, the selling of women, and children, and disgraceful working conditions where people are treated as mere tools for profits rather than free and responsible persons are infamies and supreme dishonor to the creator."
- Pope Francis has spoken out frequently against human trafficking, including his statement last February, on the occasion of the feast of our patron, St. Josephine Bakhita. You can read his comments here.
- Men and women religious have played an integral part in the battle against human trafficking. In 2001, nearly 800 women leaders of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) passed a resolution dedicating over one million members "to work in solidarity with one another within our own religious communities and in the countries in which we are located to address insistently at every level the abuse and sexual exploitation of women and children..." The Alliance to End Human Trafficking is the United States' response to this call.





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Programs and Initiatives

### Education & Outreach

Education and Awareness are key to helping prevent and end human trafficking!

- Speaker Training and Presentation Requests
  - The Alliance has launched its National Speaker's Bureau in 2024. Our speaker's bureau is equipped with free training on becoming a dynamic speaker and access to our survivor-vetted presentations on a variety of topics. If you would like to spread the word in your community and become a voice for change, contact the Alliance at [Christine@AllianceToEndHumanTrafficking.org](mailto:Christine@AllianceToEndHumanTrafficking.org).
  - If you would like to **schedule a presenter** to come teach the basics of understanding human trafficking and how to prevent it, or create a customized presentation for your audience, please use our [speaker request form](#) to see if we have a presenter available in your area.
- Educational Materials
  - We have prepared educational materials on a variety of topics related to human trafficking such as root causes, children, women, labor, pornography, migrants and refugees, sporting events, and organ removal among others. These 2-4 page guides are perfect for individuals or small groups who want to engage in deeper reflection on issues related to human trafficking. See the full list here: [AEHT Modules](#).
  - Another great way to learn more about human trafficking is through radio, podcasts, and videos. We have curated a list of recommended media resources related to human trafficking for your ongoing education: [Human Trafficking Media Resources](#). If you missed any of our 2024 webinars, you can still view them [here](#).
  - The Stop Trafficking newsletter promotes awareness of human trafficking, provides best practices in advocacy, and recommends actions to counter human trafficking and empower survivors. [Read the latest Stop Trafficking newsletter here](#).





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Programs and Initiatives

### Access to Survivor Services

#### Survivor Stories

- Hear from survivors who have directly benefited from our educational scholarships and programming by members around the country. You can be part of this positive impact by joining us or donating today! [Survivor Stories](#)

#### Member Run Houses

- AEHT members are connected to organizations and houses across the country that provide a variety of services to survivors of human trafficking. Learn more about these houses and the work they are doing here: [Member Run Houses](#)

#### How can you help?

- YOU can help support survivors of human trafficking by supporting their ongoing education directly, donating to our scholarship fund, or hiring them for a job. Learn more about these opportunities here: [Education & Employment](#)
- You can further support human trafficking survivors and prevent human trafficking through your purchasing choices. You can check out our list of [Fair-Trade and Survivor-Made Products](#) that also make great gifts!





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Programs and Initiatives

### Advocacy Work

Catholic Social Teaching proclaims that “action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world” are a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel. In response to this call, AEHT will faithfully engage in advocacy that addresses both the root causes of human trafficking and the needs of victims and survivors.

### Advocacy Tools and Training

- The Alliance provides occasional trainings for how to best engage your representatives and we also provide helpful resources for engaging in effective advocacy, including how to plan a visit with your legislator available on our website. See our advocacy resources.

### Advocacy Priorities

- Our advocacy priorities address the root causes of trafficking and their connections to other important global issues. See our advocacy priorities.

### Take Action!

- Take action to end human trafficking, support survivors, and protect the vulnerable! See our current advocacy campaigns.







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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Programs and Initiatives

### Coalition Building

We believe by working together and sharing our time, talent, and resources, we can have a greater impact on ending human trafficking and supporting survivors across the country.

Please consider joining our network as a member today. Together we can realize a world without human trafficking and with a network of services and resources to inform the public, prevent the crime and assist survivors to achieve a fulfilling life!

Become a member of the Alliance to End Human Trafficking today!





