



# 'Ecology and Human Ecology' Climate Change and Human Trafficking

**Winifred Doherty**  
**Good Shepherd Sister**



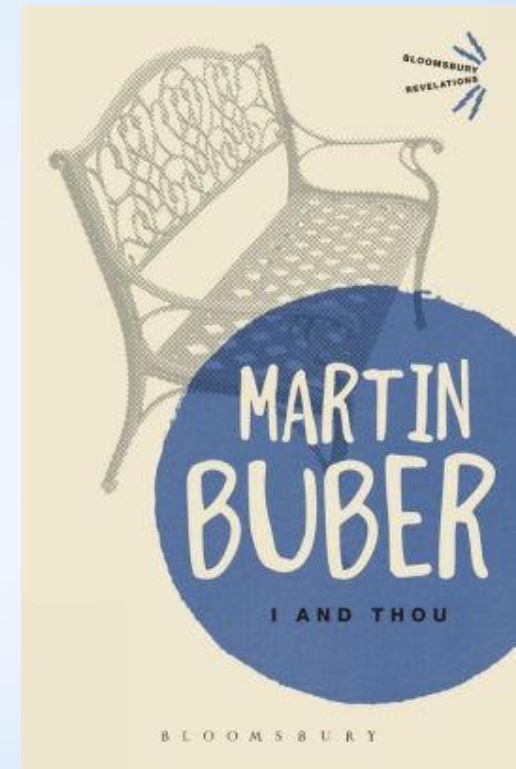
# Ecology and Human Ecology

- Ecology studies the relationship between living organisms and the environment in which they develop. This necessarily entails reflection and debate about the conditions required for the life and survival of society, and the honesty needed to question certain models of development, production and consumption. It cannot be emphasized enough how everything is interconnected. Laudato Si 138



- **“Our own humanity is diminished to the extent that we encounter others as objects rather than subjects.”**

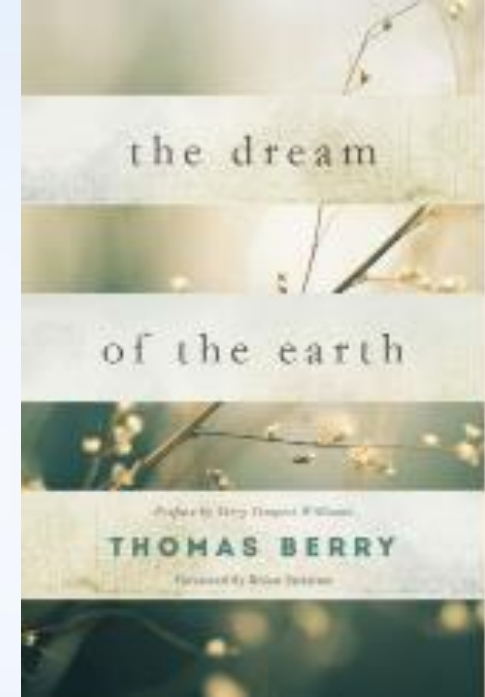
Martin Buber - Austrian-born Israeli Jewish philosopher best known for his philosophy of dialogue, focusing on 'I - Thou relationship'.



**I-Thou relationship of Buber extends today beyond the person to person encounter to recognizing the Rights of Mother Earth and the call for not just for social justice or gender justice, but eco-justice.**



## Thomas Berry



- “Our relationship with the earth involves something more than pragmatic use, academic understanding, or aesthetic appreciation. **A truly human intimacy** with the earth and with the entire natural world is needed. Our children should be properly introduced to the world in which they live.” (Thomas Berry, “Human Presence,” in *The Dream of the Earth*, 13).



