



EBF  
ANTI-  
TRAFFICKING  
RESOURCE  
BOOK

EBF Anti-Trafficking Resource Book.  
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## Introduction

TONY PECK

*General Secretary*

*European Baptist Federation*

In the late eighteenth century, in my home city of Bristol, England a young Baptist named William Knibb became deeply challenged about the exploitation and injustice of the African slave trade which was then accepted as normal by most of British society. The Baptist Missionary Society sent him to Jamaica where many slaves were working on British-owned sugar plantations. William Knibb campaigned tirelessly for freedom for the slaves, and lived to see their final emancipation. Today he is remembered as a national hero by the people of Jamaica.

From then onwards there has been a Baptist tradition, sometimes a minority and misunderstood one, of working for the freedom of those bound by slavery and oppression. Perhaps the most famous example is USA Baptist pastor Martin Luther King jr who in the 1950s and 60s fought, until his early and violent death, for an end to racism and injustice for the black men and women of the Southern States of the USA.

In Europe today we face another version of the evil of slavery. The opening of Europe's borders post-1989 has made possible human trafficking across the continent, mainly of women and girls who leave their countries with the promise of a better life and find themselves abused and forced into prostitution.

The strength of the European Baptist Federation is that it is a grass-roots movement of Baptist communities in almost every country in Europe, and particularly strong in countries where many of these women originate. But the EBF also has strong Unions in countries to which these women find themselves trafficked and then enslaved.

We are very grateful for the initiative of the Swedish Baptist Union in bringing this concern to the whole of our European Baptist family. We were encouraged by the attendance at the EBF Anti-trafficking Consultation held in Budapest, Hungary in April 2005 where we brought together government representatives, senior executives of

NGOs working in anti-trafficking, as well as representatives of Baptists in 29 countries across Europe. We listened to first-hand accounts of those who are the victims of trafficking, we prayed and reflected on the Scriptures, and we helped one another to determine what part we as the EBF can play, with others, in countering this contemporary evil trade in human beings.

We recognised that it is not enough just to feel moved by the plight of those who are the victims of human trafficking. We must do more to help our member Unions face this issue which perhaps has not been talked about so openly among them; and we must also seek to use the networking possibilities of the EBF and its communities right across Europe.

The EBF Anti-Trafficking group was set up to help us to do this. We are very grateful for their good work in preparing these materials and in establishing an EBF anti-trafficking network.

On behalf of the EBF, I commend these papers to you for study and discussion in our Unions and churches. But much more important, my prayer is that as European Baptists we will follow the tradition among us which will lead us to *action* on behalf of the enslaved and the oppressed.

“Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of my family, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40).

*Tony Peck*

*General Secretary EBF*

*Prague, September 2006*

## EBF anti-trafficking work group: A humble tool for urgent needs

By Anna Maffei

General Secretary, Baptist Union of Italy

Chair of the External Relations Division of the European Baptist Federation

*“When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said: Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market?” (John 2, 13-16)*

### How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market?

Let’s reflect for a moment on these words. Turning God’s house into a market is a sin, it is overturning God’s purpose for His house into something else, alien to His will. A market is a place where everything can be sold and bought, where everything has a price, a space where money is the centre. Jesus in the temple of Jerusalem *scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables*. An act of rebellion, a prophetic cry for truth.

Today the entire world is often defined as a “market,” the *world market*, and the lives of people seem all to be subjected in one way or the other to the strict laws of economy.

In this booklet, which was prepared by the Anti-trafficking workgroup of the European Baptist Federation (EBF), we want to offer to the churches and to all the readers another point of view of the world and express a vibrant protest against the impersonal merciless laws of supply and demand. We propose that you have a look into this special kind of market of human lives which is going on here in Europe, and not only here, but also in the general indifference of many Christians and churches.

It will be a sad but necessary look.

We are talking of a special black market in which girls and women coming from different countries are deluded, deceived, deported, sold and bought as sex slaves. We are talking of an enormous business organized to exploit and violate tens of thousands of young lives. Bodies and souls. The aim of all of this trafficking is to make money, big money. Jesus called money “Mammon,” underlying in this way the idolatrous and demonic character of money, when a means to live becomes an aim and purpose for power, the treasure of one’s heart.

How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market?

Jesus expressed his deep indignation toward the profaners of God’s temple who

turned prayer into business, the temple into “a den of robbers.” Now, the word of God also tells us that the bodies of His creatures are all potentially the temple of God and whoever violates them will fall under God’s judgement. “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred and you are that temple” (Romans 3, 16).

And elsewhere Jesus tells us with the same severity: “If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matthew 18, 6).

The booklet that we present here is the first effort, after the Conference of Budapest of EBF “Counter Trafficking Efforts” (14-17 April 2005) to bring, in a written form, into the Baptist churches in Europe and the Middle East the unheard voices of the victims of this criminal trafficking.

We, as Christians need to hear those voices; we need to deepen our knowledge of this widespread international phenomenon; we need to create awareness in our churches concerning what is going on in the streets of our countries or in thousands of hidden apartments of our cities; we need to reflect biblically on this theme and recognize our prejudices; we need to take seriously our responsibility to denounce the evil powers who destroy human life and the dignity of so many women; we need to overcome the fear to act; we need to fight in our respective countries for fair legislation which punishes the perpetrators but protects the victims; and, we need to organize an efficient network and work together in order “to proclaim freedom to the prisoners”, as Jesus did.

The pages of this book may represent a humble instrument for a beginning in fulfilling all these needs.

You will find in the book a proposal to the churches by Luran Bethell, international consultant on issues of trafficking and prostitution with International Ministries (ABC/USA), to consider the importance and urgency for church involvement in the anti-trafficking work. Elaine Storkey, one of the most experienced writers and speakers in relating the Christian Gospel to contemporary culture, offers a presentation of the phenomenon of international trafficking and gives elements for a theology of human personhood as a basis for Christian mission today. Marion Carson, lecturer in New Testament and Pastoral Care, International Christian College in Glasgow, proposes four bible studies useful for our congregations connected with our theme.

Then you receive from Sven-Gunnar Lidén, chair of the EBF anti-trafficking workgroup, an interesting word on trafficking from a male perspective which also contains a sorrowful text for a confession of sin. By the same author you can read an article on research organized in Sweden on the use of the Internet in trafficking and prostitution. Then in order to give faces to numbers you can read four brief life stories of victims. They are just examples of what is happening everyday in the actual lives of thousands

of young women. In the end of the booklet you have the brief description of two projects going on in Sweden and in Italy. Both projects are run in cooperation with other governmental and non-governmental organizations. Attached to the Swedish project you can also find a concise presentation of the Swedish law on prostitution.

Finally, as you can see, at the back of the booklet, there is a pocket with a leaflet, where you have a list of the contact persons of a number of European Baptist Unions. They are names and e-mail addresses of the people who constitute the first core of a European network that the European Baptist Federation is building for the purpose of countering trafficking and helping its young victims.

When driving at night in the suburbs of Rome, I happen to see beautiful young women earning money for their pimps and persecutors, when my eyes dare crossing their sad eyes hidden behind masks of heavy make-up, I ask myself, where are the Christian churches, where are my brothers and sisters, where am I, who should protect the “little ones” who Christ loved so much. What do we, what do I, do to stop this horrific market? What do we do to stop the trampling of these girls’ souls, the destruction of their bodies, the rape of their dignity?

The answer is simple: I shake my head, silently go on my way and reach home. Then I try to forget and go to sleep.

Is this what God wants from us, from me?

This book has been printed for us to lose some sleep and stop.

