

**COMMUNION and SOLIDARITY
with the MOST EXPLOITED of OUR
TIME**

"Human trafficking is a scandalous crime against human dignity and a serious violation of fundamental human rights". John Paul II



LOOKING AT THE REALITY



In our country, Ecuador, it is sad to see how native children are torn away by deception from their parents for a sum of money. They are then relocated to different countries with the promise of a better quality of life, and the sending of money to parents, so that they can improve their home or their "chacra" (piece of land for the culture and the rearing of animals).

Research done on this subject has confirmed that children are forced to beg in the streets or perform inhuman work, becoming "mules" for drugs or prostitution.

Some of these children have been saved, found in the streets of other countries of Latin America, and returned to their place of origin. Warnings were given to parents to prevent repetition of this genre of "trade". The children were placed with professionals, who can help them overcome the trauma of abuse and slavery.

We have just learned that indigenous children enrolled in the Colombian guerrilla troops are used as human shields in confrontations with the Colombian army.



**Good Shepherd Position on the Trafficking of
Women and Girls, p 4, Clare Nolan, 2011**

"We understand trafficking as a grotesque injustice rooted in the dynamics of our global world and current global economy. Structures and systems which increase extreme poverty of the vulnerable, support patriarchal hierarchies, and give priority to economic profit above the value of the human person, render untold women and children vulnerable to being trafficked for labor and for sexual exploitation. In concert with many forms of gender discrimination and global gender-based violence, the trafficking of women and girls is a violation of their dignity and human rights. It challenges GS's determination to respond. GS stands with all persons of good will who condemn this phenomena and work to eradicate it"

FOR OUR REFLECTION:

- What does the above text tell me? How reecho these words in your heart and in your mind?
- Take a few moments to reflect on this fact (Looking at the Reality) and the actions that you can perform to engage more on behalf of the victims of human exploitation.

FINAL PRAYER:

Oh God, we cannot express what our minds are unable to understand, and our feelings when we hear about men, women and children deceived, transported to unknown places, forced into prostitution or other forms of work, for the benefit of traffickers and unscrupulous people.

Our hearts are sad and our spirits angry, because their dignity and their rights were not respected, and they were forced by threats to become victims of deception. We raise our voices against this degrading practice and pray to end trafficking of human beings.

Protect, Lord, all potential victims and especially the most vulnerable, such as young people, women and children. Surround with care and tenderness all the current victims of human trafficking. Deliver them from evil and give us the courage and wisdom to express our solidarity with them, so that together we may find ways to give them back the freedom that you want for all of us.
Amen.



*Submitted by Luz Marina Enriquez, GS Associate,
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