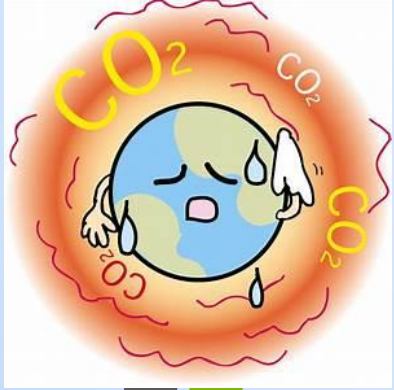
# Opening words of Laudato Si! Paragraph 1



**Our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us.**

—Pope Francis  
Laudato Si'

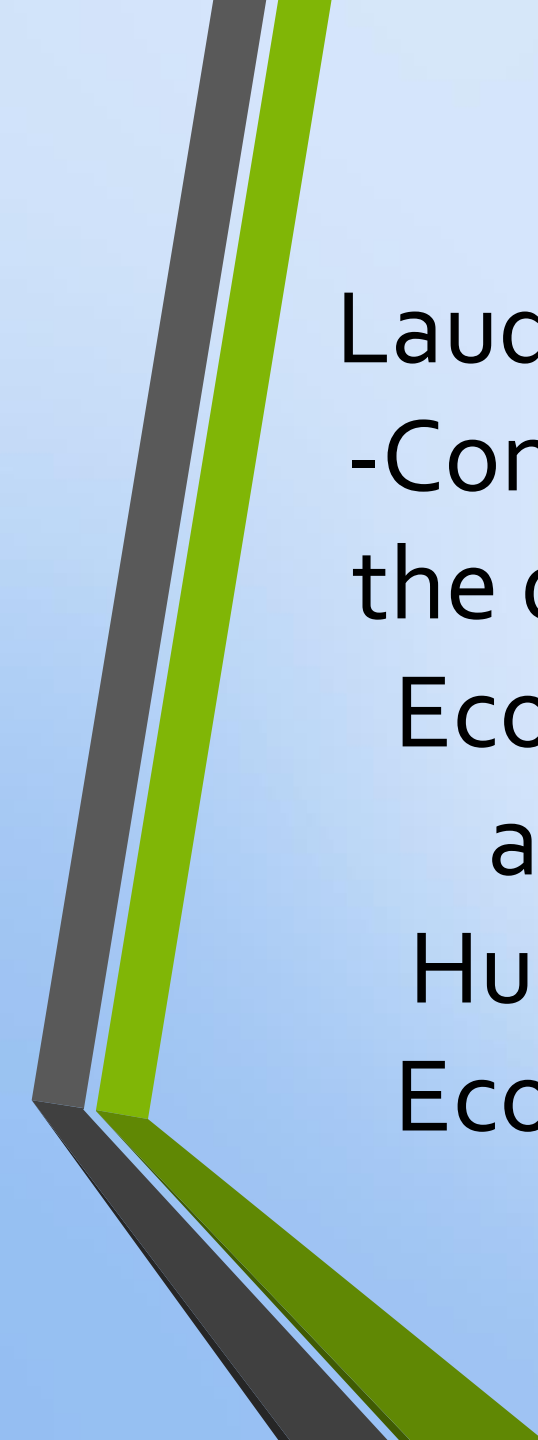




Pope Francis on June 14, 2019 addressing some of the world's biggest multinational oil companies

- Declared a global “climate emergency”, warning of the dangers of [global heating](#) and that a failure to act urgently to reduce greenhouse gases would be “a brutal act of injustice toward **the poor** and future generations”.
- Time is running out and Pope Francis urged them to hear “**the increasingly desperate cries of the earth and its poor**”.
- Decisive action is needed





Laudato Si  
-Connects  
the dots –  
Ecology  
and  
Human  
Ecology

- 91. “ A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern **for our fellow human beings**. It is clearly inconsistent to combat trafficking in endangered species while remaining completely indifferent to **human trafficking, unconcerned about the poor, or undertaking to destroy another human being deemed unwanted**. This compromises the very meaning of our struggle for the sake of the environment. ... Concern for the environment thus need to be joined to a sincere love of our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”



