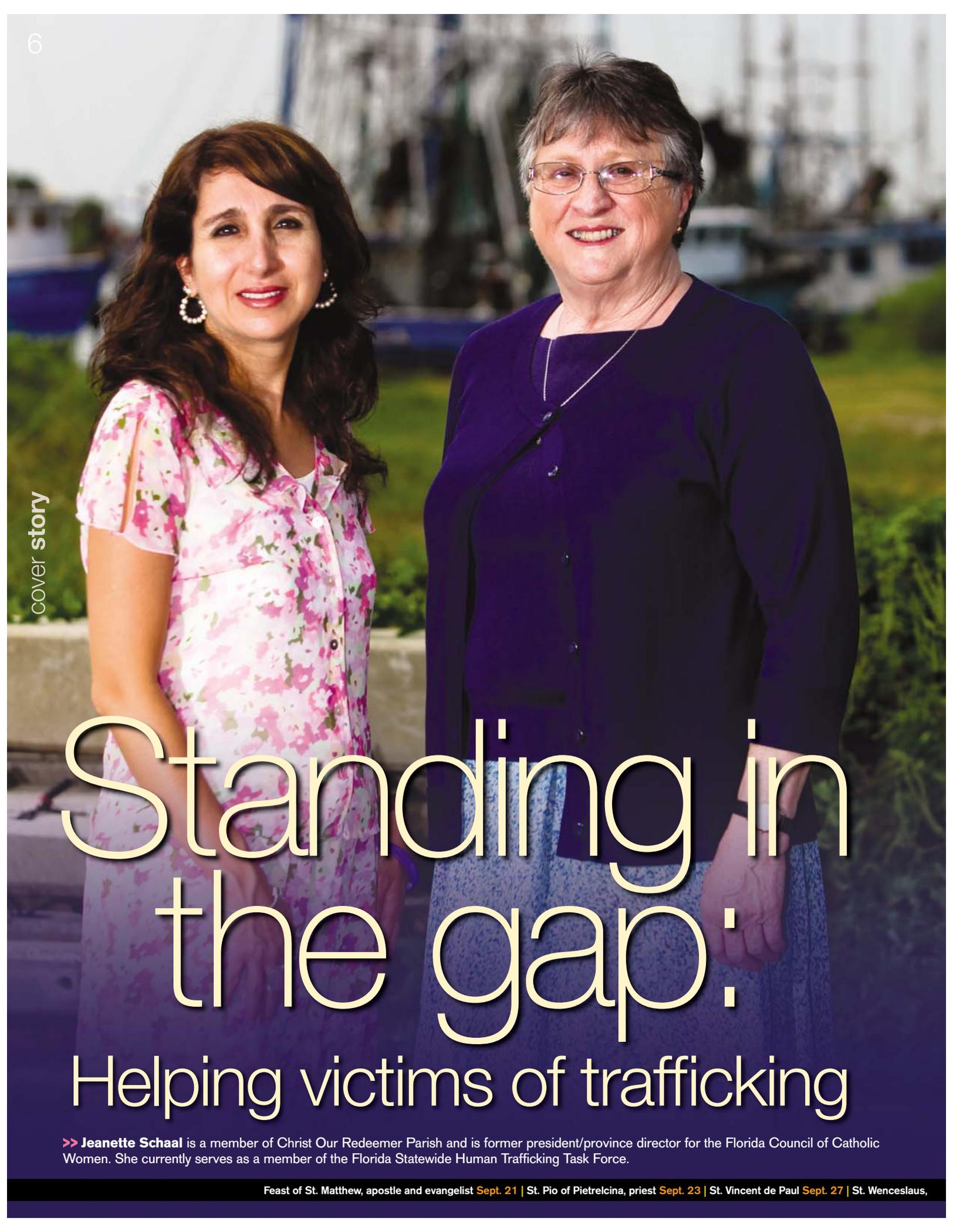


# Modern day slavery in our midst:

TRAFFICKING  
WOMAN

A hand is shown in the foreground, palm facing up, reaching out. The background is a blurred image of a person behind a chain-link fence, suggesting a state of confinement or restriction.

A photograph of two women standing outdoors. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a pink and white floral dress. The woman on the right has short grey hair, wears glasses, and a purple cardigan over a blue skirt. They are both smiling. In the background, there are boats and a body of water.

