HILDEGARD WELCOMES PHOENIX RISING

When it looked as though the Hildegard House Catholic Worker community would not be able to sustain long-term live-in hospitality, we asked our original guests, with whom we formed committed and long-term community, for their advice. Should we pack up the house and dissolve the community, or is there a role for Hildegard House to play?

With numerous meetings, deep community discernment, and prayer, Hildegard House Catholic Worker community accepted the invitation to support and host Phoenix Rising: A drop-in hospitality program run by and for victims and survivors of human sex-trafficking. This is what they offer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHOENIX RISING PROGRAM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Offering Day time hospitality to Women who have experienced Human Sex Trafficking by referral. Starting the first weekend in May. Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays from 9am-3pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Shower</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Laundry (up to 2 loads)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Light breakfast and simple lunch on site</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Clothes (From Donations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Toiletries (From Donations)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Movies (cable and Netflix coming soon)</td>
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Referral by e-mail at 4survivorsbysurvivors@gmail.com

Members of the Hildegard House Catholic Worker community and members of the Phoenix Rising program will live together at the house. Phoenix Rising members make all the decisions on how to reach out and provide services to those who have experienced sex-trafficking and the Catholic Worker members will be on hand to offer support and friendship as well as material resources to keep the house livable and functional.

While we have our separate roles to play, we are committed to the common good, we will embrace the God-given dignity of all creation, and we will recognize the universality of the call to love one another which manifests itself in the teachings of the great faith-filled traditions. We will also continue to expose, protest and resist injustice, war, racism, and violence of all forms.

We are still not tax-exempt. Through our faith in the Spirit, we look to the generosity of our friends and neighbors to sustain this work.
THE AIMS AND MEANS OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER

When we examine our society, which is generally called capitalist (because of its methods of producing and controlling wealth) and is bourgeois (because of prevailing concern for acquisition and material interests, and its emphasis on respectability and mediocrity), we find it far from God's justice.

---In economics, private and state capitalism bring about an unjust distribution of wealth, for the profit motive guides decisions. Those in power live off the sweat of others' brows, while those without power are robbed of a just return for their work. Usury (the charging of interest above administrative costs) is a major contributor to the wrongdoing intrinsic to this system. We note, especially, how the world debt crisis leads poor countries into greater deprivation and a dependency from which there is no foreseeable escape. Here at home, the number of hungry and homeless and unemployed people rises in the midst of increasing affluence.

---In labor, human need is no longer the reason for human work. Instead, the unbridled expansion of technology, necessary to capitalism and viewed as "progress," holds sway. Jobs are concentrated in productivity and administration for a "high-tech," war-related, consumer society of disposable goods, so that laborers are trapped in work that does not contribute to human welfare. Furthermore, as jobs become more specialized, many people are excluded from meaningful work or are alienated from the products of their labor. Even in farming, agribusiness has replaced agriculture, and, in all areas, moral restraints are run over roughshod, and a disregard for the laws of nature now threatens the very planet.

---In politics, the state functions to control and regulate life. Its power has burgeoned hand in hand with growth in technology, so that military, scientific and corporate interests get the highest priority when concrete political policies are formulated. Because of the sheer size of institutions, we tend towards government by bureaucracy--that is, government by nobody. Bureaucracy, in all areas of life, is not only impersonal, but also makes accountability, and, therefore, an effective political forum for redressing grievances, next to impossible.

---In morals, relations between people are corrupted by distorted images of the human person. Class, race and gender often determine personal worth and position within society, leading to structures that foster oppression. Capitalism further divides society by pitting owners against workers in perpetual conflict over wealth and its control. Those who do not "produce" are abandoned, and left, at best, to be "processed" through institutions. Spiritual destitution is rampant, manifested in isolation, madness, promiscuity and violence.

---The arms race stands as a clear sign of the direction and spirit of our age. It has extended the domain of destruction and the fear of annihilation, and denies the basic right to life. There is a direct connection between the arms race and destitution. "The arms race is an utterly treacherous trap, and one which injures the poor to an intolerable degree." (Gaudium et Spes)

* * *

In contrast to what we see around us, as well as within ourselves, stands St. Thomas Aquinas' doctrine of the Common Good, a vision of a society where the good of each member is bound to the good of the whole in the service of God.

