



SCNY PJIC Office Update – January 2026:
National Human Trafficking Prevention Month
By Diandra Garcia-Heredia

In response to the ongoing reality of human trafficking—and grounded in our Vincentian mission to serve those most vulnerable—the Sisters of Charity of New York’s PJIC Office invites our community to participate in a four-week Vincentian journey, “Unmasking Exploitation: A Vincentian Call to Awareness and Action”.

A Four-Week Vincentian Journey

Week 1 – SEE: Opening Our Eyes

We begin by grounding ourselves in prayer and reflection, asking God to open our eyes to the reality of human trafficking and its impact on individuals and families.

Goal: Awaken awareness, compassion, and commitment to justice.

- Click on the 2026 National Human Trafficking Awareness Day Prayer Service & Toolkit found [here](#).
- Symbolic Action [here](#): Light a blue candle or wear a blue ribbon in solidarity with survivors. (Wear Blue Day is officially January 11)
- Reflect on the life of St. Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of survivors of trafficking.

*[St. Josephine Bakhita’s](#) feast day is celebrated each year on **February 8**, the anniversary of her death in 1947. The Catholic Church also observes this date as the **International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking**, honoring her as a former slave and patron saint of trafficking survivors. Go to end of toolkit to download calendar [here](#).*



Photo Credit: USCCB

Week 2 – JUDGE: Understanding the Web of Exploitation

This week invites deeper learning and discernment—examining the root causes of trafficking and listening to survivor voices.

- If you have not watched the January 5, 2026 “Unmasking Exploitation” webinar on root causes such as poverty, migration, or gender inequality, hosted by the Vincentian Family Justice Representatives, view [here](#).
- Learn from survivor stories [here](#) and partner organizations like the Lifeway Network [here](#).
- Optional: Share educational discussion guides with parishes, schools, or ministry teams like this [here](#) from the Alliance to End Human Trafficking.

Week 3 – ACT: Advocacy and Accompaniment

Faith calls us to action—standing with survivors through advocacy and tangible support.

- Contact legislators (<https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>) to support the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (H.R. 1144). Learn about it [here](#).
- Donate to local safe houses or survivor-support programs. Click [here](#) to find out ways to donate to LifeWay Network,

an organization that Sisters of Charity of New York have strongly supported.

LifeWay Network

PO Box 8654

Tarrytown, NY 10591

- Share a reflection or story of action with the SCNY PJIC Office.

Digarcia@scny.org; 718-879-5261

Week 4 – SUSTAIN: Keeping the Call Alive

We close the month by recommitting ourselves to long-term engagement and accompaniment.

- Conclude with a prayer service or personal pledge for ongoing action through the 2026 National Human Trafficking Awareness Day Prayer Service & Toolkit [here](#) (pgs. 10 & 15).
- Commit to continued education, advocacy, or direct service throughout the year.
- Consider using the shared witness hashtag: #UnmaskingExploitationVinFam

While January brings focus to anti-trafficking efforts, the call continues year-round. Together, as a Vincentian community, we walk alongside survivors toward dignity, justice and hope. Stay informed with the Alliance to End Human Trafficking’s *Stop Trafficking! Newsletter* [here](#) for monthly news, updates, and advocacy calls to action.