



# MIGRANTS REFUGEES

Vatican City, 8 January 2019

Prot. N.: MR-0006/2019

*Ref: Publication of Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking*

Your Excellencies,

dear colleagues and friends,

Among the vulnerable people on the move, for whom the Migrants & Refugees Section is called to care, an important group are the very many men, women and children everywhere who are caught up in human trafficking and slavery.

In the course of 2018, the M&R Section developed *Pastoral Orientations on Human Trafficking* (POHT). Pope Francis has approved this text and it will be published in the immediate future.

The POHT is a 40-page booklet. Its purpose is to provide a *reading* of human trafficking and an *understanding* that motivate and sustain the much-needed long-term *struggle* against the “atrocious scourge” which the Holy Father denounced at the United Nations in September 2015 and on many other occasions. Human trafficking, a serious crime in itself, involves other atrocities and violations such as slave labour, involuntary servitude, child soldiers, sexual exploitation including prostitution, and the marketing of human organs and tissues.

The POHT is meant for Catholic dioceses, parishes, religious congregations, schools and universities, and Catholic and other organizations of civil society. The Orientations can be implemented in local programs and by groups collaborating at a distance. They also offer points to be used in homilies, education and media.

The POHT will be made public on 17 January at 9.00 GMT. From that time onward, you will find the POHT at <https://migrants-refugees.va/trafficking-slavery/> in various languages and formats.

Once you have had a chance to look at the POHT, please do send us your impressions and questions. Also very welcome is news of initiatives in your area to prevent human trafficking, to liberate those who have been trafficked and rehabilitate and reintegrate them, to collaborate with others.

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We conclude as does the POHT with a prayer to the patron saint of those who survive human trafficking. It includes the following passages:

*St Josephine Bakhita, help us always to be like you, especially when we feel tempted to look away and not to help, to reject others or even to abuse them... O Loving God, give us all the strength to grow in true freedom, and in love for you, for each other and for our common home. Amen!*



Fr Michael Czerny S.J.

Fr Fabio Baggio C. S.

*Under-Secretaries*