# Standing in the gap:

## Helping victims of trafficking

>> **Jeanette Schaal** is a member of Christ Our Redeemer Parish and is former president/province director for the Florida Council of Catholic Women. She currently serves as a member of the Florida Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force.

**H**uman trafficking is the new practice of modern-day slavery based on false promises, coercion and profit for the trafficker. Fueled by greed and abetted by ignorance, this terrible violation of human dignity happens in our own country, as well as around the world.

Victims of human trafficking live and work in our communities. They're hidden or blended into communities. They are living in fearful, disadvantaged hostile situations. Sister Mary Ellen Dougherty, formerly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Migration and Refugee Services, defined the task for the National Council of Catholic Women in 2007: "Catholic Women in leadership can take this information back to their parishes. Look for victims of human trafficking."

The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services oversees the "Campaign to Rescue and Restore Victims of Human Trafficking." In cooperation with ORR, non-governmental organizations in the U.S. respond to the needs of 14,500 to 17,500 victims annually. According to ORR, 18,000 to 20,000 men, women, teenagers and children are trafficked into the United States yearly. About 600,000 to 800,000 women, men and children are trafficked across international borders worldwide every year. More than half of these are children. Many enter the United States legally, but, because of their poverty or inability to speak English, they are exploited by traffickers. Many are lured from homes with promises of employment. A growing number of victims are U.S. citizens. The contracted agencies provide both immediate assistance to the victims and case management to help them access the government benefits they're eligible for.

ORR also provides resources to help care-givers understand the mindset of the trafficking victim. Victims often think that they do not want to be found. They are actually held captive by their own fear of being discovered, as well as by their fear of their traffickers. They fear prosecution for the illegal acts they may have been forced to engage in. They also fear reprisal against themselves and/or their family members back home. Rescue and Restore creates a way for victims to come forward, to be protected, and to participate in the prosecution of the traffickers.

Pope John Paul said in a 2002 letter to Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran, "The trade in human persons constitutes a shocking offence against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights ... selling of women and children and disgraceful working conditions ... constitute a supreme dishonor to the Creator. Such situations are an affront to fundamental values that are shared by all cultures and peoples, values rooted in the very nature of human

person." In 1965, in "*Gaudium et Spes*," the Church spoke out against "slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children, and disgraceful working conditions where people are treated as instruments of gain rather than free and responsible persons" as "infamies" which "poison human society, debase their perpetrators" and constitute "a supreme dishonour to the Creator" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 27).

Trafficking is global in nature, so no country is immune to this issue. It is a lucrative commercial activity. After drug dealing, human trafficking is tied with the illegal weapons industry as the second-largest criminal industry in the world today, and is the fastest-growing. Trafficking is almost always associated with organized crime. It is a \$10 billion-plus industry.

Traffickers face few risks and can earn huge profits from large numbers of people usually living in crowded or impoverished communities. Few laws exist in other countries, especially underdeveloped nations, to prosecute traffickers and protect victims. The United States is one country that does have such laws.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA – reauthorized in 2003 and 2005) defines "Severe Forms of Trafficking in Persons as:

**"Sex trafficking:** The recruitment, transportation, provision of a person for the purpose of a commercial sex act, in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud or coercion, or in which the person forced to perform such an act is under the age of 18 years; or

**"Labor trafficking:** the recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery."

What are people forced into when they are sold through the trafficking market? People are trafficked for domestic services, commercial sexual exploitation, marriage, factory work, begging, agricultural labor, restaurant work, construction, janitorial work, and other forms of informal labor. Children are "sold" by unsuspecting parents who believe their children are going to be taken care of, are going to learn a trade, or be given an education. Some children are sold into the "sex trade" for the price of a television. There is a demand for prostitutes and cheap labor from rich countries.

The Center for the Advancement of Human Rights states that Florida ranks No. 2, behind only California, for highest rates of human trafficking in the country, followed by Texas and New York.

Most of our cases in northwest Florida involve labor, migrant farming and hotel or restaurant labor. There are cases pending in Panama City, Destin, and Pensacola. Last year, several victims – restaurant workers from Russia, Ukraine and other Baltic countries – were identified.