# ALLIANCE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Programs and Initiatives

### Talking Points

- The Alliance to End Human Trafficking (AEHT) is a collaborative, faith-based national network that offers education, supports access to survivor services, and engages in advocacy to eradicate human trafficking. We work to inform the public, prevent this assault on human dignity, and assist survivors to live fulfilling lives.
- Our members include 200+ congregations of Catholic Sisters, coalitions, organizations, and individuals working to end human trafficking.
- Prevention is key to ending human trafficking. Education and advocacy are necessary and women and men who have survived this crime need access to services to help them heal.
- Pope Francis calls human trafficking one of the most troubling of the world's open wounds.
- Many victims come to the United States from other countries where they are promised the American dream of getting an education and finding work only to have their passports confiscated, and fear of their safety or the safety of their family to be compromised. They are taught not to trust law enforcement. Speaking another language further diminishes their ability to seek help. Their dreams are turned into nightmares when they are forced to enter the sex industry, labor on farms, in hotels among other industries for 12 – to 14-hour days with no hopes of escaping their new-found life.





# ALLIANCE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Prayer Service

**Opening Song:** Choose an appropriate song or hymn

**Scripture Reading:** John 1: 1-5



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be.

What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the whole human race;

the light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

### **Reflection on the reading:**

We live in a time where it is easy to believe that darkness has overcome light or that it soon will. We can look at a variety of issues, but simply looking at the one issue of buying and selling human beings--human trafficking--it would be easy to believe that the darkness is going to win. But we are a people of hope. This is a year of hope. Focusing on how the light dispels the darkness of human trafficking is how we will continue to help meet its end. Two decades ago, the language and knowledge of human trafficking was barely known. We are part of the people who have brought that information forward--we have shone a light on that darkness. We will continue our work until that darkness is completely dispelled and people are no longer a commodity. It is possible. Keep shining the light.

Let us take a moment and reflect on how each of us can bring light to this issue.





# ALLIANCE TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Prayer Service

### Prayers of Petition:

God, we ask that you show us what is ours to do to bring light to the offense of human trafficking so that others may not become victims.

Leader: Our response to each petition is: Loving God, hear our prayer.

For those who are currently being trafficked, may liberation and healing be imminent, we pray.

For those who have survived trafficking, may pain be transformed into power as they further their healing journey, we pray.

For humanity, that we may each be guided by light in ways that show us how we are complicit as consumers of goods and services made possible by those trafficked for labor, we pray.

For governments and corporations, that they may embrace fair labor and trade initiatives and laws and that they work toward the common good, we pray.

For an end to sex and labor trafficking, online exploitation, and other social ills that plague society, we pray.

For the safety of children, that they may be allowed to grow and simply be children, we pray.

For the conversion of hearts of traffickers, we pray.





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# **The Alliance to End Human Trafficking**

## **Message from Pope Francis**

**February 8, 2024**

Journeying in Dignity: Listen, Dream, Act

Dear sisters and dear brothers!

Today, the liturgical Memorial of Saint Josephine Bakhita, we celebrate the tenth World Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking. I associate myself wholeheartedly with all of you around the world, especially the young, who are working to combat this global scourge.

Together let us walk in the footsteps of Saint Bakhita, the religious Sister from Sudan, who as a child was sold into slavery and was a victim of traffickers. Let us remember the wrong she endured, her suffering but at the same time her strength and her journey of liberation and rebirth to a new life. Saint Bakhita encourages us to open our eyes and ears to see those who go unseen and to hear those who have no voice, to acknowledge the dignity of each person and to fight trafficking and all forms of exploitation.

Trafficking, in fact, often goes unseen. The media, thanks also to courageous reporters, have brought to light modern forms of slavery, but the culture of indifference tends to desensitize us. Let us help one another to be more responsive, to open our lives and hearts to our sisters and brothers who even now are being bought and sold as slaves. It is never too late to take action.

Thank God, many young people have taken up the challenge of this World Day against trafficking. Their enthusiasm and commitment show us the way: they remind us that we are called to listen, dream and act in order to counter trafficking.





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# **The Alliance to End Human Trafficking**

## **Message from Pope Francis, continued.**

**February 8, 2024**

First, it is essential to listen to those who are suffering. I think of the victims of wars and conflicts, those affected by climate change, those forced to migrate, and those, especially women and children, who are exploited sexually or in the workplace. May we listen to their cry for help and feel challenged by the stories they tell. Together with the victims and the young, let us once more dream of a world where all people can live with freedom and dignity.

Then, sisters and brothers, by the power of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, let us make this dream a reality by taking concrete action to combat trafficking. Let us pray fervently and work proactively for this cause, the defence of human dignity, whether by prayer and action as individuals and families, or as parish and religious communities, as ecclesial associations and movements, and also in the various spheres of social and political life.