To this end, we advocate:

---Personalism, a philosophy which regards the freedom and dignity of each person as the basis, focus and goal of all metaphysics and morals. In following such wisdom, we move away from a self-centered individualism toward the good of the other. This is to be done by taking personal responsibility for changing conditions, rather than looking to the state or other institutions to provide impersonal "charity." We pray for a Church renewed by this philosophy and for a time when all those who feel excluded from participation are welcomed with love, drawn by the gentle personalism Peter Maurin taught.

---A decentralized society, in contrast to the present big- ness of government, industry, education, health care and agriculture. We encourage efforts such as family farms, rural and urban land trusts, worker ownership and management of small factories, homesteading projects, food, housing and other cooperatives--any effort in which money can once more become merely a medium of exchange, and human beings are no longer commodities.

---A "green revolution," so that it is possible to rediscover the proper meaning of our labor and our true bonds with the land; a distributist communitarianism, self-sufficient through farming, crafting and appropriate technology; a radically new society where people will rely on the fruits of their own toil and labor; associations of mutuality, and a sense of fairness to resolve conflicts.
Next Steps
Michele Naar-Obed

The catholic workers of Hildegard House have had a steep learning curve in understanding the complex issues of human sex-trafficking. We have struggled with providing hospitality that is good and meaningful and that helps to restore dignity and humanity to women who have been reduced to a commodity and slave.

The physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual damage from this form of slavery and dehumanization is intense and we have learned that healing and moving beyond the victim stage is long-term and non-linear. There are many steps forward, backwards and off to the side.

With everyone of our guests here at Hildegard House, we have been able to see the resilient and loving sacred spirit that is inherently theirs. Even if it was just a momentary glimpse, a split-second smile or a brief twinkle of life in their eyes, it was there. Their light was not entirely overcome by the darkness of the evil that was perpetrated upon them.

As victim morphed into survivor, some stayed close to Hildegard House to help welcome the new ones. They created welcome baskets and made welcome posters to hang on the walls. They created spa night and support groups and now are on hand to comfort more of the afflicted through offering day hospitality. Their program, Phoenix Rising, is for survivors by survivors.

The catholic workers in the community are the support system, but we are realizing that we can and should be more than a support system. Now, more than ever, we are trying to rise to the task of afflicting the comfortable. We have to address the demand side of human sex-trafficking. We have to look at our society’s shortcomings that allows an “industry” that capitalizes on the sale of human bod-ies, and thrives on exploitation, to grow into a multi-billion dollar “business”.

Again, we have a steep learning curve but we can look to our elders who began to address this issue and made the connections between capitalism, war and exploitation. Where they were able to shed some light into this rotten system, we are tasked with not only dismantling it, but transforming it.

The road to transformation will not be an easy one. Somehow we have to start believing in the common good. This is a universal teaching. For us at the catholic worker, we find it in the Sermon on the Mount and in the Beatitudes. But this is a theme that runs throughout the Koran, the Torah, and the teachings of the Aboriginal cultures.

How do we make these teachings real in our world? We read, we study, and we listen. For many of us, listening to the cries of the exploited requires us to go outside of our comfort zones, but catholic workers around the country are taking these steps forward and are opening up avenues for change and exchange.

Now is the time for the meek to inherit the earth.

Where were the saints to try to change the social order, not to just minister to the slaves, but to do away with slavery?

Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness
Our problems stem from our acceptance of this filthy rotten system – Dorothy Day

Googling “capitalism and human sex-trafficking” leads you to some interesting reads. Here are a few titles and excerpts. You can find the rest of the article on line if you want to know more.

May 31, 2016 // At Mississippi College

The Ugly Connection Between Capitalism And Human Trafficking Most Americans Ignore

Most Americans who condemn sex-slavery, miss the connection between trafficking and our own economics.

Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery
By Siddharth Kara

The structures of Western capitalism, as spread through the process of economic ... Sex trafficking is one of the ugliest contemporary actualizations of global capitalism......

From A World to Win News Service:

Capitalism, the Sex Trade and the Oppression of Women
March 31, 2013 | Revolution Newspaper | revcom.us

The so-called sex industry generates billions of dollars for the imperialist world economy. It has become an integral part of world capitalism and its functioning, both economically and ideologically.

Capitalism & Sex Trafficking: My Musings on the Communist Manifesto
Jan 10, 2011 | By: Michelle Brock

Capitalism, therefore, exacerbates sex trafficking and prostitution on two levels. First, it creates a global structure in which wealthy countries, corporations, and individuals get wealthier by exploiting the rest of the world. This creates groups of vulnerable people who are easy for traffickers to target. Second, it breeds entitlement and greed, which ultimately push men into the night to pay for their fantasies.

When Sex Trafficking Goes Unnoticed in America

Many cases go unreported, making it a difficult crime for law enforcement personnel to spot.

The Department of Homeland Security defines human trafficking as a “modern-day form of slavery involving the illegal trade of people for exploitation or commercial gain.”
Twin Cities area braces for Super Bowl sex trafficking

Super Bowl, Ryder Cup expected to bring uptick in sale of women and girls
(Minneapolis Star Tribune)

The FBI recently reported that sex trafficking, much of it involving children, is the fastest-growing organized crime in the U.S. and that victims are regularly transported for sale at “lucrative venues” such as major sporting events.

Sold like merchandise

Trafficking has become the commercial exploitation of humans, packaged and sold much like any other online merchandise, Ali said.

Ali, in Washington County, said large events attract sex trafficking because “it involves the basic economic principle of supply and demand. When the demand is high, the supply increases.”

Ahead of the game on sex trafficking during Super Bowl

Stephanie Dickrell, sdickrell@stcloudtimes.com
Published 7:00 a.m. CT Dec. 10, 2016 | Updated 9:42 a.m. CT Dec. 10, 2016

The Women’s Foundation commissioned a study to investigate the often-quoted claim that Super Bowls are the single-largest trafficking event of the year.

What it found: There’s a short-lived uptick in online advertising during any large event, not only Super Bowls, but also trade shows and other conventions.

"It's not unique to the Super Bowl. It's every political, religious, sports, conventions or events," said Rebecca Kotz, trafficking services coordinator at the Central Minnesota Sexual Assault Center

"It's not necessarily more people or new people being trafficked. But whenever there is a big event where single men are congregating to a certain area, (traffickers are) going to move all of those already being trafficked to this destination, just because the demand is higher," Kotz said. "That's why we see an increase up here during deer-hunting season and fishing opener."

"It's so outrageous, from a public policy standpoint, what we're allowing to happen." — Abigail Kuzma, office of the Indiana Attorney General

Indiana officials used the Super Bowl they hosted in 2012 to look at how major events impact demand for commercial sex, and whether demand is increasing year over year.

Researchers counted the increase in adult services ads placed during the time period of the Super Bowl. While they can't identify which ads involved people who are trafficked, researchers do know trafficked victims are commonly sold on sites like Backpage.com.
World War – 1914

As President Wilson said,
The World War was a commercial war.

But a commercial war had to be idealized
So it was called a War for Democracy

But the War for Democracy did not bring Democracy
It brought Bolshevism to Russia, Fascism to Italy
Nazism to Germany.

Wealth Producing Maniacs

When John Calvin legalized money-lending at interest,
He made the bank account the standard of values.

When the bank account became the standard of values,
People ceased to produce for use and began to produce
for profit.

When people began to produce for profits.
They became wealth-producing maniacs.

When people became wealth-producing maniacs,
They produced too much wealth.

When people found out that they had produced too
much wealth,
They went on an orgy of wealth-destruction
And destroyed ten million lives besides.

