



JUST Love



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF PEACE, JUSTICE AND
ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF SAINT ELIZABETH

NUNS HEALING HEARTS

On July 30, 2019, Sisters of Charity Mary Canavan and Maureen Dunne celebrated the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons at the United Nations and attended the US debut of a photo exhibit *Nuns Healing Hearts* that focuses on women religious and their anti-trafficking activities throughout the world. The event also celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Talitha Kum Network <https://www.talithakum.info> an international network of religious against human trafficking. Sister Mary Canavan reflects on her experience:

July 30 was the 6th annual United Nations World Day Against Human Trafficking. The representatives of the Holy See used the occasion to celebrate *Nuns Healing Hearts*, a panel presentation describing how nuns around the world have responded with hearts, hands, and homes to save and support people in bondage. Calling the 41 million women, men, and children currently enslaved for work, sex, or war “an open wound on the Body of Christ,” the speakers described the dire circumstances under which these people are forced to live and work. Catholic sisters have formed a network called Talitha Kum in 77 countries on five continents.

Sister Gabriella Bottani, the international coordinator of Talitha Kum, spoke of the difference religious sisters are making. There are currently 2000 members involved who strengthen and help one another in programs of prevention, protection, and help for survivors. These groups have reached 235,000 people in prevention programs and have helped 15,000 survivors through their networks. Dramatic photos were displayed of workers in mines, fields, brothels, and war zones being held in inhuman conditions and forced to live and work as modern day slaves for the profit of their slave masters. Trafficking is the second largest “world industry.” The current refugee crisis goes hand in hand with the trafficking phenomenon. As people flee violent homelands seeking a better way of life, they fall prey to those seeking to make a profit on them.

Lisa Kristine, a humanitarian fine arts photographer, visited 160 countries taking photos of these atrocities. Her work, in slides and large photos, were on exhibit at the Vatican and now at the UN (see above for one of Kristine’s photos). They carry a powerful message to move our hearts to act. Sister Gabriella called us to empower one another as “women - together- giving long term hope -on the ground.” She issued these challenges: 1. to work for the implementation of anti-trafficking laws with adequate budgets; 2. to eradicate root causes; 3. to cooperate and collaborate. We must commit ourselves together as *one* human family to which we *all* belong.



Sister Melissa Camarado, a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth, Kansas, spoke of the work of LifeWay Network in providing safe houses and support for survivors in the New York City area. The network currently provides safe housing with 12 beds for a year and 2 beds for emergencies. LifeWay has assisted 100 women from 37 countries. Their philosophy is that of being *with* these survivors, not doing something *for* them; healing happens in the context of community. Anoa Noreen, a survivor, told of her forced marriage to a man with three other wives. As a survivor she lived for a year in the safe house provided by LifeWay. She is currently living independently and advocating for laws to make forced marriage illegal. She expressed her gratitude to LifeWay for their support and enablement.

The program concluded with a strong plea from Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sando, head of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. He called human trafficking a crime against humanity. He said it is not enough to know about it; we must act as gospel people. In the eyes of God everyone is a free person. Religious leaders have a new imperative to move from indignation to revolution for change.



Sisters Maureen Dunne (l) and Mary Canavan (r)
at the United Nations.



At the 2019 General Assembly of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth there emerged a strong focus on a Congregational action to alleviate homelessness. This is very much in accord with the direction of the 2 million members of the Vincentian Family around the world. The FamVin Homeless Alliance (FHA) was set up in 2017 to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of the Vincentian Charism. The FHA supports established and emerging Vincentian homelessness initiatives across the globe. It takes a broad definition of homelessness – encompassing those living on the street, refugees and those displaced from their home, and slum dwellers in inadequate housing. There are Vincentian homelessness projects across six continents helping hundreds of thousands of people each year. The FHA acts as a bridge for those projects, fostering cross-border learning and supporting their development. The FHA is also helping to create new homelessness projects. Find out more about the goals and activities of the FHA by visiting their website

<https://vfhomelessalliance.org/>



Jean-Jacques Olier, (1608 –1657) was a disciple and friend of St. Vincent de Paul and was inspired by him to found the Society of Saint Sulpice or the Sulpicians, a society of priests dedicated to priestly formation and the running of seminaries. One of Olier's sons, Sulpician Father Peter Gray has painted this portrait of Vincent which communicates his perceptive vision, his gentleness, and his firm resolve. As we celebrate the feast of St. Vincent de Paul on September 27, we invite you to read the following quotes from Vincent, to gaze prayerfully for a few moments at his image, and to choose a few concrete actions by which you might grow in faithfulness to our Vincentian heritage.

♡ The service of the poor should be preferred to everything else.

♡ We should strive to keep our hearts open to the sufferings and wretchedness of other people, and pray continually that God may grant us that spirit of compassion which is truly the spirit of God.

♡ In the kingdom of charity, one prefers to suffer some inconvenience rather than inconvenience the neighbor.

♡ To this end, we should help and support one another and strive for peace and union among ourselves. This is the wine that cheers and strengthens travelers along the narrow path of Jesus Christ.



Justice, Peace, and Ecology Dates to Celebrate in September

2 Labor Day “There is no good society without a good union, and there is no good union that isn't reborn every day in the peripheries, that doesn't transform the rejected stones of the economy into corner stones. There is no justice together if it isn't together with today's excluded ones.” Pope Francis

13 St. John Chrysostom “Do you really wish to pay homage to Christ's body? Then do not neglect him when he is naked. At the same time that you honor him here with hangings made of silk, do not ignore him outside when he perishes from cold and nakedness. For the One who said, 'This is my body' ...also said 'When I was hungry you gave me nothing to eat. For is there any point in his table being laden with golden cups while he himself is perishing from hunger? First fill him when he is hungry and then set his table with lavish ornaments.'”

21 International Peace Day "The sponsors of war closely resemble the weapons they create. And smart bombs, depleted uranium, land mines, rockets and tanks, rather than protect 'widows and orphans and strangers at the gate,' are designed precisely to create 'widows and orphans,' to transform strangers into enemies and enemies into corpses." Daniel Berrigan, SJ

27 St. Vincent de Paul “Go to the poor: you will find God.” Pray today for the more than 2 million members of the Vincentian family around the world; that we may go to the poor and find God there.

29 International Coffee Day Is your coffee fair trade? Good for workers and good for Earth? <https://equalexchange.coop/> Consider selling fair trade coffee at your parish.