

## The theme for Day for Life, June 17 2018, is Human Trafficking

**Day for Life** is the day in the Catholic Church's year dedicated to raising awareness about the meaning and value of human life at every stage and in every condition. This year's *Day for Life* is celebrated on Sunday, 17 June 2018 and this year's theme is human trafficking. Caritas Anti-Trafficking, working with the Santa Marta Group and the Medaille Trust will launch a major initiative in the Diocese to raise awareness on human trafficking and modern day slavery.



In March, Caritas Anti-Trafficking organised a Question Time type event in Crosby for Edmund Rice schools. Chaired by Mark Wiggin of Caritas a strong team of panellists from the Santa Marta Group, Medaille Trust and Lancashire Constabulary answered questions from representatives from seven secondary schools. This is just one example of what Caritas is doing to raise awareness amongst adults and young people.

The figure for the number of slaves in the UK is often cited as 10-13,000, but there could be many more.

Lancashire Police targeted a sex trafficking ring centred on Blackburn which led to the rescue of women in Blackburn, Preston, Manchester, Luton and Northampton. Nine men have been sentenced and five men and a woman await trial. Forty one people suspected of being trapped in a modern day slavery ring were rescued in Liverpool. They were put to work in food processing and packaging



factories in Manchester. Victims of sexual exploitation or labour exploitation are brought to the UK from Eastern Europe. UK homeless men are picked up by traffickers and forced to work on agricultural sites and elsewhere. Nigerian children and women are held in domestic servitude. Vietnamese children and men are locked in cannabis factories. Modern Day Slavery thrives in car washes and nail bars,

In a Modern Slavery Police Transformation Summary published in March 2018 there were at least 568 live Modern Slavery police operations being undertaken across all policing regions involving 1391 potential victims. The difficulty of gaining victim testimony is so great that convictions are few and many victims simply disappear, often no doubt back into the hands of the traffickers. Modern Day Slavery is a crime hidden in plain sight, at service outlets, canvassing for work on your doorstep and sometimes in health centres and hospitals. We tend to shy away from the poor and downtrodden and mostly they go unnoticed.

The Police desperately need public intelligence to fight this heinous crime and Caritas Salford Anti-Trafficking raises awareness on the issue in churches, schools and with groups of adults. On June 17 in partnership with the Santa Marta Group and the Medaille Trust we will provide awareness raising resources for Diocesan churches including a card for ever parishioner which will give the signs of human trafficking and what to do if someone sees something that doesn't look right and probably isn't.