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People are NOT for sale

Please support programs to combat modern slavery

If you have donated to ACRATH this year – thank you for supporting victims and survivors of human trafficking. If you have not donated, please consider supporting ACRATH's projects and programs. We hope to raise \$350,000 by 30 July 2023, the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.

This year's campaign is highlighting ACRATH's need for sustainable funding in order to continue programs and support victims and survivors of human trafficking. ACRATH has made a difference to the scourge of modern slavery in the past 18 years with huge support from schools, philanthropists, the community and religious congregations.

ACRATH is an advocate, educator and direct responder, working against human trafficking. We have always taken a long-term view. This was evident recently, where in the recent Federal Budget, the decision was made to offer victims and survivors of human trafficking the opportunity to access support without, in the first instance, being involved with law enforcement agencies. A pilot program will be provided for alternative processes. ACRATH with several other partners, has advocated over the past 17 years for this important change in direction. Similarly, after long-term advocacy, the Federal Budget has provided for the establishment of a Federal Anti-Slavery Commissioner.

We are asking for one off donations, or if possible a three-year commitment, to ensure our existing programs can be maintained, and new projects can be initiated when needs arise. Funds raised will go to the following programs:

- Our ACRATH Companionship program, where we train and support volunteers to walk alongside a victim and survivor, much as a good neighbour would do.
- Our awareness raising program in Australian public hospitals so Emergency Department staff are trained to recognise a trafficked person and also know how to refer them on safely.
- Our advocacy campaign with Members of Federal Parliament this year to get a federal compensation scheme that can be accessed by victims and survivors.

In this newsletter we shine a spotlight on some of our loyal supporters and hope you might follow their lead. We ask YOU to help us to continue our important work and spread the message that PEOPLE ARE NOT FOR SALE!

[Donate](#) today.

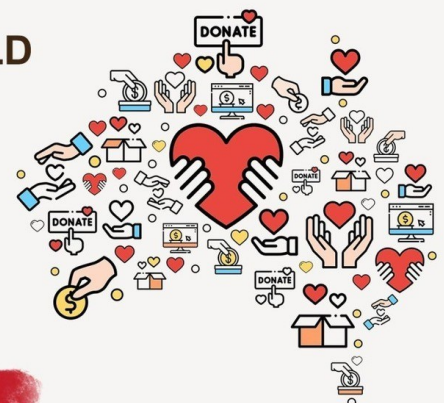
ACRATH
**OUR VISION OF A WORLD
FREE OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKING**

WE ADVOCATE

WE CAMPAIGN

WE RAISE AWARENESS

WE OFFER COMPANIONSHIP



Wise women support ACRATH

Women's Wisdom in the Church (*WWITCH), a group of Catholic and Anglican women founded by Dr Claire Renkin and Dr Eleanor Flynn in 2018, is an ACRATH donor. Eleanor, the group's media officer, explained why WWITCH supports ACRATH's work.

When did you first learn about the work of ACRATH?

WWITCH is a group of mainly Catholic women who meet regularly to discuss women's place in the Church. Many of our members had heard about ACRATH from various sources but particularly those in the Brunswick and Moreland community were aware of Sister Therese Power rsm and her work in ACRATH so we invited her to come and talk to us about ACRATH and its mission.

Your organisation has donated money recently to ACRATH. There must be many demands on your resources, what motivated your organisation to make this donation to ACRATH?

After Sister Therese's presentation we were much more aware of the work of ACRATH and the need for funds to continue the work. We don't have a regular source of funds, but we were able to provide a donation because of money remaining from our evening presenting Sr Joan Chittister osb in May 2022.

Catholic organisations and women religious have worked to combat human trafficking globally in areas where they live and work. Do you think here in Australia we have a sense of the presence of human trafficking?

Sadly, I don't think many Australians are aware of the magnitude of human trafficking or the suffering it causes, particularly for vulnerable women. We know that many Catholic organisations, especially women religious, are working to combat human trafficking in Australia and across the world. I am aware that the ambassadors to the Vatican have also been involved in this work for many years, especially those from Australia.

Your work must have taken you far and wide; have you encountered people affected by human trafficking?

I remember a conversation with an English friend last year about the possibility that the young woman who had recently done her nails might have been trafficked. My friend who is a police chaplain considered the woman's story was very concerning and she seemed traumatised by her experiences. I'm also aware of the issue of forced marriages and dowries in some cultural groups in the world including Australia, as a previous colleague works in that area. I haven't personally been aware that someone I've been in contact with might have been trafficked. Since our discussion about ACRATH at our WWITCH meeting I have been considering the possibility much more.

Human trafficking is hidden in plain sight - forced marriage, forced labour, tainted supply chains - it can sometimes seem hopeless - how do you find hope in the face of suffering?

Like all Christians I find hope in the love of God for all God's people, and in the knowledge that many of God's people are working hard to combat the suffering and trauma of trafficking. All of us can support those working in the area as well as raising awareness of the issue with the wider public. We need to remind our politicians that there are actions they could take to help stamp out trafficking in all its forms.

What would you say to other people considering making a donation to ACRATH?

I would commend ACRATH to anyone thinking of donating to a group which not only raises awareness of the problem but seeks in many practical ways to assist vulnerable people caught up in trafficking. ACRATH provides clear information about the types of trafficking, the size of the problem, and what they are doing to combat the issue and to support the victims.