CATHOLIC WORKER INSPIRATIONS: DOROTHY DAY ON CAPITALISM

Marxist Communism has been condemned by Catholics for its destruction of family life. What then of capitalism, which creates an ever-growing proletariat ground down to such a level of insecurity and misery that decent family life is almost impossible? Probably we have all wondered about the dismal future of young people finishing school these days, with years of sterile learning behind them and no prospects of a job ahead. There are countless thousands of them well on in their twenties today who have never had a job and whose chances decrease as the years pass. Capitalism bars them from living by the fruits of the labor they would willingly give, and marriage is out of the question. (1930’s)

...[W]e still do not see why there should be such a furor in the Church while the great mass of priests of the Church go along wholeheartedly with Capitalism, which Count de La Torre in Osservatore Romano¹ called a cancer on the social body of the Church, and worse than Communism. – The Catholic Worker, March 1954.

We need to change the system. We need to overthrow, not the government, as the authorities are always accusing the Communists of conspiring to teach to do, but this rotten, decadent, putrid industrial capitalist system which breeds such suffering in the whitened sepulcher of New York. – The Catholic Worker, September 1956.

Did that mean he was confirming me, us, in our mission to do away with war, change the social order, abolish capitalism, overthrow the State (non-violently)?

The Duty of Delight: The Diaries of Dorothy Day, entry: May 15, 1969
In September, 2016, the Hildegard House community and supporters launched candle-lit lanterns onto Lake Superior Harbor and sent this message to the community: **To all those who are suffering silently in human sex-trafficking, we the people who have been there, would like to tell you that there is life after sex-trafficking.** *We know how it feels to be stuck in that lifestyle. Despite all the obstacles, we also know it’s possible to leave that life behind. We know it is possible to escape and heal from our addictions and trauma. So let’s start imagining a life without trafficking and negativity because it is possible. If you believe in yourself and your dreams with a motivating passion. We hope one day you will believe in your capabilities and self-worth because once you do, anything is possible.*

We want to do this again and we invite you to participate by sponsoring the lighting of a lantern for $20. Attend the ceremony. If you can’t attend, we will light and float your lantern for you. Send a check to Hildegard House and indicate for lantern launch in the memo.

All proceeds go to the Hildegard House Catholic Worker to fund the Phoenix Rising day hospitality and services.

**Saturday, September 9, 2017  7:30PM**

Harbor Drive and 5th Ave W. At the end of the lakewalk directly behind the Aquarium

Call Hildegard House at 218 722-2231 for more details

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**WHAT CHANGES**

Naomi Shihab Nye, 1952

My father's hopes travel with me years after he died.
Someday we will learn how to live.
All of us surviving without violence
never stop dreaming how to cure it.
What changes?
Crossing a small street in Daha Sauk, nut shop shuttered,
a handkerchief lies crumpled in the street,
maroon and white, like my father had, from Jordan.
Perfectly placed in his pocket under his smile for years.
He would have given it to anyone.

(Submitted by Mary Kay Thornton)
In keeping with the Catholic Worker tradition of opening up ways in which many people can participate in the life of Hildegard House, we asked for 50 people to pledge $10 per month for one year. Thanks to a great response, we have made it through 4 years with ample electricity, heat, water, phone communication, house insurance and property taxes. That’s where the money goes and that’s why those pledges play a vital role in the life of Hildegard House. We are not a tax exempt organization because we are convinced that justice and the works of mercy should be acts of conscience, without need for governmental approval, regulation or reward. Your investment is leading to a much greater return, which is the breathing of life back into the spirit of all who walk through our doors. Please can we do it another year? Thank you to all those who have consistently made good on your pledges and if you haven’t made a pledge yet, we’d love to have you join in. Pledges can be made in monthly, quarterly, bi-annual or a one-time payment.

Contact: hildegardhouseduluthcw@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook: Hildegard House Catholic Worker. For Phoenix Rising: 4survivorsbysurvivors@gmail.com. If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive our newsletters or notification of events, please email or send us your postal address

Who are we: Laura Hoelter, Treasure Jenkins, Greg and Michele Obed, Judy Sausen, Mary Kay Thornton, Sr. Linda Wiggins.