



PRESS RELEASE  
JANUARY 3, 2010

CONTACT: SR. PATRICIA CROWLEY, O.S.B.  
(773) 764-2413, Ext. 230

**ILLINOIS BISHOPS AND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS  
OF ILLINOIS CALL FOR THE END OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

CHICAGO – As we commemorate National Migration Week (January 3-9) and approach National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (January 11), the Catholic Bishops of Illinois and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious of Illinois (LCWR, Region 8) call for the end of human trafficking, a “modern day form of slavery.” In a joint statement, the Catholic Bishops and LCWR, Region 8 leaders call attention to the “tragic denial of human rights” and urge all to pray for human trafficking victims. Furthermore, the statement calls for all to “observe the annual National Human Trafficking Awareness Day and to participate in legislative advocacy efforts that promote the dignity of trafficked persons.” Catholic institutions are also urged to participate in programs to assist victims of human trafficking.

Approximately 2.5 million persons are victims of human trafficking, which is the movement of people through violence, deception or coercion for forced labor, servitude, or prostitution. In 2005, Illinois passed a law to criminalize human trafficking and began the Illinois’ Rescue and Restore Campaign to combat human trafficking and provide assistance to victims. In cooperation with the goals of the Campaign, the Catholic Bishops and LCWR, Region 8 call on Catholics and all people of good will to become educated and aware of human trafficking and to participate in “concerted efforts to prevent and eliminate the ongoing practice of trading in human lives.”

The joint statement from the Catholic Bishops of Illinois and LCWR, Region 8 is attached. For further information, please contact Sr. Patricia Crowley, O.S.B. at (773) 764-2413, extension 230.