



**The Catholic Women's League of Canada  
Alberta Mackenzie Provincial Council  
Community Life Chair**



**DATE: July 23, 2020**

FROM: Theresa Hickey, Provincial Chairperson of Community Life  
TO: ABMK Provincial Executive  
TO: Diocesan Presidents  
TO: National Community Life Chair  
RE: Communiqué #5 – Human Trafficking

*Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be in a place alone and scared and held against your will?*

Human traffickers lure many young girls, women and men every minute of a day. They lure their victims by using charm, lies and deception, promising a better life and more opportunities to make money. The intention is not romantic but to make money. The victim may be sold, used for labour or sexual exploitation. Many are tricked into fraud and physically forced into selling sex, threatened, assaulted and manipulated under illegal and unacceptable conditions.

Human trafficking is one of the most heinous crimes imaginable often described as modern-day slavery. Victims, mostly women often as young as fourteen years of age are deprived of their normal lives and forced into sexual services through acts of violence and threats to their families. Those who are most at risk are indigenous women and girls, new immigrants, LGBTQ2, youth who are socially and economically disadvantaged .

Within Canada, 93% of victims are from Canada, 75% are minors.  
Traffickers make up \$300,000 a year per victim.

The warning signs of human trafficking are often hard to spot as trafficked persons are not always away from the public eye. We must become aware if we are going to help by watching for suspicious activity such as a young woman in trouble or a person who **may have injuries or signs of physical abuse, appear malnourished, seem disoriented and not know where she/he is, have few personal items, same clothes regardless of weather, not have identification documents**

The Alberta Government *introduced Bill 8 on Tuesday April 7, 2020*, that if passed, will empower survivors of human trafficking. The Bill will **expand the definition of sexual exploitation to include people of all ages, make it easier for survivors to get protection orders, enable police to take faster action, allow survivors to sue traffickers and create an Awareness Day on February 22.**

With 12 Alberta cases among the 228 reported human trafficking incidents, Premier Jason Kenny said the province has to be a leader in this fight. Too often, we think that Human Trafficking is something that happens at the remote corners of the developing world. The truth is it happens in our own communities and happens as close as our own next doors.

### ***What can we do to stop Human Trafficking?***

Encourage companies to take steps to prevent Human Trafficking in their supply chains and publish the information. Recognize the seriousness of the crime. Volunteer and support anti-trafficking efforts in your community. Know the Hot Line to call in your area – in Canada it is 9-1-1 or the police.

We certainly can help when we educate and know the warning signs and I encourage everyone to visit

<https://www.alberta.ca/human-trafficking-task-force.aspx>

to get the latest information.

Please print a copy of **the Nine Point plan** and discuss it at a council meeting.

Members of the Catholic Women's League individually can help by supporting not-for-profit organizations like Magdalene House who are committed to "restoring hope and dignity for people exploited by human trafficking."

Please contact social media for further updates on Human Trafficking. If you notice any suspicious behaviour in your communities contact your local RCMP and or city police.

#### Prayer to End Human Trafficking:

Loving Father,

We seek your divine protection for all those who are exploited and enslaved.  
For those forced into labor, trafficked into sexual slavery and denied freedom.

We beseech you to release them from their chains.

Grant them protection, safety and empowerment.

Restore their dignity and provide them a new beginning.

Show us how we might end exploitation by addressing its causes.

Help us reach out in support of victims and survivors of human trafficking.

Make us instruments of your Spirit for their liberation.

For this we pray through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who lives and reigns with you in unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.  
Amen.

Theresa

Provincial Community Life Chair