For more information on human trafficking, visit [www.usccb.org/mrs/trafficking/index.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/mrs/trafficking/index.shtml), or, for a complete review of the literature on human trafficking, visit <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/07/HumanTrafficking/LitRev/index.shtml>. – **Jeanette Schaal**

## Think human trafficking doesn't happen right here in our midst? Think again.

A June 7, 2007, article in the Independent News (Pensacola) describes the story of a young woman being held against her will for four days from April 27 to May 2, 2007. The white, middle-class 18-year-old was betrayed by a "friend" she met at night school. Invited to hang out at the friend's father's house in her own neighborhood, she, after having a soda, blacked out and awoke bound and being raped repeatedly at gunpoint by five men. The friend's "father" was actually her pimp. As she faded in and out of consciousness, she heard the men discussing sending her to "a man in Texas" and "\$300,000." She had gone to the house of her own free will, but was held against her will. She is fortunate to have escaped after four days of torture to tell her story and participate in the prosecution of the traffickers.

In the same month, June 2007, Anna Rodriguez, head of the Florida Coalition against Human Trafficking, reported 33 victims; 10 in one week in the Florida panhandle. She said, "This is more than the cases in Miami and Orlando."

# Human trafficking: the nature of the problem.

– Maria Roswold



**H**uman trafficking is an immense and complex problem that destroys lives right here in the diocese and around the world. The number of victims worldwide is approaching one million per year. More than half are minors. Victims are recruited for labor or for the sex trade, and controlled by traffickers through threats, force, coercion, fraud, debt bondage or a combination of methods. Some are recruited right here in the United States – at bus terminals, in malls, online. Nearly 20,000 enter the U.S. each year from foreign countries, brought here with fraudulent promises of wealth, opportunity or education. The trade in human beings is lucrative for traffickers, estimated to be a \$10 billion business that is growing exponentially. High demand for cheap labor and commercial sex keeps the U.S. a prime “receiver” nation. Florida ranks No. 2 in the country for the number of victims, behind only California.

The victims live in the shadows, often held against their wills in communal housing. They begin as people who are desperate to better their lives, to feed their families, to escape the pain of their existence. They end up as modern-day slaves.

Who will stand in the gap between these victims and those who exploit them? What does the Church say and do to combat such evil, such injustice?

Two women who are on the front lines fighting human trafficking are Maria Roswold, program coordinator for the refugee and immigration program of Catholic

Charities of Northwest Florida, and Jeanette Schaal, former president and province director for the Florida Council of Catholic Women. Both women serve on the Florida Statewide Human Trafficking Task Force.

Long an advocate for the implementation of Catholic social teaching, on behalf of the National Council of Catholic Women, Schaal participated in a 2004 “Against Human Trafficking” seminar in Baltimore, Md, that was grant-funded by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office of Migration and Refugee Services. She said, “I returned from the seminar on fire. This message had to get out to our people. The world needs to hear this message. It is my (our) task to promote justice for the women and children of the world. I have a passion for the issue of human trafficking and want to spread the news so we can make a difference in the lives of the women and children and, yes, men too!”

In response to human trafficking, the USCCB/MRS has contracted with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to provide an Anti-Trafficking Per Capita Services Program. As a subcontractor under that program, Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida now provides comprehensive case management services to victims.

That’s where Roswold comes in. A native of Colombia who has lived in many countries, she brings special compassion and empathy to the job.

“The needs of victims vary with the amount of time they’ve been in the ‘ring,’ with whether they were labor or sex trade victims, with their language skills, with their medical and mental health status, with the support network they may have available and a number of other factors,” Roswold said.

Comprehensive case management involves helping the client navigate the complex systems of care and empowering the client to make choices that contribute to long-term self-sufficiency and safety. The case manager serves as the main point of contact for all service needs and liaises with law enforcement and the client’s attorney to ensure the client’s legal case is progressing and that the client is receiving emotional support through the process.

Both the federal government and private providers make services available to victims/survivors of trafficking. Case managers as-

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– Maria Roswold

sist clients in accessing services to meet their needs in the areas of medical and mental health, safety, public benefits (food stamps, etc.), language, shelter, legal, law enforcement, transportation, education and spiritual needs.

Roswold pointed to the area of safety as one many people wouldn’t think of. “We help the client determine how they can best stay safe; avoid repercussions from the traffickers; how to vary the routes they take as they go about their daily activities; other actions to take – how to dial 911 and what to say to the operator, for example; how to recognize if they’re being followed and all the precautions to take to avoid becoming a victim again.