We may find ourselves sharing Jesus’ indignation for the profanation of the holy temple of His Spirit turned into a wretched market. And after that we may start praying for those girls. We start wondering what is their name, where they come from, what is their life story. We realize we do not know them yet, but God does and wants their salvation. We know He loves them so much even to give His only son, Jesus our Saviour, to rescue their life. Just as mine. And while praying God may whisper to us what to do, where to start in order to fulfil His will.

Christian faith has something serious to do with all this.

## As Jesus did: Why churches should be involved in anti-trafficking

By Lauran Bethell

International Consultant on the issues of trafficking and prostitution with International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches/USA.

*“Just then Jesus’ disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a Samaritan woman....” (John 4:27)*

“Why don’t you take care of the pastors’ daughters and the ‘good’ girls who deserve your resources and care, instead of the ‘bad’ girls,” said a prominent church leader and member of my board to me, just after I’d opened a shelter in Thailand for victims of trafficking and prostitution. I was hurt, stunned, angry and at a loss for words. I knew this man as a person of great compassion and generosity, and I had to realize that he was simply expressing his own frustration at the lack of resources to meet the many needs of the people who looked to him for care and leadership. His question was valid. Why should we, as Christ’s Body here on this earth, get involved in situations which are “bad”, “ugly”, “dangerous” and seemingly “hopeless”.

And my answer to my friend and board member was simply, “Because Jesus spent a significant part of his time with those kinds”.

Jesus only spent three years in ministry on this earth, and I continue to be amazed at how much of that limited time he spent with people that his society considered “bad”, “ugly”, “dangerous” and “hopeless”. Yes, he also ministered to the masses, the “ordinary” people and to the leaders. But he intentionally sat down at a well with a Samaritan (Jews always tried to avoid Samaritans) woman (a good Jewish man would *never* be seen talking with a woman in public) who was outcast (she had to come to the well alone, in the heat of the day because she couldn’t mix with the other women who came at more convenient times) because of her sexual sins (she had been married five times, and was living with a man she wasn’t married to, so very culturally unacceptable). And he carried on quite a sophisticated theological conversation with her (offering her dignity). And he gently confronted her with his knowledge about her sins (“he told me everything I have ever done”!) And she recognized Jesus as the Messiah. And she became one of Jesus’ first evangelists (“many Samaritans... believed in Jesus because of the woman’s testimony...”). The disciples were astonished. They had never seen a man like this.

### Is Jesus our example?

If your answer is “yes”, and you have chosen to radically commit yourself to follow him, then you can expect to encounter situations in which you could never have

previously imagined yourself participating. That was certainly my story! And I'm sure that the disciples never expected a life such as they had after committing themselves to follow Jesus! And the most wonderful part about this "following-Jesus-life" is that we're never alone in it. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, is with us in every encounter, in every moment, and gives us the wisdom and courage to face situations that have few formulas or blue-prints to guide us to solutions.

### **Is Jesus our example?**

One of the "messiest" of situations that we have in our world today involves the trafficking of human beings. Trafficking usually involves the most vulnerable in our societies: children, impoverished women and men who need to support families, those who have been victims of childhood abuse and dysfunctional family and community systems. As soon as they become involved in a trafficking situation, they become even more vulnerable, helpless and entrapped because of the threats and brutality of the traffickers, often involving mafia-type organizations.

It seems like an overwhelming situation, filled with impossible obstacles and difficulties: poverty, extreme emotional wounds, cultural stigmas, organized crime, and on and on and on. Why don't we just focus our time and energy on the "good girls" instead of wasting our time and energy on the "bad girls", the messy, ugly, uncomfortable issues of the trafficking in persons?

### **Is Jesus our example?**

It's becoming evident that God is calling the Church to reach into the dark corners of this world of trafficking in persons with Light and Love, just as Jesus walked into the messy, ugly, uncomfortable situations of his time, with his Light and his Love. He risked the judgment of his peers, the hatred of the religious elite, and the questioning of his best friends. But he knew that he was where he was supposed to be. He went with nothing but compassion and caring. He met the Samaritan woman with a request for a drink of water, not with a requirement for immediate change. He met her with respect for her personhood, and with the knowledge that she had been created in God's image, in great love. And like Jesus, we too, as his representatives on this earth, can enter into these uncertain situations, knowing that the Holy Spirit will be with us, giving us the wisdom and courage we need to face the most challenging of situations.

### **So why should churches be involved in anti-trafficking?**

**1.** *Churches can draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer to intervene in places of darkness and evil.*

The presence and prayers of The Faithful in places where the evil of trafficking abounds can make a powerful difference. God is at work in this world, and many times

Christians are called to simply show up and call upon God's power and presence to intervene.

**2.** *Churches represent the Body of Christ on this earth, and have the capacity to provide the kind of compassion and caring needed for the healing of victims of trafficking. Victims of trafficking have been deeply wounded and need to experience Christ's unconditional love and acceptance to lead the way towards their healing. Christians can provide that, led and empowered by the Holy Spirit.*

**3.** *Churches are well-networked and can provide rapid information sharing amongst each other.*

It is essential in the anti-trafficking movement that many networks cooperate together. When a trafficking situation is identified, a well-informed network of churches can facilitate contact with appropriate government organizations (GO) and non-governmental organizations (NGO) for intervention, protection and prevention.

**4.** *Churches represent people at the "grass-roots" of our societies, who are observant of what is happening in their communities and who can identify situations of trafficking if they are made aware of them.*

If Christians are willing to learn about who is at risk for trafficking and willing to look for signs of victimization, more rapid intervention would be possible. And rapid intervention can save lives from exploitation or further abuse.

**5.** *Churches can be confident that Jesus will be with them, as their example and leader, when they follow his Call into anti-trafficking activities, as they seek his guidance, strength and wisdom.*

Jesus is our example!

*Rev. Dr. Lauran Bethell serves as an International Consultant on the issues of trafficking and prostitution with International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches/USA. She served in Thailand as the Director of the New Life Center for 14 years, and is now based in Prague, Czech Republic, living at IBTS.*

# Sociology & Theology: Notes from a speech held at the Budapest Counter trafficking conference 2005

By Elaine Storkey  
Wycliff-Hall, Oxford UK

Trafficking of people is always done in a global context based on a 'mechanistic' economic model. In the 18th century men and women were being transported from Africa, where labour was abundant and 'in surplus', to North America and the Caribbean where cheap labour was 'needed'. Workers were found to meet this demand from poorer parts of the world. They were transported to the areas in need.

That model is run by a Push-Pull situation of Demand and Supply. When the need was present (pull), the solution was to get new people into the system (push). The best way was to find new workers among poorer areas and transport them around the world. This was the demand behind the slave trade for the cotton fields and sugar canes.

The same model is now practised in the leisure industry and sex trade. Women and children are forced into the sex industry; normally they come from poor countries and are given promises of big money. The work they do is making huge profits, not for themselves, but for their owners. They are the cheapest workers and make the highest profits.

What is wrong with this? First the need of People is presented as something neutral, mechanic and a natural economic transaction. The model ignores the issue of moral and ethics. Human beings are made into commodities: things, labour machines, leisure accessories. This model also ignores that it violates the identity and the freedom of individuals to make their own choices. It tells the person she's a prostitute, but what if she wants to do something else? What is her choice?

The model also ignores the ethics of power. It creates an economic power that grows through the exploitation of others and finally ends up as a global structure. The relationships between human beings get distorted. It is an economically profit making system that is really based on slavery.

Throughout the 18th to the 20th centuries in the developed world we have had many legal and constitutional changes, including human rights charters, protective legislation for children and women, and the protection of the courts. Yet the trafficking of women and children has continued illegally on a global scale with relatively few prosecutions worldwide, until it has grown to enormous proportions.