# Connecting the dots...

## Ecology and Human Ecology

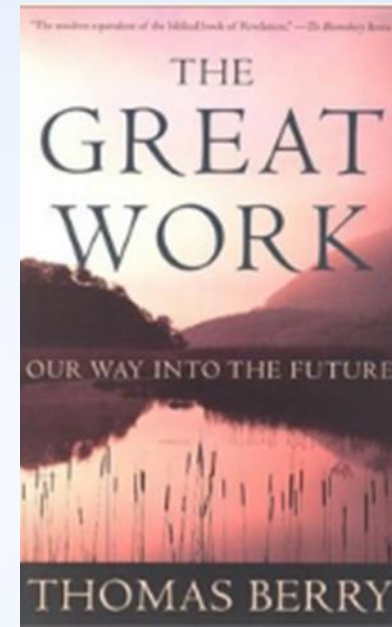
- I will turn around what the Pope said and say concern for our sisters and brothers who are trafficked – whether for sexual exploitation or labour needs to be joined to a sincere love of the environment and an unwavering commitment to resolving the environmental crisis coupled with the problems of society.
- Both issues are interconnected, are driven by an attitude or mindset of exploitation, plunder, rape, control over and dominance by one of another – be that a person or the environment.

Concern for the environment  
thus needs to be joined  
to a sincere love  
for our fellow human beings  
and an unwavering commitment  
to resolving the problems society.

Pope Francis  
*Laudato Si':  
On Care For  
Our Common Home*



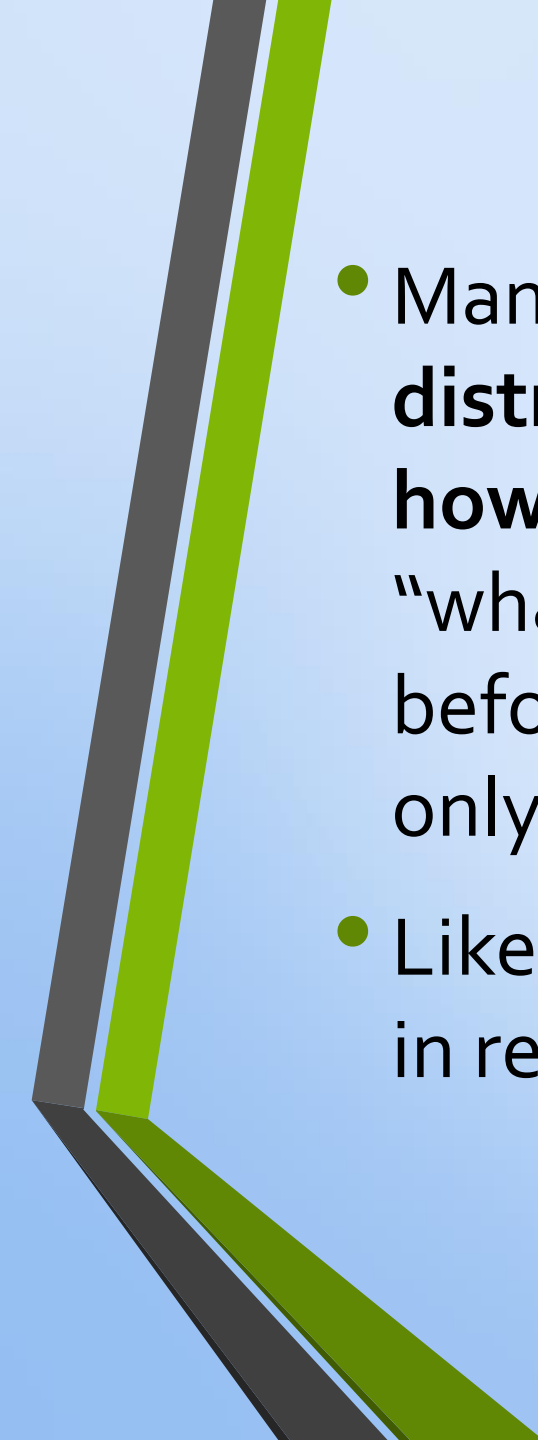
## Thomas Berry



- “The naïve assumption that the natural world is there to be possessed and **used by humans** for their advantage and in an unlimited manner cannot be accepted.”  
(Thomas Berry, “The Viable Human,” in *The Great Work*, 61).

