



# Where Justice and Truth Meet

January 2013

## January is Human Trafficking Awareness month



*"[W]hatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the*

*selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed... Moreover, they are supreme dishonor to the Creator."*

—[Gaudium et Spes](#), 1965

Trafficking, which encompasses forced labor, sexual exploitation, and child soldiers, is the acquisition of people by force, fraud, or deception with the aim of exploiting them. President Obama, UN groups, Dominican women, Project Irene, and so many NGOs have programs to prevent human trafficking and aid survivors of this horrific abuse. Human trafficking has been called "the underbelly of globalization". It is often the result of economic and social disparities, but is fueled by the demand for the services provided by trafficked persons. There is an international network of

consecrated religious, active in the Dominican Federation in Peru, called [Red Kawsay](#). In Spanish "red" means "net" or "network", and "Kawsay" in Quechua is "life". Their mission is to use resources and actions to raise awareness of the trafficking of persons.

Red Kawsay Vive!



Vida Consagrada  
por una Sociedad sin Trata

In 2010, collaboration by the Catholic Bishops of Illinois and leaders of the Illinois region of the LCWR resulted in a joint statement, [Eradicating Human Trafficking](#). They remind us that "the mission of the gospel is to set captives free and to show mercy to our neighbor who is in need. Human trafficking around the world betrays every dimension of personhood and is a modern day form of slavery" in calling attention to this tragic denial of human rights.

January is Human Trafficking Awareness month. May we too join others to educate and advocate. May we engage in actions which promote dignity, justice, and solidarity for all. "Human trafficking will never be truly defeated without eliminating the consumerism that feeds it and prosecuting those actors in receiving countries, including our own, that benefit because of the exploitation of vulnerable human beings.



*Human trafficking is a horrific crime against the basic dignity and rights of the human person. All efforts must be expended to end it. In the end, we must work together—Church, state, and community—to eliminate the root causes and markets that permit traffickers to flourish; to make whole the survivors of this crime; and to ensure that, one day soon, trafficking in human persons vanishes from the face of the earth."*

—[On Human Trafficking](#),  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007



**“Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.” Mt 25:45-46**

that reduce death and injury from gunfire, sent a letter to the 113th Congress. Religious leaders representing 40 different faiths signed the letter urging the President and Congress to urgently take action to respond to the gun violence crisis in the United States.

To read the letter and learn more, see [www.faithsagainstgunviolence.org](http://www.faithsagainstgunviolence.org)

## Blessed are the Peacemakers

In his message for the celebration of World Day of Peace 2013, [Blessed are the Peacemakers](#), Pope Benedict reminds us that "Life in its fullness is the height of peace." He speaks of an ethic of life/peace that includes respect for human life at all ages and stages, ethical principles of economic development, and active peacemaking.



*“The path to the attainment of the common good and to peace is above all that of respect for human life in all its many aspects, beginning with its conception, through its development and up to its natural end. True peacemakers,*

*then, are those who love, defend and promote human life in all its dimensions, personal, communitarian and transcendent.”*

## A Consistent Ethic of Life and Gun Control

*Respect for the sanctity of life has to include respect for how that life is lived, enhanced and protected... at the moment of conception and throughout the course of that life.*

Thomas Friedman, *New York Times*

Even before the tragedy last month in Newtown, in the wake of killings in a Colorado theater, *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman noted that a truly “pro-life” stance should include support for common sense gun control (banning public access to the kind of semiautomatic assault rifle, designed for warfare, that was used in a Colorado theater), as well as other issues that protect and enhance life: support for EPA efforts to ensure clean air and water, preserve biodiversity and combat climate change; and support for programs like Head Start that provide basic education, health and nutrition for the most disadvantaged children. Read the editorial at [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/opinion/sunday/friedman-why-i-am-pro-life.html?\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/28/opinion/sunday/friedman-why-i-am-pro-life.html?_r=1&)

On January 15, *Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence*, a diverse coalition of organizations united by the call of faiths to confront America’s gun violence epidemic and to rally support for policies



## Call for a New Social Covenant

What *values* are needed to address the economic challenges and choices the world is now facing? Besides the instability, insecurity and human pain caused by the collapse of financial systems and resulting economic crisis, they have also generated a growing disbelief and fundamental distrust in the way things operate and how decisions are made.



Leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland January 23-27, 2013 will have a session on “*The Moral Economy: From Social Contract to Social*

*Covenant.”* Recognizing that inequality, austerity, mal-distribution, growing conflicts over resources, and extreme poverty all raise questions about our values, the Covenant reminds us that “the choices made about each issue are determined by the values we hold—the values applied by government, business, civil society, and individuals. Those choices need to be self-conscious—not based on the inertia of accumulated interests. This is not merely a philosophical enterprise; it is an urgent matter that requires moral courage.”

While recognizing the great diversity of global values, the social covenant puts forward three that express a consensus across cultures and religions: 1) the *dignity of the human person*, 2) the importance of *the common good*, which transcends individual interests, and 3) the need for *stewardship* of the planet and posterity.“ Together these offer a powerful unifying ideal: Valued individuals, committed to one another, and respectful of future generations.”

[http://sojo.net/sites/default/files/file\\_attach/NewSocialCovenant.pdf](http://sojo.net/sites/default/files/file_attach/NewSocialCovenant.pdf)

**Lenten Calendar** The Archdiocese of Washington has prepared a Lenten calendar with daily reminders to be a wise steward of God’s creation as a way to prepare to celebrate new life at Easter. Print your copy at

<http://site.adw.org/pdfs/2013-calendar-color.pdf>