Economical and social theories are not neutral. They always rely on assumptions

connected to moral and spiritual implications. Beneath most theories there is a view of human personhood that needs to be challenged from a Christian point of view. This mechanistic model is against all the foundation of our education and theology.

John Stott, a British theologian, says that we don't need a new Christian theology. We need to use the one we have in the Bible and from Jesus Christ. It's not a new starting point; it's a new destination into new areas and new horizons. We have eliminated so much of this that our wings have been cut. Our theology have become something private and only about ourselves.

Stott argues for a fuller doctrine of God, a fuller doctrine of human beings, a fuller doctrine of Christ, a fuller doctrine of salvation and a fuller doctrine of the church. We need to understand God as a God of justice as well as of justification. It is a theology of humanity, justice, and love for your neighbour.

## Theology for Human Personhood

In the story of Creation it is all about sin and reconciliation. God is the Creator and the two persons, the Human Beings, are doing the sin and destruction. Reconciliation in this context is that sin is not the last word. God has a specific feeling for his children and bless them with his love. We are also all of the same significance before God. Every Human Being has the same value in his Kingdom. In the global context this is not so, people are not of the same value in the economic model.

Created by God, everyone has a purpose and meaning. As humans we are dependent of God and also accountable to God for what we do. We are also given freedom before God, to be able to respond to and worship God. We are also under the divine ownership of this world, therefore is all slavery a crime against God himself.

We are the image of God; we have the ability to make relationships, make love, show compassion and be creative. Every person born into this world need relations that gives support and security. We are interdependent of each other as communal beings. We need some kind of intimacy; we need to work, created as we are to be creative. Work has a relationship to the Creation of God. And we are put in a bigger community to be a part that grows with others.

Trafficking is built on the opposite side, it is fragmentizing Humans and placing the person outside the Creation of God.

## Humanity and Sin

The Sin has many faces. Sin alienates people and cuts us away from God, other people, ourselves and all of creation. The Destruction of Sin will tear down, destroy and hurt the image of God in us. All the things that are good for us will be destroyed in this.

Sin is also Distortive, it distorts and justifies lies, and makes the Truth to be considered a lie too. Sin is Addictive; it makes Humans dependent and takes all of them



under the control of Sin, so will we lose our freedom, and so is the sex industry able to make humans become slaves under the power of Sin.

The structural sin of power will corrupt justice and enslave others. Trafficking is one kind of structural sin.

Societal Sin is growing within politics and commerce. Distortive things are seen as normal and accustomed, and it takes much more to brake what is not normal. It deludes and justifies the actions of the rich and powerful.

### **There is a need for Redemption!**

How can the lives of those who have been violated and harmed be redeemed by the love of God? How can unjust structures, especially the trafficking of women and children, be changed, and those involved redeemed?

The answer can be found in the Bible. In Josiah is the Servant Song. (42:1-8; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:1-12). It's a song about a suffering Servant. God speaks to his people about this Servant, God also gives the Servant his Credentials and God also speaks to his Servant in these passages.

It's a matter of prestige; he is called to be a Servant but he shall bring justice to nations, and to rise what is oppressed. His method is humility, not shout or being bombastic. The characteristics of the Servant are compassion, gentleness, care. God is present with him, the covenant is signed through him, it is a light to the heathens who shall free the captives. Compassion and love for those imprisoned and in darkness.

How can we reply to this Servant? Our Response to this as Christians and Church must be in Faith through:

- Worship, prayer and sacrament – that is the visual part of church.
- Mission and evangelism is two important aspects.
- Nurturing and disciple Christians.
- Passing traditions to the next generation.
- Keeping separate from the world.
- Social action.
- Other things.

The European Christianity has been involved in colonization and Pietism through the history. It has worked together with power and with a strong emphasis on personal conviction. But on the road of mission into new continents the work is also full of sacrifice against injustice, exploitation of commerce.

James McKean transformed the life of Northern Thailand by eliminating its three major curses – smallpox, malaria and leprosy. Wells and pure water often came through the help of missionaries. Industrial schools were stressed through the 19th century and industries were established. In addition the missionaries were constantly the protectors

of the native peoples against exploitation and injustice by government and commercial companies. They played a very important part in the abolishing of forced labour in the Congo. They waged war against widow burning, infanticide and temple prostitution in India. Missionaries have been fighting for the right of the people they come to.

There is a lot of material in the Bible regarding warnings against injustice and war. The prophet's view is found in Jos 5; Jos 58; Hez 22; Amos 5. In the Gospel there are; Luke giving good news to the poor in Luke 4; Maria's song in Luke 1; Judging the exploitation in Luke 19, The poor widow is acknowledged in Mark 12; the woman that anoints Jesus in Luke 7, the feeding of the 5000 in Matt 14; 'proclaiming justice to the nations' (Matt 12/Isa); the rich young ruler in Matt 19 (v. 21); Washing the disciples feet in John 12.

Most of the parables are about justice and how to treat poor people. Matthew 25; the Pharisees thinks they are believers but are self-centered and the actions of their faith are not true. Are the workers in the Vineyard in Matthew 20 exploited or treated well? The unfair judge and the widow in Luke 18, and her search for righteousness.

In the Acts there is the first transformation of wealth in chapter 4; creation of deacons (ch 5). The list can be made long of words in the Scripture about taking care of the poor, the oppressed.

### **Where are we now?**

We are at a crossroad in the global world. We need to make way for the Truth. We are carrying hope from Christ to the broken-hearted and those suffering under injustices and other's sin. We need to get conscious of structural sin and injustice for these trafficked persons. We need to get out of our own comfort.

There is a need for a bigger vision for the work against trafficking. It is a rethinking of being Baptists! What will it mean in this aspect of injustice?

We can stop our attitudes of judging and moralising and become a fellowship that liberates sinners. We can work together as Christians over denominational borders. We can start co-operating with non-Christian organizations, which is hard, but can be a good thing. We can use our buildings and material resources.

The church has a mission in working against trafficking, called by God into this world to be light of Christ.

*Dr. Elaine Storkey is one of the most experienced writers and speakers in relating the Christian Gospel to contemporary culture. She has a background in philosophy and sociology and has many years experience of teaching in the UK and overseas (most recently with King's College, London). For 7 years she was the Executive Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity. She is the UK President of Tear Fund, a Vice President of the University of Gloucestershire and a member of the Crown Appointments Commission. Her most recent publication, with the University of Salford, addresses issues of helping business leaders explore and apply Christian ethics in their work. Elaine is a Senior Research Fellow at Wycliffe Hall, a role which allows her to continue her valued wider ministry in writing, broadcasting, research and public speaking.*



## What can we do?

*By Sven-Gunnar Lidén*

*Minister at Södermalms Baptistchurch*

*Coordinator of anti-trafficking work within the Baptist Union of Sweden*

*Chair of EBF anti-trafficking work group*

All of the problems should not discourage us. On the contrary: Choose to do one or two things but do them well and in co-operation with others, and you will be of great help. It is necessary to start with small, concrete steps if you want to change the general situation.

**1.** Reaching out to trafficked people is not easy. They can be difficult to locate and reach. So use the signs you can get. They are normally discovered in police raids, so the church should have good contacts with the police. Through information from neighbours and clients, hidden women and children can be collected.

**2.** In the process of liberation they need assistance of five major categories:

- a. Assistance to women who still work for their exploiter.
- b. Assistance to women who are struggling to disentangle themselves from exploiters.
- c. Assistance to those who have been rescued and suffer from physical and psychological consequences of mishandling and violence.
- d. Assistance for return to their home country.
- e. Assistance for reintegration.