## Another quotation from Laudato Si 56

- “ ... economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the **effects on human dignity and the natural environment**. Here we see how environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked. ....

- 
- Many people will deny doing anything wrong because **distractions constantly dull our consciousness of just how limited and finite our world really is.** As a result “whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule.”” Laudato Si 56 and Evangelii Gaudium (2013)
  - Likewise our awareness and consciousness are often dull in relation to human trafficking and prostitution.



# Human Trafficking is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights

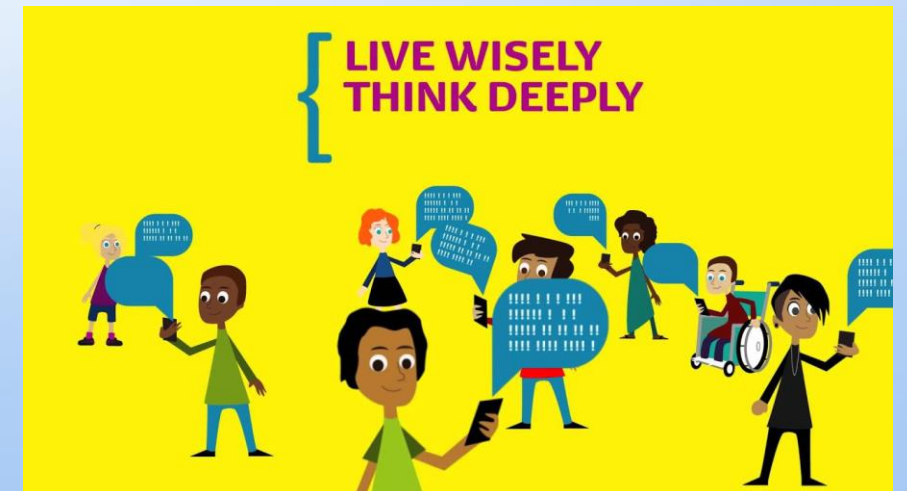
- Human Trafficking is driven by market forces of demand and supply whether for sexual exploitation or labour exploitation or organ removal or forced marriage.
- Human Trafficking for sexual exploitation is often into prostitution.
- Quoting a line from the previous slide referring to the environmental crisis 'many people will deny doing anything wrong because distractions constantly dull our consciousness' but I will ask what dulls our consciousness when we speak of human trafficking or prostitution?



**What can I do?**

# Live mindfully – I like the graphic - Living Wisely is indeed living mindfully

- Mindfulness is the self-regulation of attention with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance. This is a pre- requisite for entering an I-Thou Relationship with another or the 'human intimacy with the earth.' Thomas Berry