We know that the fight against trafficking can be won, but it is necessary to get to the root of the problem and eliminate its causes. I encourage you, then, to respond to this appeal for transformation, in memory of Saint Josephine Bakhita, who stands for all those men and women who, despite their enslavement, can still attain freedom. It is a call to take action, to mobilize all our resources in combatting trafficking and restoring full dignity to those who have been its victims. If we close our eyes and ears, if we do nothing, we will be guilty of complicity. From my heart, I express my gratitude to everyone engaged in the celebration of this Day, and bless all those who are committed to combatting trafficking and all forms of exploitation in order to build a world of fraternity and peace.

Rome, Saint John Lateran, 8 February 2024  
Memorial of Saint Josephine Bakhita.





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Prayer Service

Leader:

Let's take a few moments of quiet to consider: what one action can I take to increase awareness of human trafficking in my neighborhood?

[Moment of Silence]

Closing Prayer

God, help us see that human trafficking affects all of us. Show us what is ours to do to increase awareness of human trafficking so that people do not become victims. Help us become more aware of how social media, poverty, homelessness, or immigration status may make children and others vulnerable to exploitation. Enlighten us on how our obsession with consumerism serves to feed the demand for cheap labor. Help us to commit to incorporate one action in our lives that will serve to stop the demand and help people not become victims of human trafficking. Amen.

Closing Song:

Choose an appropriate song or hymn





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Take Action!



### Take Action To End Human Trafficking

1. Pray for Victims of Human Trafficking – Contact your church to raise awareness:
  - Submit prayers of the faithful for National Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness Month in January and the Feast day of St. Bakhia and Day of Prayer for victims of human trafficking on Feb. 8
  - Hold a Mass or Prayer Service in honor of these days
2. Educate
  - Engage with your community to create and lead awareness campaigns about human trafficking. Encourage grassroots efforts to educate community members on recognizing the signs of trafficking, reporting mechanisms, and supporting survivors.
  - Schedule a Presentation with the Alliance:  
<https://alliancetoendhumantrafficking.org/speaker-request-form/>





# The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Take Action!

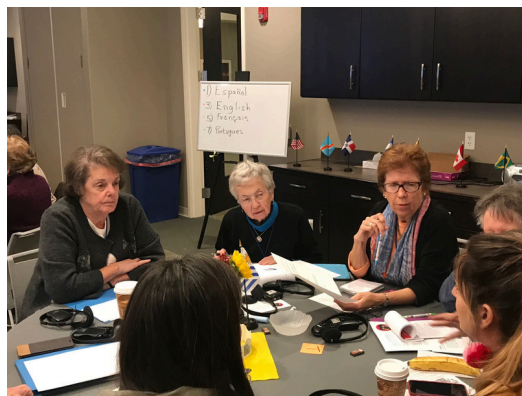
## Take Action To End Human Trafficking

### 3. Advocate

- Contact the Governor of your state. Ask them to ensure that the National Human Trafficking Hotline phone number (888-373-7888) and text line (233 733 or BeFree) is featured prominently on all state websites and in all state-run restroom on Interstate highways.
- Work with legal experts and advocacy groups to identify and propose legislative changes that strengthen anti-trafficking laws. Advocate for policies that increase penalties for traffickers, protect survivors, and improve the overall legal framework for combating human trafficking.

### 4. Host a Letter-Writing Party

- Write your lawmakers to support anti-trafficking legislation
- Write a letter to the editor to raise awareness and affirm coverage of human trafficking
- Write local leaders to support anti-trafficking initiatives and raise awareness
- Contact companies, encouraging them to clean up their supply chains





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## The Alliance to End Human Trafficking Take Action!

### Take Action To End Human Trafficking

5. Be A Conscientious Consumer – Learn more about the impact of your purchases
  - Download the Sweat and Toil app on your Smartphone
  - To learn more about which products use slave and child labor, visit the [Bureau of International Affairs](#)
  - Encourage members of your congregation, your friends, or family to consider whether the source of the clothes they wear, the food they eat and the products they buy come from those in forced labor
  - Purchasing survivor-made goods is a fun way to help support survivors who are learning new job skills and working to become independent. Check out [this page](#) for a list of organizations that sell fair-trade and survivor-made items.
6. Volunteer
  - [Become A Member Today!](#) and join one of our [working groups](#)
7. [Get the Word Out - Share on Social Media](#)
  - [Follow the Alliance To End Human Trafficking on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to get updates](#)
8. Follow the prayer and reflection calendar (the next two pages) created by the [Sisters of Saint Joseph of Orange](#).
9. [Donate](#) to support the work of the Alliance.
10. [Wear Blue](#) on January 11 to show your support to End Human Trafficking!

