

# Ten Long Years

## - A Story of Success in the Fight Against Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery

The recent story of the Catholic Church's fight against human trafficking is well known. In 2013 Pope Francis called the Church's attention to the evils of modern slavery and Cardinals and Bishops around the world began to mobilise. In England and Wales the St Bakhita House Project and the St Marta Police initiative were clear examples of a desire to engage in this work.

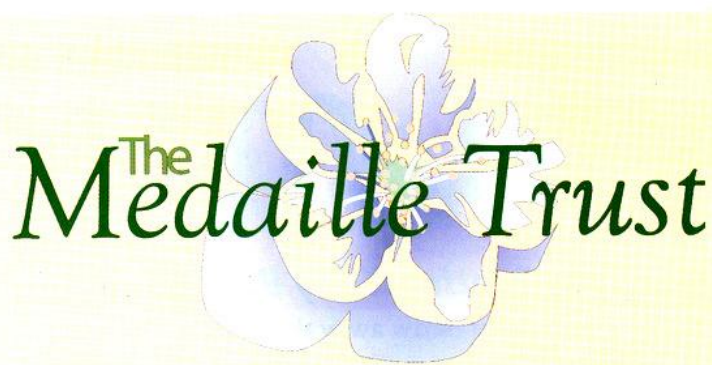
For some Catholics however there is a different story. In 2006 a different Pope, Benedict XVI, made a similar plea for action. One person who heard that call was Sister Ann Therese of the Order of St Joseph of Annecy. Adopting a 'whole church' approach she gathered around her like minded individuals from the Religious (male and female), the Clergy (Diocesan and Religious) and the Laity. Within months the Medaille Trust had been formed and acquired its first safe house for the victims of human trafficking. Its vision and mission were simple:

**Vision:** *The Medaille Trust desires a world where the trafficking of human beings for sexual, economic and labour exploitation has been eradicated.*

**Mission:** *The Medaille Trust is a charity founded by Catholic Religious Congregations to work for the eradication of human trafficking and to offer support to those who have been trafficked. Believing in the intrinsic dignity and worth of every individual we provide safe housing and specialist services for rehabilitation and raise awareness of these modern forms of slavery*

It was not easy in the early stages and the Trust owes a huge debt of gratitude to the Religious and others who supported them in many ways not the least financially. Particular mention should be made of the help and support received from the Trafficking Raising Awareness and Campaigning group, the Brothers of St John of God, Caritas Salford and the many, many female Religious Orders in the UK. With their help the Medaille Trust has flourished and it now manages eight safe houses for men, women and dependent children across the breadth of England. Together they offer 75 beds for victims with plans for further expansion:

Medaille Trust Services	Houses per Service	Male Spaces	Female Spaces	Family Units	Total
<b>Existing</b>					
Northern	2	13	7	0	20
Central	1	0	14	0	14
Southern	3	4	10	0	14
Coastal	1	0	0	18	18
London	1	0	9	0	9
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Proposed New Services (2016)</b>					
London	1	0	24	0	24
Mersey	1	9	0	0	9
Eastern	1	0	5	0	5
<b>Sub Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Grand Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>113</b>



### A Light Shining in a Dark Place of Human Trafficking

The Catholic Medaille Trust is the largest provider of residential services to victims of human trafficking in England and Wales. In the ten years of existence the Trust has supported over 1,000 victims. Alena's story is typical of those the Medaille Trust helps:

**Alena, age 26, from Nigeria.**



For the last few months, Alena has been accommodated in one of Medaille Trust safe houses. Alena was trafficked to the UK at the age of 25. Due to FGM she had suffered terrible abuse from her husband and eventually returned to the family home with her mother and sister. Alena's mother was sick and could not afford another mouth to feed. Alena was offered employment overseas as a nanny in the UK. This would be the answer to her prayers, a good job that will help pay for her mothers medical expenses.

Alena arrived at Heathrow airport and was taken straight to Manchester where she was made to swear an oath.. She was locked in a flat with other ladies for three month and forced to sleep with total strangers. Alena was not allowed to contact anyone outside of the flat including her mother.

