



*Submitted by
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Working to End Human Trafficking

On January 14, more than 75 people joined the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi for a human trafficking presentation by Kim Ritter, an event planner for the National Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). The attendees were sisters, associates, coworkers, neighboring parishioners, young men in formation and friends.

Kim frequently stated, "I'm just an event planner." She emphasized this as a way to let us know that, no matter what your profession or status, we can do something about human trafficking. "I'm just a housekeeper, I'm just a housewife, I'm just a domestic worker, I'm just in formation." You can still do something to end human trafficking.

Kim identified some of the stakeholders working to end trafficking: Internet Exchange Initiative, airlines, parents, schools, hotels, etc. We all have a stake in bringing down human trafficking.

Our eyes and hearts were opened to the terrible reality of sex trafficking; however, we were filled with hope, realizing that each one of us can help to diminish this sin against innocent victims and bring to justice its perpetrators.



Here are a few of the indicators of human trafficking:

- Has a child stopped attending school?
- Has the person had a sudden or dramatic change in behavior?
- Is the person disoriented / confused, or showing signs of mental or physical abuse?
- Does the person have bruises in various stages of healing?
- Is the person fearful, timid, or submissive?
- Does the person show signs of being denied food, water, sleep, or medical care?
- Does the person appear to be coached on what to say?
- Is the person living in unsuitable conditions?
- Does the person lack personal possessions and appear not to have a stable living situation?
- Does the person have freedom of movement? Can the person freely leave where they live? Are there unreasonable security measures?

Kim focused on hotels, as this is her bailiwick. She suggested a few indicators to be mindful of at hotels:

- Do you notice frequent opening / closing of hotel room doors?
- Do you notice frequent requests to change the sheets?
- Do you notice an unusual dress code at the hotel?
- Does anything look suspicious to you?

If you would like more information, or if you would like to join the Human Trafficking Committee of the Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, please contact Sister Ann Kelley, at 414-744-1160, ext. 3028, or akelley@lakeosfs.org.

Help us end human trafficking.