Helping women to free themselves from the trafficker is a very difficult and potentially dangerous job. Women are afraid, they are threatened, and their families can be under threat as well. They can also be dependent upon their exploiter for psychological reasons. There is often good reason for these women to be afraid to return to their home country, but the possibility to stay is often also limited. To return home is also to give up the dream of a better life which is usually inextricably linked to a future in the receiving country.

The assistance when freed is done through Safety, Shelter, Restoring the physical and psychological integrity. First there is a need of an initial psychosocial assistance and counselling, and also for health problems and diseases. There can also be problems with addictions. Traffickers force women into alcohol and drug addiction in order to keep them docile and under their control. They can also need help to testify, press charges etc. The best is not to try to do it all by yourself, but to enable the trafficked person to get her or his rights recognised and her/his voice heard in the process. Support during the judicial procedures includes legal assistance and psychological preparation for what they will face in the process.

Assistance for return is one of the most difficult things to do well. It is important that the conditions for a safe return are guaranteed. After the return comes the big process of reintegration. Trafficked persons are still in danger of being located by their trafficker, and being re-trafficked. Reintegration often meets the rejection of the environment. The assistance of reintegration includes the following categories of needs:

- Protection.
- Shelter.
- Emergency assistance and for basic needs.
- Socio-psychological assistance.
- Assistance for health problems.
- Social reintegration.
- Assistance for professional reintegration.
- Assistance for getting identity and other documents.

Social intervention and assistance needs good and thorough preparation, including a clear understanding of social and legal conditions and the possibility to help. You need to stay and follow up the first initial initiative in order to be successful. You may help trafficked persons with some initial assistance, but make sure that your resources allow you to provide further help. Giving help to trafficked persons can be dangerous, but also tiring and frustrating.

Minimize the risks without being paranoid. Try to assess the potential risks of any kind of work. The official address of the organization can very well be a well-known name. Confidential information shall be shared with as few as possible. There is a lot of things voluntary workers can do to help. But get to know them well before entrusting them with work of sensitive nature.

Take care of the well-being of you and your colleagues. Regular debriefing and professional counselling are essential to avoid burn-out. Learn from others and network.

In the preventive work the churches have a lot of possibilities. Through networking and cooperation a lot of young people can get help not to get caught by traffickers' promises of a good life in another country.

Read more in books written for church work by CATNET (Christian Action and Networking Against Trafficking in Women). You find a literature list at the end of this booklet.

## Bible studies

By Marion Carson

PhD, Lecturer in New Testament and Pastoral Care,  
International Christian College in Glasgow

### Matthew 25:31-46

In this passage, which tells the story of the “sheep and the goats”, Jesus speaks of the end times, when He will return with the angels, and he will judge all the people of the earth. He uses a metaphor to describe two different kinds of people – those who have cared for others and those who have ignored those in need. The first he calls the “sheep” and the second he describes as “goats”. The sheep will be told that they are blessed by the father and that they are to take their inheritance – their rightful place in the kingdom as children of God. They are given this honour because they have fed and clothed the needy, given hospitality to strangers, treated the sick, and even visited those in prison. Although they did not realise at the time that this was what they were doing, Jesus says that when they ministered to “the least of these brothers of mine”, they were serving Jesus himself.

The goats, on the other hand, are told that they are cursed and that they should depart from Him. This verdict is given on the basis of what they have not done. They have ignored those in need around them, pretending they did not see them, and in so doing they have failed to serve Jesus Christ.

The point of the story is easy to see – those who serve “the least of these” are serving Jesus himself and their reward will be eternal life in the kingdom of God. Those who do not, who live a selfish life with no care for others, have no place in the kingdom, no place with the one they say they love most of all – Jesus Christ.

The only real problem with the passage is the meaning of the “least of these my brothers.” For some, Jesus is saying that we need only care for those who are believers, those who are in the church. But elsewhere Jesus does not restrict his compassion to those who believe in Him. The pattern of his ministry is that he reaches out to people on the margins of society and teaches his disciples to do the same.

In our world today, there are millions of people in slavery. They are on the margins, out of sight. Tanya is such a slave. She is someone else’s property; he has taken away all her belongings as well as her freedom. Tanya relies on her “master” for everything. Without him she cannot eat or drink. He decides when she will work and when she will not, and she gets to keep no money for herself, despite working every night in the brothel. She has no voice; her body is abused and she thinks of herself as a non-person, an object for other people to use.

In the world’s terms, and in Tanya’s own mind, she is the “least of these”. There are

thousands like her, who have been tricked into believing that they will get a good job and be able to care for their families. Jesus says: “Whatever you did for one of the least of these sisters of mine, you did it for Me.”

Will we stand by and let the women and children suffer in this way? Who will minister to Christ by ministering to them? Who is willing to help women who have been trafficked – giving them shelter, helping them back to their homes and to find alternative employment?

### Questions for further discussion

- In response to Christ’s demand that we cannot stand by and do nothing – how can you as an individual or as a church minister to “the least of these”? Think of practical ways you might serve Jesus in this way.
- What gifts do you have as a church which could be used to serve in this way?

### PRAYER

Lord Jesus. We hear your voice in this story.

We hear your call to us to care for “the least of these”.

Help us to obey your call.

Help us to know how we can help women like Tanya.

You are the way the truth and the life.

We pray that you will enable your church to embody your truth,  
to show the way to those who have been in captivity and to  
give life to those who feel that they deserve to die.

In Jesus’ name we pray.

Amen.

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### Luke 7:36-50

In this well-known story, Jesus is dining at a Pharisee’s house. A woman, who is described as a “sinner” comes in, and goes to where Jesus is reclining. He is lying on a couch, facing the table, with his feet easily accessible. She weeps and kisses his feet, which become wet with her tears; she wipes them with her hair and puts ointment on them. The Pharisee thinks to himself, “If Jesus were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman this is and would certainly not allow her to touch him.” But Jesus does not prophesy in the way Simon expects. Knowing what he is thinking, Jesus tells a story which teaches that the more people are forgiven, the more they love. The woman may be a sinner, but she knows that her sins are forgiven and thus shows great love. Simon has not shown such consideration, let alone love.

Who is this woman, this “sinner”? She may be known as dishonest, or simply as someone who did not obey the religious and social norms of the day. But Simon’s

concern for purity might suggest she is a prostitute, someone whom the traditionally religious people think unclean, and likely to contaminate those who consider themselves pure. Moreover her actions are suspect, socially inappropriate and rather shocking. It is one thing to wash a person's feet, but to wipe them with her hair and put ointment on them is to go too far. She is being much too familiar, much too sensuous in her approach. Her behaviour is bordering on the immoral. Perhaps if Simon had been left in charge of the situation she would have been thrown out of the house, shouted at, and told not to come back. But Jesus accepts her gift of worship, seeing beyond her reputation and behaviour, and into her heart.

Many Christians find it difficult to accept those whom they think of as "sinners", and women who have been involved in prostitution suffer from a particular stigma. They are often seen as dirty or morally depraved, even those who, like Tanya, have been forced to work as prostitutes against their will. They are shunned and despised, pronounced "disgusting" and not accepted in decent society.

But what if Tanya came to your church? How would you react to her? What if her behaviour and dress were considered inappropriate, or she showed her love for Jesus in ways which did not fit in with your tradition? Would you shun her, worried that somehow she might contaminate the church community? Would you be able to see her as someone loved by God? See what Jesus does in this story. He accepts her extraordinary expression of love, despite the fact that it is socially inappropriate. She may be a sinner, but so is everyone. She may be impure, but so are we all, in different ways. Unlike Simon, Jesus loves this woman and does not reject her. He accepts her and her expression of faith just as he accepts the Pharisee with all his faults. Both Simon and the woman have the chance to learn from Jesus. The woman learns that she is accepted and forgiven and that she may go in peace. The Pharisee learns that his sense of religious perfection is not so important as he might think, not so important as true worship and purity of the heart.