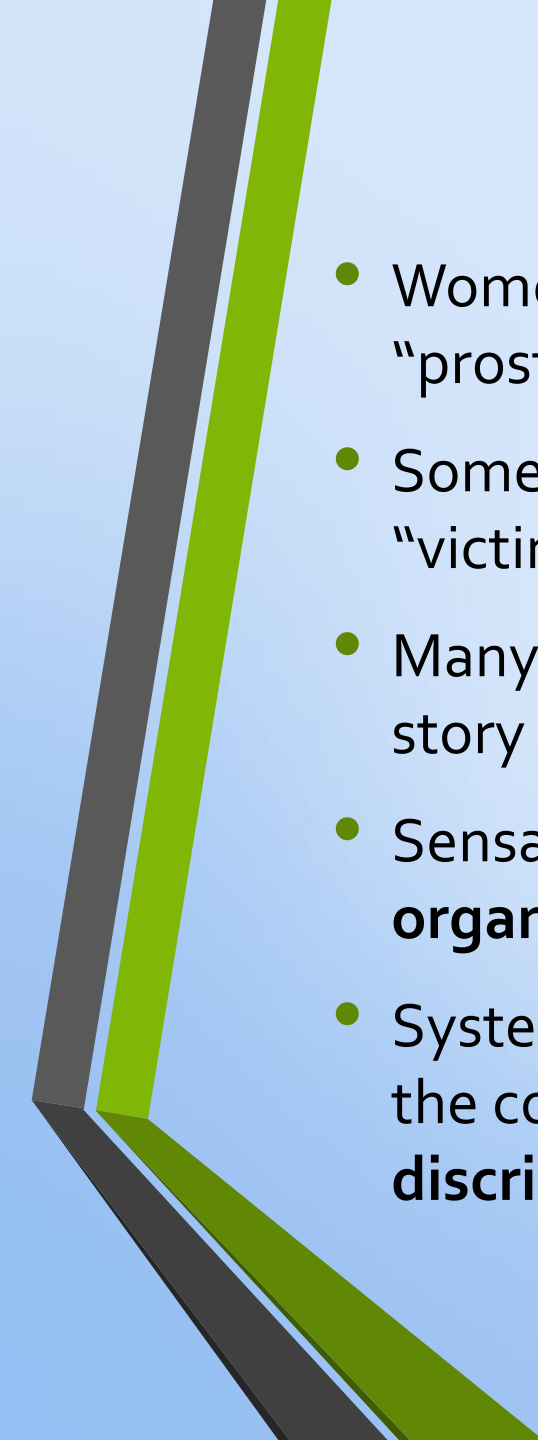


# Changing the Narrative

## Awareness of Use of Language

- Language is powerful.
- If I label a person – I am categorizing the person, denying uniqueness, dignity, respect, and personhood, I am closing off curiosity, openness and acceptance of the person. I am refusing to enter into the I -Thou relationship
- Example – how do I refer to girls and women who have been sexually exploited? Do I say prostitutes, hookers, whores, or 'a girl, a young women who has been prostituted'?



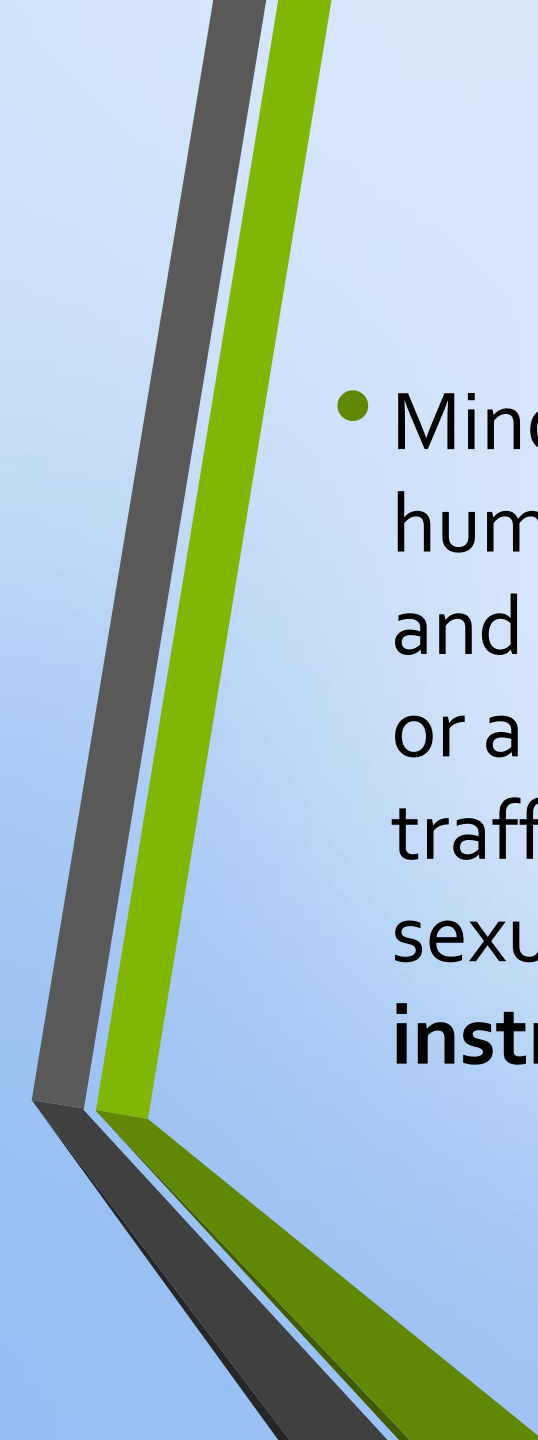
- 
- Women and girls who have been trafficked are not “sex workers” nor “prostitutes” What sort of mindset perceives this way?
  - Some people who have been trafficked prefer the word “survivor” to “victim”
  - Many prefer not to be labelled at all – the experience may be part of their story but not representative of who they are.
  - Sensationalizing human trafficking fails to recognize **the systemic, organized and prevalent nature of trafficking.**
  - Systemic causes render persons more vulnerable to being trafficked over the course of their lives – **poverty, lack of social protection, rural isolation, discrimination, a culture of gender violence and patriarchy.**