**Dr Eleanor Flynn said WWITCH "came together because we were appalled at the very poor response of the Australian Bishops to the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We provided submissions to the Plenary Council, the Synod on Synodality and collaborated with other members of ACCCR (Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform) in webinars. In 2022 we organised the visit of Joan Chittister osb to Australia. We are organising an ecumenical evensong liturgy at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, on Sunday September 3, 2023 at 4 pm to celebrate the feast of St Phoebe, the first deacon.*



Always hope for change

K and D* are Directors of the Jack and Hedy Brent Foundation, longtime donors to ACRATH. The regularity of the Foundation's support, together with other organisations, has made it possible for ACRATH to advocate for major policy changes over the years. One recent example is the Federal Government's Budget decision in May to offer victims and survivors of human trafficking the opportunity to access support without involvement with law enforcement. This momentous achievement came after a 17-year battle by ACRATH.

K and D know it isn't helpful getting despondent about the abuse of human rights they see around the world. They use their money to support those individuals and organisations that they believe 'do the heavy lifting', including ACRATH. They are hopeful that things can change and injustices can be made right. They think that many people assume human trafficking is elsewhere, off their radar. But it happens here. Human trafficking takes a different form now to what many people associate with slavery, but in many countries it is still the poor who are vulnerable to being trafficked.

They believe that change can happen and it is about working out the best way to bring about change. Perhaps aid is the solution for a trafficked individual who might be in danger of being sent back to their home country, or advocacy to bring about bigger changes. Advocacy is so important and can take a long time.

"Organisations like ACRATH create the opportunity for considered responses to issues," they said. They hope that one day human trafficking will end.

**Names withheld for privacy reasons*

Students throw support behind ACRATH

Each year hundreds of young women graduate from Ave Maria College in Aberfeldie, Melbourne, knowing about human trafficking and committed to fighting against the terrible injustice. Through their annual fundraising events they have also helped ACRATH run programs and projects to combat slavery. In the past four years the students have raised almost \$4000.

Patrick Hogan, the college's Director of Catholic Identity and Mission, said fundraising initiatives for ACRATH had become a tradition and were led by the college's Year 11 and 12 Franciscan leaders.

"Women and children are so often the victims of human trafficking and I think the issue really resonates with our girls," Patrick said.

The girls' actions are informed by faith formation days held each year. In May ACRATH member Sr Therese Power rsm spoke to Ave Maria's Year 11 students at the faith formation day at Australian Catholic University in Melbourne. Sr Therese told the girls about human trafficking and her work as an ACRATH Companion, supporting victims and survivors of human trafficking to rebuild their lives. She spoke about the human trafficking hidden in plain sight here in Australia.

Patrick said many of the girls listening to Sr Therese were surprised to learn that human trafficking is so widespread.

This year's event has not yet been planned, but in 2022 the students raised \$349 at a choc toss. Senior students generously donated Fairtrade chocolate bars for the operation of the all school fundraiser, which saw students throw a gold coin in a bid to win themselves a chocolate bar. As well as the choc toss in September, the Year 11 students contributed to the buying of Christmas gifts for children affected by human trafficking. The gifts were given to Sr Therese who is well known to staff and students at Ave Maria.

Patrick said it was important to support ACRATH "because we educate our students to work towards creating a just world. Ave Maria has a strong history based on our Franciscan charism and Gospel values, of working with and supporting those most in need in our society".

Dan gives for good

Dr Dan Fleming is an ACRATH donor, giving regular donations as part of Give4Good (G4G), St Vincent's Health Australia's workplace giving program. Dan was appointed Group Manager of Ethics and Formation at SVHA in 2017, about the time that ACRATH and SVHA launched the [Human Trafficking Project](#), thought to be a first in Australia's health care sector. It was a groundbreaking effort to change the way hospitals respond to trafficked people and 'slavery proof' the goods and services they use.



The project looked at how trafficked people – who may present at any of SVHA's hospitals Australia-wide – can be identified and receive necessary treatment, support, referrals and access to services to facilitate their journey out of modern slavery. This includes women who have been sexually exploited, people facing forced marriage and people who have experienced forced labour.

In 2019 SVHA embarked on the *Advocates for Change* training program to help key staff identify and support vulnerable people who have been trafficked.

The work happening at SVHA was an eye opener for Dan who was familiar with human trafficking globally, but unaware of its prevalence in Australia.

"Once I found out more both about the problem and the work of ACRATH, I had a sense of familiarity: women religious were first responders to this need. This is the same as the story of St Vincent's: our story begins with women religious seeing a need and responding to it," Dan said.

"I did training with ACRATH and our then Group Mission Leader, Lisa McDonald, and discovered more about forced marriage, forced labour and supply chains and what we could do as a health and aged care provider to combat human trafficking."

"In my lectures in ethics, I had regularly used the global example of chocolate manufacturing and the risk of forced labour in supply chains, but the training showed me that slavery occurs under other banners and can be hidden in plain sight here in Australia."

Dan said supporting ACRATH, which has volunteers working across Australia, was an easy choice for him because his life's work, as an ethicist, is about protecting the human dignity of all people, especially those who are vulnerable in any way – including those subject to human trafficking.

Many SVHA staff are now trained to identify, support and refer to appropriate services people whom they believe have been trafficked. Several people have been helped leave slavery-like conditions after being treated at various SVHA hospitals across the eastern states of Australia. Staff were empowered to respond to these needs well because of ACRATH's training and support.

ACRATH needs core business funding and additional funding for special projects.

Please consider a regular donation to ACRATH so that we can plan ahead. Thanks.

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or <https://acrath.org.au/donate>

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible

NATIONAL OFFICE

54 Beaconsfield Pde
Albert Park, VIC 3206

www.acrath.org.au

office@acrath.org.au