This story challenges us to accept the outsider as Jesus accepted them and to make room for those who do not seem to fit in the social norms. Tanya has been rejected and used, she needs acceptance and care.

### Questions to consider

- Is your community prepared to welcome those whose behaviour may not fit in with the traditions of your group, or whose reputations are not as "pure" as you might like?
- What are your Christian priorities, the respectability and safety of the community or welcoming "sinners"?

### PRAYER

Lord God, thank you for the way you welcome sinners.

Thank you for your great love for all men and women.

Help us to be the church you want us to be.

Help your people to reflect your compassion and glory.

Forgive us for our wrong priorities.

Forgive us when we are more concerned for ourselves than for others.

We pray for the help of the Holy Spirit to break down our fears and resistance, and to show love for those who are different from us.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

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### Lamentations 1:1-11

But why should we reach out and help people like Tanya, one of thousands of girls who walk the streets of our European cities and gets into cars and sleeps with many men every night? Why should we get involved with people like her? Are we not called to be holy and to live out of the world, to be separate? How are we to solve this dilemma? If we get involved will we not soil ourselves, bring impurity into our communities, expose ourselves to danger and sin?

In Lamentations chapter 1 we hear the voice of a person who is observing the affliction of Jerusalem after the exile. The city is like someone who has been grand once but whose life has turned to ruin and has become a slave rather than a princess. We do not know who the speaker is, but we hear that he believes this princess to be responsible for her own fate. The poem is about Jerusalem after the exile, and these first verses speak of the suffering of a city which has come under the power of a foreign agency. The story that is told, and suffering described, are those of many who are enslaved today.

(1) The narrator of the poem says that Jerusalem is now like a widow – one who has lost all hope and is wholly reliant on other people for her feeding and clothing. In fact, she is a slave. She used to be a happy carefree girl, pretty and people called her "princess". (2) But now she cries herself to sleep every night because she has to work in a brothel. She has to have many lovers, none of whom care for her. The man she trusted once, betrayed her. (3) She is far away from her home and has no way to contact those who love her. Her passport has been taken, she is an exile, unable to escape. (4) No one will celebrate her birthday, no one sends her any birthday cards or Christmas presents. Those who are left at home do not know where she is. They do not know whether she is alive or dead. (5) She feels that the world is full of enemies, that no one cares for her. Not only that, people say that she has brought all this on herself. She is nothing but a sinner, and deserves all that she gets. She thinks of her children all the time, and knows

that she cannot see them or support them. (6) Who would recognise her now? And who is caring for her children? (7) When she thinks of her family, her heart is full of pain. As long as she is away from them, they are in captivity too. She is broken, brought low, soiled. People will say that she is filthy, who knows what diseases she might have. By now she has even rejected herself. She has to dance in a bar and then sleep with the clients. She despises herself. How did she end up like this? She cries out to God. “Lord, please help me, help me get away from the people who have enslaved me”.

(10) Any money she earns is taken away from her, and she is forced to sleep with many men. She had thought that she would be able to support her family, but instead she has only added to their suffering by bringing worry and shame to them. No wonder she asks the Lord to help her, for she is despised.

### Questions for discussion

- The writer of the poem describes a woman in great pain and suffering, and thinks that her situation is due to past sin. What is your attitude to people like Tanya? Do you see her as a victim, or as paying for her sin? What would Jesus do?
- What does the group think of prostitution and prostitutes? Would you be prepared as a church, to help care for someone like Tanya?

### PRAYER

Heavenly Father,  
Grant that we may know your mind.  
That we may grow in our faith.  
And have the wisdom which you promise if we only ask.  
Help us to serve.  
Help us to love.  
To act with compassion.  
In Jesus' name we ask this.  
Amen.

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### Lamentations 1:12-22

In the second half of this poem, the woman herself speaks. Let's listen to the lament of the captive. Read through these verses, preferably aloud, then read the commentary. Read through the passage again and try to hear the voice of thousands of women like Tanya.

(12-15) Noone knows where this woman is. Many people pass by her window, but they do not know that she is there, unable to escape. Or they pass by her figure in the

window, posing, looking for customers. But they do not think that a human being is there. She is becoming desperate, unable to go on suffering in this way. She thinks God must be very angry with her, to be punishing her in this terrible way. It feels like she is being burned with fire, right through to her bones. And if she tries to escape, he seems to put a net on the floor which trips her up. God has abandoned her to her fate. She is exhausted, crushed, and there is no one to rescue her.

(16-19) When she is alone, she cries, but there is no one to comfort her. She thought she would be able to feed her children with what she earns – but it is all taken away from her. And now her children are without their mother, as well as being destitute. But even as she dreams of returning home, she is afraid. Her neighbours will know that she is a whore, they will say that she is dirty, and that no one should have anything to do with her. She really believes that the Lord is punishing her because she was rebellious. She had looked for help to feed her children, but she has been deceived and betrayed by people she thought she could trust.

(20-22) She torments herself with guilt. Her pimp has told her that if she tries to escape he will kill her. But if she stays where she is she knows that she will die. She feels that she is dying inside, like she has a black hole in her soul. When she cries for help, the pimp only laughs at her; she wonders if one day justice might be done. But in the meantime, she must accept the punishment she thinks God is dealing out to her, and feels that there is no hope.

### Questions for discussion

- What insights has this passage given you into the situation of trafficked women?
- If a woman who had been trafficked were to come to you for help, what needs might she have? How would you help her? How can we give her, and the thousands like her, hope in Jesus?
- Do you, as a church, know where you could get help?

### PRAYER

Lord, we pray for women like Tanya.  
We thank you that Jesus understands her pain.  
Thank you that the Scripture gives her pain a voice.  
Thank you that Jesus too was despised and rejected.  
We pray for the thousands like Tanya.  
We ask that you will set the captives free.  
Help us to help them in their brokenness.  
Help us to give her hope in Jesus.  
For His name's sake.  
Amen.

## Trafficking – a male issue

By *Sven-Gunnar Lidén*

One of two problems at the basis of human trafficking is the men who buy these women for their own leisure. (The other is the situation and poverty of women in many countries). In order to combat trafficking, it is necessary to tackle these areas. This article will raise some questions about men's involvement and quiet support, of sex as a "human right". It will also raise the question of whether men who buy sex should be considered as committing a criminal act.

Most men would agree that it is wrong for men to use women as slaves. However, as the market for women in prostitution differs from country to country, and because some women appear to voluntarily become prostitutes, a debate has arisen within the EU as to whether prostitution should be legalised or not. There needs to be a debate whether this is a kind of enslavement. One first step is not to talk about "voluntary" prostitutes, but to talk about prostitutes who do this "consciously". There might still be some kind of pressure behind the involvement of women into this.

Most of the western world has reduced human beings to bodies which consume. Men, and especially women, must take care of their bodies, and make them attractive. This ethos focuses on training, diet, plastic surgery, cosmetics, and so on. Bodies are big business, and the sex industry is seen as part of that business. The debate about sexuality also reduces human beings to mere bodies – something which can be bought and sold. The fact that human beings are spiritual is lost among the adverts which encourage you to change your body. For us to start talking of trafficking as a male issue is also to start seeing ourselves as more than simply male bodies. To be a spiritual man is to accept that sex is more than a physical thing – it is a spiritual issue.

In Germany and Holland, it is legal to be a sex worker. The motivation behind this is the wellbeing of the prostitute, who is given the status of "ordinary" worker. However, in reality it is only the pimps and exploiters who gain on legalisation and the easy access to prostitutes. It is all about money, and making it as quickly as possible.