“The relationship with the client must be based on trust. As you can imagine, it is not easy for survivors to trust. We don’t make decisions for them, but we do guide them and walk with them as they rebuild their lives,” she said.

Recently, Roswold helped two adult survivors who had escaped from a forced labor situation in the hospitality industry in northwest Florida. “The smiles on their faces at the end of the process – that is my best reward,” she said. “I love being able to make a difference in the lives of survivors of human trafficking, allowing them to gain back the hopes and dreams they had when they arrived in the U.S.” – **Peggy DeKeyser**



– Jeanette Schaal

# How trafficking victims become eligible to remain in the U.S. and receive benefits:

Foreign nationals who are trafficked into the United States and who do not have citizenship or permanent resident status may be eligible to receive a T visa, which provides an authorized stay in the U.S. and employment authorization for survivors of human trafficking. To be eligible for a T visa, a survivor must:

- Be a foreign national victim of a severe form of trafficking as defined by the TVPA (Trafficking Victims Protection Act), trafficked within the U.S. or territories, but not exclusively, and be physically present in the U.S.;
- Comply with any reasonable request for assistance in the investigation or prosecution of acts of trafficking, unless the client is under the age of 18, in which case compliance with law enforcement is not a requirement;
- Prove that the he/she would suffer extreme hardship involving unusual and severe harm if he/she were removed from the U.S., and;
- Have not committed a severe form of trafficking in persons.

Individuals who have received a bona fide determination of a T visa may be eligible to receive "certification" by the federal Department of Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement (HHS/ORR) to receive certain benefits. T visa recipients also may adjust their status after four years and also may apply for certain family members to come to the U.S. under a Family Derivative T visa (T-2, T-3, T-4, and T-5 visas).

Continued presence is an administrative action taken by the Department of Homeland Security to not remove a for-

eign national survivor of trafficking from the U.S. Federal law enforcement agencies can apply on behalf of an individual for continued presence when the survivor's assistance may be needed in the investigation and/or prosecution of the trafficker. Continued presence comes in the form of an I-94 card and allows the survivor to legally stay and work in the U.S., typically in one-year increments. Once continued presence is granted, HHS/ORR may provide a "certification letter" to the survivor to obtain certain public benefits. Continued presence can be revoked or renewed.

Foreign national victims receive the same

benefits and services as refugees through certification from HHS/ORR. A person who is identified as a victim of a severe form of trafficking and is not certified is considered pre-certified. **To receive certification, the person must:**

- Be a victim of a severe form of trafficking as defined by the TVPA;
- Be willing to assist law enforcement in every reasonable way with the investigation and prosecution of their case, [minors under the age of 18 do not need to assist with the prosecution of their traffickers], AND;
- Have received continued presence from USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services); OR
- Have received a bona fide determination of the T visa; OR
- Have received a T visa.

**To be enrolled in USCCB's Anti-Trafficking Services Program, a client must:**

- Meet the federal definition of a victim of a severe form of trafficking as defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act; OR
- Have derivative status, as defined by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act, through receipt of the T-2, T-3, T-4, T-5 visa (collectively referred to as "Derivative T visas");
- Be removed from the trafficking situation;
- Be in the U.S.;
- Not be a U.S. citizen or a lawful permanent resident;
- Be working towards, or have already received, certification/eligibility from Health and Human Services/Office of Refugee Resettlement; AND
- Require case management around the trafficking situation.

Clients may be served for up to nine months during the pre-certification process and for four months once they receive status as certified or eligible.



## What you can do:

- Attend the Human Trafficking Awareness Training at St. Joseph the Worker Parish in Chipley on Saturday, Oct. 2, 2010, from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. (central time). Terry Coonan, FSU Center for the Advancement of Human Rights, and Tom Gillan, Office of Criminal Justice – Catholic Charities of Central Florida, will provide the training. They will have a PowerPoint presentation and other information to take back for use in parishes.
- Educate yourself on human trafficking and the suffering of its victims.
- Help your parish learn more about the problem through adult education classes and talks.
- Learn to recognize victims of trafficking within your community. The signs for adults and children differ. You can learn the signs and what action to take at [www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/)
- Pray for the victims of trafficking and that the violence of this crime might be eradicated from our world.