Alena said "this was a very disgusting episode of my life that I don't want to ever happen again". For many weeks she felt she could not tell anyone about her full ordeal.

Alena got £5.00 each time she was made to have sex. On the 11th of November 2005 she managed to escape through a bathroom window. A few streets away from where she was caged she met a lady who helped her with directions to get to the Police station. After her escape, Alena was threatened and harassed by the man who held her captive. She had to change her sim card out of fear.



*Alena can not sleep without taking medication and she lives with constant headaches. She also suffers with horrible and constant flashbacks every day.*

*The Medaille Trust continue to work with Alena by way of providing safe house accommodation and specialist support and assistance to overcome some of the trauma she has experienced and to identify the best way to put her life back together again.*



**Medaille accommodation — A typical bedroom**

In addition to the core work of residential victim support the Medaille Trust has a range of other activities.

### International Work

The Medaille Trust partners, selectively, with organisations around the world. Some details are shown her:

**Kenya** – the primary partnership is with Mama Margaret's, a Salesian led project, in the Dagoretti slum on the outskirts of Nairobi. The project aims to provide alternatives to sex work in the local brothels and the risk of being trafficked that accompanies it..

**Albania** – the Trust works closely with Mary Ward Loreto and Different and Equal in Albania on a variety of joint anti-trafficking projects.

**Vietnam** – a partnership with Hagar International has begun working together on victim support and repatriation issues.

It is hoped that other countries can be added to this during 2016 and Romania and Poland were proposed. In addition to these formal partnerships the Trust has engaged in more informal work and training in France, Spain, Romania, Germany and Slovenia.

### Awareness Raising and Educational Work

The Trust has an active programme of education and awareness training that reaches out to schools, churches, community groups and interested parties. A schools' teaching pack was provided to 453 senior Catholic schools in 2015. These activities are, in part, delivered by or supported by our growing network of Diocesan Representatives whose work is described below.

### The Diocesan Representative Network

The role of the Diocesan Representative is to present the work of the Medaille Trust and raise awareness of human trafficking in the Catholic Dioceses to which they are appointed. Through the use of talks, appeals and presentations, the particular tasks of the Diocesan Representative are:

- ☐ To request prayer support from those willing and able to offer it
- ☐ To raise the level of awareness of the evils of human trafficking and its presence in our communities
- ☐ To increase the number of active benefactors of the Trust by collecting contact details for those who wish to receive our regular Magazine.
- ☐ To generate income for the Medaille Trust by soliciting donations and to encourage all donors who are UK taxpayers to Gift Aid any donations.
- ☐ Increase sales of Mama Margaret stock (Handmade craft items from Kenya).

During 2014-15 the viability of this network was tested and it has proved to be a success. During 2016 a large scale recruitment of a minimum of a further ten representatives will take place. Current Diocese in which we are, or have been, active during the initial phases are:

- |                                      |                                     |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Westminster | <input type="checkbox"/> Southwark  | <input type="checkbox"/> Salford   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Liverpool   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hallam     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cardiff   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nottingham  | <input type="checkbox"/> Portsmouth | <input type="checkbox"/> Lancaster |

### Police and Law Enforcement Agencies

The Medaille Trust works with a variety of Police Forces and other law enforcement agencies such as the Gangmasters' Licensing Authority, Border Force, HM Revenue and Customs, National Crime Agency and others. It is particularly proud of it's close links to the Metropolitan Police's Human Trafficking and Kidnap Unit. The Trust is also privileged to have been appointed the Coordinator of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership sponsored by the local Police and Crime Commissioner. A dedicated Police Liaison Officer was appointed in 2016.

### Miscellaneous

On specific subjects, related to trafficking, where the Trust feels it has experience or knowledge that should be heard, it engages in campaigning and lobbying aided by its Patrons, Baroness Cox and Mr Rupert Everett. The Chair of Trustees is Brother Francis Patterson from the Order of the Brothers of Christian Instruction. The CEO is Dr Mike Emberson and Caritas Salford provides administrative support. Contact details are:

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