In Sweden, it is forbidden to buy sex from another person. One reason for the ban is that experience has shown that prostitutes become victims of their past, and are exploited. Another is that most prostitutes, and all trafficking, is organised by criminal networks. Any man who buys sex from another person is often becoming a part of the criminal network, supporting it financially by buying the illegal product. So, shall we continue to watch men become involved in growing criminal networks by permitting them easy access to girls and children? Or can we support the work that wants to make all of this a criminal act?

The brothel owners want to create a demand for buying sex. The market for selling sex is becoming increasingly open – it is advertised everywhere. These images create desire and a perceived need. At one conference I attended, a leader of a male group said that when a man sees a naked woman, his testosterone levels increase, leading to an increase in sexual desire. At the same time, the image becomes imprinted on his mind as a strong memory. It is difficult to escape such images in public areas and on TV in many countries. The message given to us men is, "Even if you say no, we know what you really want!"

How do men cope with this? Making our public areas free of such images would be a good first step in the fight against trafficking and prostitution. Would it be possible? Can churches take action, for example, by refusing to buy from those companies which use such advertisements?

How can men working within the police and social work with this stay free from influence? To see a lot of men earning a lot of money and freely use women is a tempting situation. How is the accountability system organised within these organizations? A growing male network can break the old habits, be of assistance for debriefing and make other men accountable for their actions.

Most men desire to get close to women's bodies. There are many different ways for men to do this and the most common is the caring, loving, voluntary way in which there is mutual give and take. But men are sometimes using another way, which is force. You take what you want and if she complains, you hit her. There is also the use of ideological and even theological imposition. Men might even tell her it is God's will that she be subordinate and obeying, and that he has all the right over her. As the sociologist Manuel Castells writes, behind all fundamentalism is the urge for power – over the nation, the female body and religion. This gets the Man in power with free access to what he wants.

Yet another way is to use money to buy access to a female body for a short time. Prostitutes and trafficked women are cheap and easily accessed and the buyer does not need to care about her afterwards. This is said to be the oldest female work, which should legitimize the deed. There is an argument that this is the only way some men (for example, those who have physical or mental disabilities) can get sex. It is said that they need the opportunity to buy sexual pleasure, if they are unable to form relationships. But this begs a very important question: "Is sex a "human right"? Is it a "human right" to be able to buy someone else's body for my own relaxation? Such a "right" is not mentioned in the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights, unlike the rights not to be oppressed or enslaved. But if sex is not a human right, what is it? What about the Bible? Apostle Paul talks a lot of treating each other with love and dignity, and not to misuse any other being.

To buy sex from a woman is to violate that woman. It is time for us Men to say that



we have had enough of women being treated in this way.

Recently, I attended a conference in the United States on trafficking and prostitution. There, I heard many stories. Women from all over the world told us of their lives. My frustration grew as I heard how men treat women. On the final day of the conference, we men decided to say something collectively. Some of the men wrote a statement of repentance which was read out at Morning Prayer. We could not take the place of the perpetrators, but we wanted to show the women that there are men who think differently. At this meeting we knelt before the women, who gathered round us in a prayer of forgiveness. Next to me stood a woman who had been staying in the room next to mine in the conference centre. She had never said “hello” to me. Suddenly, she burst into tears. For a moment, we were joined together in her pain. She told me after this that for the first time in her life she felt really free: she could find forgiveness to get over her hate in the presence of another man, and be free.

If any men reading this want to be seen as part of a male community which does not see women as something to be used, but instead wants to show respect, and are prepared to take responsibility in the work against trafficking and prostitution, please send me a note.

**Male repentance:**

**The International Consultancy on Ministry to Women in Prostitution**

**2 Cor 3:16-18**

*But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is Spirit.*

**We men repent:**

*For undressing you with our eyes, for making sexual jokes and comments, and demeaning who God created you to be.*

**We repent,**

*For not giving you a safe place to experience your feminine sexuality in its God-given fullness, and for not nurturing your femininity.*

**We repent,**

*For viewing pornography and seeing only body parts rather than a person with thoughts, feelings and dreams.*

**We repent**

*For touching you in ways you did not want, and which have inflicted deep wounds.*

**We repent**

*For making you go further sexually than you are comfortable with.*

**We repent**

*For believing that our money gives us the right to use you, to degrade you, violate your boundaries, and then making you pretend that you have enjoyed it.*

**We repent**

*For hitting you, kicking you, beating you and not stopping, even when you beg for mercy. We repent too, for abusing your children.*

**We repent**

*For raping you and violating your sexuality.*

**We repent**

*For believing that our sexual need for release is more important than all of your needs, especially your need for dignity.*

**We repent**

*For all these things. We accept responsibility for what we have done and are sorry for our actions.*

*We repent and ask your forgiveness.*

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### **Prostitution and the Internet**

Millions of hits are made on Internet websites every day. In fact we could get the impression that the Internet is overloaded with information. This is certainly the case when it comes to items linked to trafficking and prostitution.

A Swedish project has been researching the Internet to find out what is going on in the world. It has been organised by the Social work Department in the City of Stockholm, with the cooperation of the police. Since its beginning, researchers have found 327 people linked to the selling of sexual services directly to Sweden, especially Stockholm. The 272 girls and 55 men were mainly 17-30 years of age; the average age was 27. Many of the girls had more than one advert posted on the internet. They were contactable by e-mail or by a cell phone number. 73 came from outside Sweden and were non-Swedish speaking, while 21 were Swedish-speaking but not Swedish born.



There are three types of advertisements: 1: via chat-rooms or forums, 2: portals (which feature a lot of girls), and 3: individual homepages. You will also find buyers chatting about the girls they have seen and how to get them. These men show little respect towards the prostitutes.

The centre for all this is a server in the Netherlands. Once you have accessed the website, you find a map of Europe. Click on the country you want and you will be given information about all the girls who are available in that country. Some girls will come to your home, at your request. Others go “on tour” and are available in towns and cities for a short time only. A new phenomenon is “web-cam sex” in which you pay to watch a girl “performing” in front of a web camera. In this case, client and girl do not meet.

The Internet is used for selling trafficked women and children in many places. It is highly unlikely that a girl from a poor country would be able to buy her own ticket to Sweden, rent an apartment there, have nude photographs taken of her, set up a website and present herself on it in Swedish. Surely, it is much more likely that there is a knowledgeable and wealthy organisation or pimp behind it all.

A major question for us is whether it would be possible for us to get in touch with girls through the Internet and offer them help or a way of escape. Servers can be traced. So can owners of homepages. The difficulty is, that when the women are in countries in which the selling of sex is legal, there is little possibility to be able to prove a link between a person and the trafficking business.

Sometimes the Internet has helped in investigations of trafficking. It has been possible, by using pictures of women advertised on the net, to trace apartments used and the trafficking network involved. Prosecutions have been made possible this way.

Prostitution on the Internet is growing. Pornography on the web is also increasing. Some lobbyists want this to be made “normal”. They say that this helps people to improve their sex lives, and that this is good for you. For many men, this already has become a “normal” part of life.

When travelling salesmen or others going away to stay in hotels during business travels, the desire for company for the night is only five “clicks” away. Most hotel offer connection to Internet, and it is easy to find a girl in the town you stay in. You don’t even need to go out in the streets.

Today, the industry is starting to get into the cell phone market. Soon it will be possible to have photographs and movies of children, girls and men, downloaded into your cell phone. The people behind this want to make a lot of money and they know how to exploit people who produce pornography.

They do earn a lot of money – and ruin many lives in the process.