# Awareness of Use of Language

- What is the quality of my mindfulness when I say 'sex work.' Is it the provision of sexual services for money or goods to which I am entitled? Is there a difference between sex work and sex worker?
- What is the quality of the I – Thou relationship in sex work? Is sex work?

# Language is Powerful – change my language leads to a change of mindset

- What is my personal level of awareness of and struggle (in my self) with some of the **underlying systemic causes of trafficking for sexual exploitation - misogyny, patriarchy, power imbalances, male privilege, gender inequality and the social acceptance of prostitution?**

- 
- Mindsets that turn a blind eye to the links between human trafficking, the sex trade, gender-based violence, and cheap labour in favour of profit, sex, a good bargain or a human organ facilitate this exploitation permitting traffickers to become legitimate business people and sexually exploited girls and women to be **commodified, instrumentalized and objectified.**



# Conclusion

- An exploitative, consumerist economy is the antithesis of human rights and human dignity. We are all complicit, and we must all act to combat it in consistent and holistic ways.
- I am back to where I started ...
- Martin Buber **“Our own humanity is diminished to the extent that we encounter others as objects rather than subjects.”**

# Do you hear?

- Do you HEAR the ... 'increasingly desperate cries of the earth and its poor' – people who are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation, into prostitution and into labour exploitation of all kinds?



# Thank You!

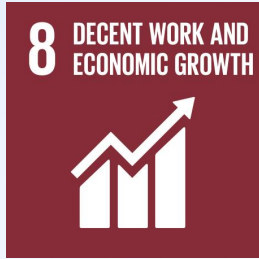
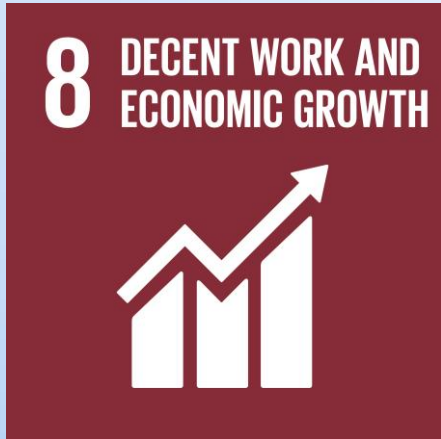
Winifred Doherty

