



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up AND Act for Justice

Media Advisory: March 4, 2021
Contact for NAC: Kathy Dempsey

Virtual Conference on Human Trafficking – March 8 & 9 ***Spotlighting Root Causes & Intersections*** ***Congressional Remarks | Special Guest – Sr. Norma Pimentel***

Media are invited to cover our 3rd conference on human trafficking and hear from experts in the field, self-advocates who have survived being trafficked, and Members of Congress. Over 450 people have registered for the conference thus far.

Economic profit and the devaluing of the human person are at the center of labor trafficking, particularly for non-white and other marginalized groups. The situation is compounded by forced migration and failed economic systems. Women and children are especially vulnerable to being trafficked for sex. The root causes include power, money, and licentiousness. In addition, people of color and other marginalized communities are at greater risk while being offered less support before and after being trafficked.

We will discuss both labor and sex trafficking, announce support for a bill being introduced next week, and delve into awareness and advocacy campaigns. Human trafficking is intertwined with disparities in power and wealth, as are its solutions.

Monday, March 8, 2021 | 12:00 – 3:00 pm EST

Tuesday, March 9, 2021 | 12:00 – 1:30 pm EST

Registration Required:

<http://bit.ly/2021traffickingconference>

In the spirit of bi-partisanship, we welcome our Congressional Honorary Co-Chairs, Rep. Ann Wagner (R-MO), Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD), Rep. James P. McGovern (D-MA) and Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ). Our Honorary Co-Chairs will offer a few remarks.

Featured speakers are:

Flor Molina who received the 2018 Fashion for Freedom Award, going from being trafficked for labor in the garment industry to a champion for trafficking survivors. She was trafficked from Mexico to the United States. Molina's story illustrates labor trafficking on the border, the vulnerabilities of migrants and their exploitation.

Sr. Norma Pimentel, MJ, was named one of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People of 2020. She is the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley where she works for justice for migrants at the border and seeks to share the human dignity in every person.

Melanie Thompson was trafficked and sold into prostitution on the streets of New York at age 12. Now she speaks and advocates for an end to commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution.

Thompson was a vocal advocate for the FOSTA law spearheaded by our Honorary Co-Chair Ann Wagner which gives federal, state, and local prosecutors the tools they need to take down websites selling children.

Additional speakers include:

Hilary Chester, PhD – Associate Director, Anti-Trafficking Program, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Lawrence E. Couch – Director, National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

Sr. Gayle Lwanga Crumbley, RGS, EdD – Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, Province of Mid-North America

Sr. Winifred Doherty, RGS – United Nations Representative for the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Diana Fimbres – Program Manager, Strategic Initiatives on Labor Trafficking, Polaris

Jennifer Reyes Lay – Executive Director, U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

Sr. Ann Scholz, SSND, PhD – Associate Director for Social Mission, Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Sr. Christine Truong, RGS, MSW, ACSW – Executive Director, Good Shepherd Services Atlanta

Scott Wright – Director, Columban Center for Advocacy & Outreach

The Schedule --

Day 1 | Monday, March 8 | 12:00 - 3:00 pm EST

Introduction / Keynote

Panel 1 on Labor Trafficking

Panel 2 on Sex Trafficking

Discussion of Legislative Priorities

Day 2 | Tuesday, March 9 | 12:00 - 1:30 pm EST

Welcome

Panel 3 on Advocacy

Commissioning of Advocates

Closing

Call to Action Day | Tuesday, March 9 | Afternoon

Our co-sponsors for the conference are the Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas – Justice Team, the U.S. Coalition of Sisters Against Human Trafficking, and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Office of Migration and Refugee Services.

[The National Advocacy Center](http://www.nac4justice.org) educates and advocates on social justice issues for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people reflecting the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. NAC advocates at the Federal level for people living in poverty, immigrants, survivors of human trafficking, survivors of domestic abuse, and other vulnerable populations.

The Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835 and are in 70 countries on 5 continents and have had a presence in the United States for over 175 years. With a presence in 22 states and 1 U. S. Territory, the Sisters and their Lay Mission Partners have dedicated themselves to serving girls, women and families who experience poverty, exploitation, vulnerability and marginalization.