## Life Stories

### *Ildiko*

Ildiko is 35 years old. Her mother is raising Ildiko’s teenage son. By now she doesn’t understand why she left him. In the shop where she worked she met a man. They talked a lot and she wanted to spend more time with him. The man did not hide how he earned his “wealth”. For his love he asked “love” in return. But the woman lost her good sense when she thought of the man. Like a crazy teenager she left her work, child, relatives and friends behind because she wanted the “love” of this man. Next day she was already selling herself on the side of the road. But she could spend the night with her lover sometimes – occasionally, when her co-workers or his official companion were not with him. After a while she also received some of his slaps. And since she saw what happened with her room-mate the bouquet of roses did not make her forget the second beating. Next day she fled to the capital city with a client. For a week she was hiding in a friend’s office because she knew what would happen if the friends of the man found her. Then they called a secret phone number. Full of fear she sat in a strange car and could hardly say anything when she stepped into the shelter house. She decided beforehand that she would only need the security found there but she was touched by the unexpected love she experienced on the first afternoon. The unconditional love and acceptance she had desired all of her life. That she did not receive at home nor from all the men. That she could receive from God only. Today her life is His. And Ildiko works so that other girls may find this unconditional love as well.

### *Lujza*

Lujza is 17 years old now and she is from a small village in eastern Hungary. She was not even fifteen when she fell in love with a boy a few years older than her. She ran away from home because of him and they lived in a nearby town where the boy rented a flat with his friends. Lujza became pregnant soon and she wanted to give birth to the child. The problems started after the child was born. Money was scarce and the boy became harsher and harsher with the girl. Once he asked a “small favor” from Lujza to help them through their temporary financial problems. This was the time she received her first slap. He asked this “favor” more and more often and became ever harsher and demanding. Lujza became a prostitute. She wanted to flee but the boy and his friends did not let her take the child with her. One day she had to go for medical control with the baby and this was her chance to flee from her “boyfriend”. She did not dare to go home because the boy knew her parents’ address so she called a number that was answered by a reassuring voice. She lives in the shelter ever since. She is looking for a job in the capital and a cheap flat where she could live with her child for a while.

## Anett

Anett was 19 when men were already selling and buying her among each other. Now she is 23 and she cannot deal with money – when she has money she spends several thousand forints per day on cosmetics and clothes. She says that the streets have worn her down and it takes more and more money to hide it. She does not like to talk about her work. She only speaks about her ponces when she is mad, when she remembers how many times they beat her because she did not earn enough money. She was working on road six when one day after work she did not get off the truck but came to the capital. Fortunately the ponce did not remember which truck she travelled with, so he could not find her though he tried to track her down by car. In the first days in the shelter she slept a lot, but then she started to miss her phone and friends. She did not bring any clothes with her either, she did not have money for cosmetics and when she heard about respectful work and the money she could earn by it she just laughed. She could not handle the freedom that an ordinary life provides so she fled from the shelter as well and went back to the streets. She hopes that alone, without a ponce she can save up some money – many share this hope but very few succeed.

## Dorine

Dorine applied for a foreign, well-paid job advertised in Romania. She was supposed to work in a bar in Italy but she found out too late that the Milan night club was not looking for waitresses. Since they took away her passport and documents she could not flee. At the border she had to smile because they threatened to kill her if she revealed the purpose of the travel. She never reached Italy. The ponces left her at their Hungarian friends to clear off an old debt. As a twenty-year-old girl she worked in a strangers flat. One of her fellow workers gave her the phonenumber to a place where they help girls like her. Now she doesn't know what to do – she does not dare to go home because they may find her and it is also difficult to stay in the shelter without the knowledge of the language and her official documents. Sometimes she thinks that she should go to Italy anyway because there might be places where they are really looking for waitresses.

## Some projects

*Collaboration Against Trafficking in Sweden 2005-2007*  
*A project supported by EU-funding, programme EQUAL*

According to the National Criminal Investigation Department, approximately 600 women and an unknown number of children are yearly transported to Sweden for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Even though trafficking has become an issue of political priority, much work still remains concerning development of methods for the collaboration between authorities and organisations related to law enforcement as well as in the work with victims of trafficking and concerning attitudinal change on a general level.

The Baptist Union of Sweden, represented by one church in the centre of Stockholm, has been involved in creating a big Swedish project to meet this situation. The project has been financed through EU-funding and governmental support, mostly given in working hours of staff.

The project has focused on three Problems:

- 1.** The insufficient collaboration and co-ordination between authorities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as regards law enforcement of traffickers, pimps and sex buyers as well as concerning the provision of dignified support and rehabilitation to the women, girls, boys and men who are victims of trafficking to Sweden.
- 2.** The insufficient and unsatisfactory support given to the individual woman, girl, boy or man concerning accommodation, social support, rehabilitation, employment and possibilities to build another life.
- 3.** The need to work for attitudinal change in society concerning how women, girls, boys and men subjected to trafficking in human beings are seen and treated, views on prostitution and power relations between women and men, girls and boys.

### Aim and goal

#### Overall aim

The overall aim is that trafficking in human beings is reduced and that a dignified program for support and return is developed for those victims of the trade. Furthermore the Partnership will collaborate transnationally with *Tratta No – modelli innovativi di informazione strategica nel contesto della tratta* from Italy, *Atvertu darba tirgu sievetem* from Latvia and *ASPIDDA – Developmental Partnership to Promote Equal Rights for Trafficked Persons in Greece*. The collaboration between the four Partnerships aims at increasing the awareness of trafficking in human beings, the work on changes in attitudes, exchange of experiences and knowledge between authorities and grass-root organisations, exchange of policies, praxis and instruments. The work will be carried out through the development of a moving exhibition, IT-based multimedia

personal stories, study visits in the respective countries, workshops for exchange of experiences and a final impact seminar in Brussels.

### Project goals

There has been an opening of an exhibition about trafficking in Gothenburg. There will also be a mobile exhibition that will be available for touring Europe. The collaboration shall achieve changes in the attitudes and priorities among authorities and the civil society including NGOs, church communions and culture institutions as well as at an individual level through development of knowledge, exchange of experiences, development of common strategies and a debate in the society as regards trafficking and its structural, economic and genderbased reasons and its consequences for the individual.

The collaboration between authorities, non-governmental organisations, nationally and internationally, will ensure the development of routines aiming at ensuring efficient law enforcement as well as to offer persons of the trade an adequate and co-ordinated support, as well as the development of alternative income-opportunities, for preventive as well as rehabilitative purposes.

### Partners

Kvinnoforum (gender organisation),  
Hela Människan (multi-denominational and national organisation for Diacony),  
Baltic Fem (creating enterprises for women),  
the Office of the Public Prosecutor,  
the Association Male Network,  
the Police Authority in the County of Västra Götaland,  
the Museum of World Cultures,  
The City of Stockholm,  
Caritas Sweden,  
The Baptist Union of Sweden (Through Södermalm's Baptist Church),  
A Women Protection Shelter.

### Other organisations involved in the project

The Swedish Migration Board,  
The County Administration of Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö,  
The Stockholm Criminal Police,  
The Prostitutiongroups of Gothenburg and Malmö,  
The University of Gothenburg.

## Swedish Law on prostitution

### Factsheet

Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications, April 2005

In Sweden, prostitution is regarded as an aspect of male violence against women and children. It is officially acknowledged as a form of exploitation of women and children that constitutes a significant social problem, which is harmful not only to the individual prostituted woman or child, but also to society at large.

The Swedish Government has long given priority to combating prostitution and trafficking in human beings for sexual purposes. This objective is an important part of Sweden's goal of achieving equality between women and men, at the national level as well as internationally. Gender equality will remain unattainable as long as men buy, sell and exploit women and children by prostituting them.