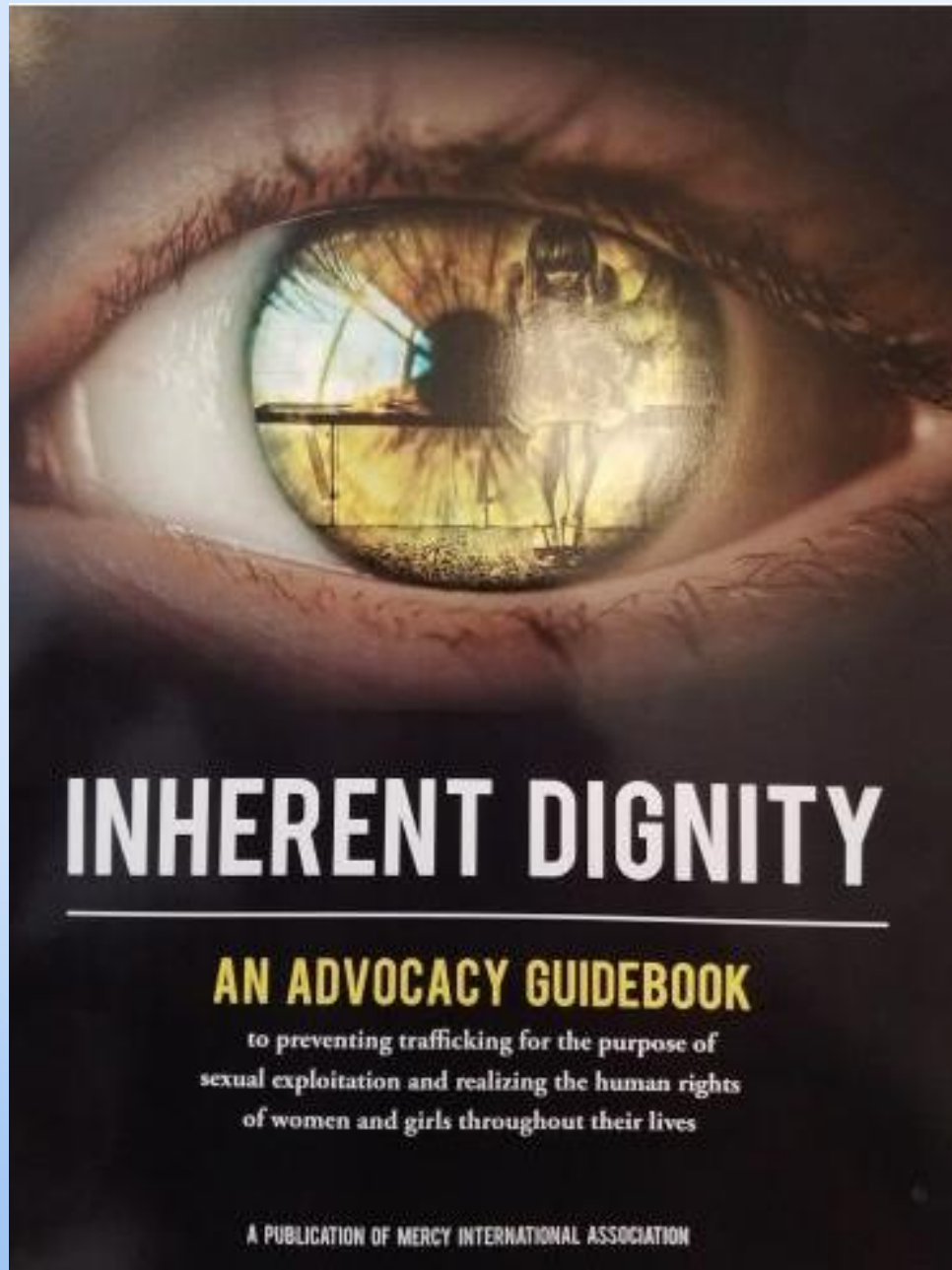
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