### Prostitution is a form of male violence against women

In the legislation on gross violation of a woman's integrity (Kvinnofridslagstiftningen), the Swedish Government and Riksdag (the Parliament) defined prostitution as a form of male violence against women and children. Since January 1, 1999, purchasing – or attempting to purchase – sexual services has constituted a criminal offence punishable by fines or up to six months imprisonment. The women and children who are victims of prostitution and trafficking do not risk any legal repercussions. Public support for the law is widespread and growing, according to opinion polls conducted by SIFO, an opinion and social research consultancy firm. On April 1, 2005, the legislation prohibiting the purchase of a sexual service was extended to include cases where the payment has been promised or made by someone else.

### Swedish Penal Code, chapter 6, section 11

*“A person who, in other cases than previously stated in this chapter, obtains a casual sexual relation in exchange for payment shall be sentenced for the purchase of a sexual service to a fine or imprisonment for at most six months. That which is stated in the first section also applies if the payment has been promised or made by someone else.”*

## The Project of the Safe House in Syracuse

Promoter: The Baptist Church

Preaching the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ is the job of the Church. It is hoped that this traditional expression is comprehensible to those who are church-goers, but to be understood outside the walls of our churches the proclamation of the gospel must be expressed as an act of liberation. Migrants, women who are slaves to trafficking for sexual exploitation and “normal” people from western societies are all to different degrees recipients of Jesus Christ’s message of liberation.

Our Baptist church in Syracuse (Sicily) was stimulated by these guidelines to become part of a group which includes public bodies, voluntary associations who provide assistance to migrants: seasonal workers, Romany gypsies, women who are victims of violence within their families or are the object of trafficking. Among those operating with us are the Regional Province of Syracuse, the Syracuse local government, associations working to combat violence and to enhance women’s culture, Médecins Sans Frontières, groups of lawyers, trade unionists, the local health service and Catholic parishes.

Different agencies helped to produce orientation material in various languages. Emphasis was given to the subject of interculture and the specific value of each individual whether Italian or migrant, man or woman. A website was set up which offers helpful information, forms and advice in real time.

In a short time we became promoters of various key projects, mainly at a local level. For instance the aim of the event called *Plurality of Voices for a New Society* (15 May 2005) was both to give prominence to and listen to testimonies and issues linked to migration, clandestine migration and the violence exacerbated by the harshness of the law but also by the lawbreakers. This was a unique opportunity for Italians and migrants, men and women, representatives from the Ministry of Equal Opportunities, from the police force, the Province and from the local government, from trade unions and churches to discuss and listen to each other, examining the issues which are crucial for migrants (housing, health, pension, work contracts, the reunion of families, literacy and schooling). It was also a welcome chance to listen to ethnic music and to enjoy the taste of exotic foods. It was also a means of recognizing diversity, the riches that everyone is able to bring to society so that it can be renewed.

In this network where the Equal Opportunity’s office plays a key role, our church was invited once more to be promoter of a special project designed to organise and run a “safe house” with a secret address for women and minors who are victims of violence.

Twenty-three organisations including the Province, local government, health services and other associations are involved. The Province made available a building suitable for 14 people with single and double bedrooms, rooms for meetings and workshops,

offices, toilet facilities. Regional funding, part of the Agreement of the General Programme (APQ), will finance furnishings, personnel, board and other expenses. This funding which will enable the project to operate for about three years is a response to a policy of valuing people with a view to valuing the area.

Clearly it is a new way of thinking which puts people and social concerns at the centre. This way of thinking is very close to what we, as believers, mean by proclaiming the gospel. We are talking about taking action for the salvation and liberation of the individual and society from evil organisations and from false cultures that generate violence and that seriously harm the weakest members of society: women and minors.

In this work or mission has been to make a specific “Baptist” contribution, a community activity at a local level. In other words, this has meant that the management of the project is carried out by a working committee, made up of those associations which are part of the project and chaired by the pastor of the local Baptist Church. The most important aspects of the project are therefore: the people for whom the project was set up (women and minors), a working network (with a wide involvement of all those who share the goals of the project and have signed the protocol agreement), a joint administration of the project in a spirit of participation without delegating responsibility or accepting privilege.

The personnel involved are all qualified. There are three highly motivated and professionally trained social workers who have shown that they are capable of taking full responsibility for the success of the project. There is also a group of educators. A project like the one we are describing requires training skills, meetings, a clarification of the methodology and the goal of the work carried out together and a definition of the rules. Training, therefore, involves all those taking part: workers, voluntary workers, representatives of associations, the local government’s social workers, psychologists, lawyers, the police and the management committee. Each member has their own role within a common “philosophy”.

**Free phone number within Italy, 800 11 59 60, enables women in need to contact the operators.**

The laws governing privacy prevent us from giving details of the work and of the case history of the guests. We can affirm, though, that violence against women is not a fabrication and daily we come up against soliciting and international trafficking which is a scourge that furthers prostitution.

Finally I want to say that the “Safe House” began to function in October 2005 and with the current funding the project is due to end in August 2007. For the moment the time has been too short to highlight all the potential that has been invested in the preparation of the project. As a church we have found ourselves running something for

which we were not prepared and it is only thanks to the work of the network that we hope that it will be possible to conclude the project. We hope that the project will not finish but that it will be able to continue and that the experience that we have had until now will be like yeast, the seed for a new plant that like the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:31) is able to welcome people from all parts of the world.

*Rev. Salvatore Rapisarda*

*Coordinator of the project and vicepresident of the Baptist Union of Italy.*

## Sources for more information

### Internet

Qweb (Database in Sweden, published english)  
[www.qweb.se](http://www.qweb.se)

European Council of Churches/CEC-KEK  
[www.cec-kek.org](http://www.cec-kek.org)

Churches Commission for Migrants in Europe/CCME  
[www.cec-kek.org/CCMEeng/ccmeindx.htm](http://www.cec-kek.org/CCMEeng/ccmeindx.htm)

Coatnet (A catholic and protestant network in Europe)  
[www.coatnet.org](http://www.coatnet.org)

Angel Coalition (Based in the Russian Federation)  
[www.angelcoalition.org](http://www.angelcoalition.org)

UNESCO  
[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

UNICEF  
[www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)

UNHCR  
[www.unhcr.org](http://www.unhcr.org)

Amnesty International  
[www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)

Anti Slavery International  
[www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)

Humantrafficking (Research and education)  
[www.humantrafficking.com](http://www.humantrafficking.com)

International Organization for Migration  
[www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)

International Centre for Migration Policy Development ICMPD  
[www.anti-trafficking.net](http://www.anti-trafficking.net)

### Church material

Churches in Europe Against Trafficking in Women, Conference of European Churches 2003

Christian Action and Networking Against Trafficking in Women – an action guide (CAT)

Angel Coalition Global Database: Governmental and Non-governmental Resources Providing Trafficking Victim Assistance. A list of partners around Europe.

### Literature

There are a lot of books written about the subject of trafficking. They can be found in any Internet bookstore, like amazon.com.

*Selling Olga: Stories of Human Trafficking and Resistance*  
by Louisa Waugh (August 2006)

*Trafficking and the Global Sex Industry*  
by Delila Amir (February 2006)

*What's so Amazing about Grace*  
by Peter Yancy

*Working in the Street*  
by Ruth Robb & Marion Carson

*2005 Report: Trafficking in Persons Report. Released by the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons*  
by US Government (June 3, 2005)  
(Free to download at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>)

*2003 Year Book on Illegal Migration, Human Smuggling and Trafficking in Central and Eastern Europe* ([www.icmpd.org](http://www.icmpd.org))

### Movie

*Lilja 4-ever*

Swedish film about a victim from Latvia coming to Sweden. It's a fiction based on a true story. Director: Lukas Moodysson