866 UN Plaza #Suite 477

New York , NY 10016

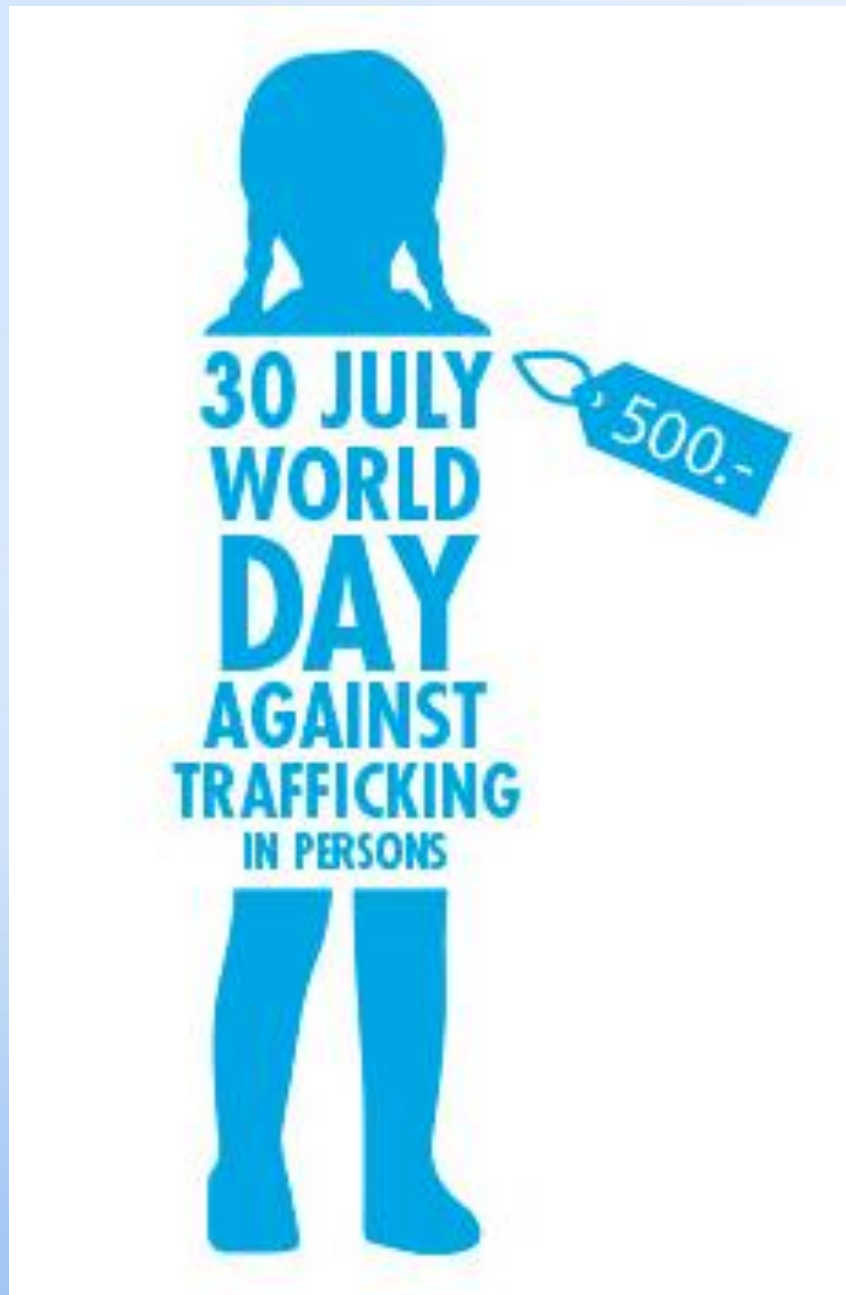
Cel: 1 917 868 1843





**'Inherent Dignity'  
is a great title It  
points to an  
I-Thou  
relationship of  
placing PEOPLE  
over Profit.**

<http://bit.ly/2FtzOt4>



**Local Action  
- On World  
Day Against  
Trafficking  
July 30**



# Special Edition: Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General (Advanced Unedited Edition July 2019)

- There has been an overall increase in the detection of victims of trafficking in persons which could reflect either a positive (enhanced efforts by authorities to identify victims) or negative (larger trafficking problem) development. In a departure from prior findings, recent data show that most trafficking victims were detected domestically, 58% in 2016, up from 43% in 2014. The vast majority (70%) of detected victims of human trafficking are females, most of whom were trafficked for sexual exploitation.

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**Theme: Empowering people and ensuring  
inclusiveness and equality**

