



CHILDREN OF THE IMMACULATE HEART

Restore All Things in Christ ~ Serving Survivors of Human Trafficking

April-May 2019

A Message from the President

Dear Friends in Christ,

Christ is risen! I hope you all had a beautiful Holy Week and are enjoying this Easter season that is so full of light and joy. At Easter Vigil, there are several readings from Exodus and Deuteronomy recalling to our minds the liberation of the Israelite people from the hands of the Egyptians. At this liturgy there is a beautiful chant of the song Moses sang after crossing the Red Sea: “Let us sing to the Lord, for He is gloriously triumphant; horse and chariot He has cast into the sea; He has become my helper and protector unto salvation. He is my God, I praise Him; the God of my father, I extol Him. He is the Lord who destroys wars; the Lord is His name.”

Of course, this historical event was only a prefigurement of baptism, which is traditionally celebrated on Easter Sunday. Baptism is the true “Red Sea” that we cross, passing from death to life, from slavery to sin, to the freedom of the children of God. This freedom, of course, is only possible because of the Pascal Mystery, the free offering the Incarnate Word who gave us his flesh and blood on Holy Thursday, which was fulfilled in His Passion on Good Friday, and His resurrection and ascension into heaven forty days later.

The work of Children of the Immaculate Heart is meant to be an extension of all of this. Sometimes the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt is read in a too-political tone, as is the freedom of human trafficking victims. When God told Moses to tell Pharaoh to “let My people go”, it was originally a request to depart into the desert for only a few days so that the Hebrew people could worship the true God in the way He asked. Almighty God wanted to free His people from the worship of false gods, from the spiritual slavery they were under in Egypt that eventually took them quite some time to conquer, wandering for forty years in the desert. This is similar to our work in that we are not only working for the physical freedom of those we serve, but even more profoundly than that, we are working for their spiritual freedom.



Fra Angelico's Resurrection

This means that there is more happening than what the legal definition of trafficking can capture: federal legislation defines human trafficking as anything using “force, fraud, or coercion” to induce labor or commercial sex acts. I do not mean to minimize the evil involved in force, fraud, and coercion, but want to point out how we miss the mark when we limit the evil involved in sex trafficking to the person not having a choice in the matter. If someone had a choice to live this lifestyle, it would be legally considered prostitution, which aside from being illegal, is not the life any little girl dreams of wanting. So what is at stake here? What is the deeper freedom that is also involved in helping someone get out of “the life”?

Put briefly, it is the freedom Christ came to bring us – the freedom to love and be loved, to stop using one another and allowing ourselves to be used because we do not know any other way to live. Sex trafficking happens because there are greedy people willing to sell another human being for their own profit and other people create a demand for this sale of human flesh. We know human trafficking is the second largest illegal industry worldwide and this is so because there are so many people with deep wounds who are led to buy and sell other persons, and girls are often taught from a young age to see themselves as objects – to have to look a certain way, act a certain way, etc., in order to be loved.

So the work we do at Children of the Immaculate Heart is primarily about letting Christ redeem people so that they can let themselves be loved by God and in so doing, learn to love others and most especially to love themselves. It is a fight in defense of chastity, which is a forgotten virtue about self-mastery that is necessary for true love to exist – loving the other for his/her own sake. Let us draw near to Jesus during this Easter season and ask Him to teach us how to love and to redeem us from all that keeps us captive.

Grace Williams, President/Executive Director

Thanks for attending our 2019 Gala

By Amy Sorensen, House Manager for The Refuge



On February 23rd, Children of the Immaculate Heart held its 6th annual Gala at Our Mother of Confidence Catholic Church. Cy Kellett from Catholic Answers did a wonderful job as our MC! He was not only entertaining, but he shared with us his compassion for victims of human trafficking. Kim Williams, case manager for CIH, was our first speaker and focused her talk on the mission of CIH what a blessing it was for CIH to take on all the women from her former program that closed last year! She spoke about the growth of the women and how much CIH has felt like home for herself and all of our new clients.

We were pleased to have Summer Stephan, San Diego's District Attorney, come and speak for us once again! She ignited everyone and focused her talk on where we have been as a County, where we are, and where we are going when it comes to combating human trafficking. She left people feeling like they were a viable effort in the cause and reaffirmed her support for our work. CIH President Grace Williams finished up the speeches with her passionate talk on culture and how it influences trafficking, and that true change will come when we acknowledge how much lust and unchastity are destroying us. She spoke about demand being a driving force behind the increase in sex trafficking, as well as the objectification of women and young girls. Ranch Catering provided a delicious Mediterranean meal and guests enjoyed our silent auction and dessert! The night generated over \$26,000 in donations, as well as providing the opportunity for people to learn, form relationships, and to get involved in our mission. We thank everyone who attended and all of our wonderful staff and volunteers. We are so blessed by all of you!



District Attorney Summer Stephan



MC, Cy Kellett, host of Catholic Answers Live



CIH Staff with Cy after the event



Our guests actively listen as our speakers share about this important apostolate!



Fr. Dorsa cutting the cake with our logo donated by Christine Hernandez!

CIH Supporters Invite Employee to go International!

By Jenna Christakis, CIH Office Manager

In January of this year, I was blessed with the opportunity to join a group of CIH supporters on a mission trip to Colombia and to World Youth Day (WYD) in Panama. It was my first time traveling out of the country and my first experience being on a WYD Pilgrimage. And, oh my, it was quite the experience!

In Colombia, we visited Gente Unida, a home for orphaned and abandoned minor children of both genders and various ages. In the United States, Gente Unida is represented by the Emiliani Project, a non profit organization dedicated to protecting and nurturing orphaned and abandoned children. These children are largely orphaned due to natural disasters and internal armed conflict. In Colombia, there are 500,000 children on the streets out of a population of 43 million. Living on the streets, two of the major areas of vulnerability for these children are sexual exploitation and sex trafficking. Since I work with victims of sex trafficking in the United States, this, of course, hit home for me. During my time at the children's home, I discovered how similar their stories of sexual wounds are to those whom we serve at Children of the Immaculate Heart.

Despite the immense trauma these children have experienced, they are the most joyful and kind souls I have met. I believe it is largely due to the strong presence of Jesus in each of the hearts of the children and the staff members. The Catholic faith is incorporated into their daily lives, from the chapel that they have on site to the daily prayers they say as a group. Gente Unida has become a new home for these children and



those within it have become their family. I look forward to returning again this Spring!

After visiting Colombia, my group headed to Panama for World Youth Day (WYD). In Panama, we were able to tour the historic city and join our fellow Catholics in the various WYD activities. Our adventures in Panama city included seeing the Panama Canal, visiting the ruins of Old Panama City, and going to the popular Biodiversity Museum, which was designed by famed architect Frank Gehry. We were also able to visit a few of the older churches in the city which existed during the times of infamous pirate invaders such as Captain Morgan!

The WYD activities were numerous! A few opportunities we had in addition to the main WYD program included venerating a relic of Mother Teresa, attending adoration, praying in front of the International Pilgrim Virgin Statue of Our Lady of Fatima, and, of course, seeing Pope Francis several times! On the last evening of our pilgrimage, we slept in an open dirt field under the stars with millions of people, from all over the world, as we awaited our chance to attend Mass with the Holy Father.

I will admit, there were a few trying times, but the positivity and cheerfulness of my group was quite impossible to squash and we were always able to power through them together! It was such a blessing to be able to experience my first mission trip and World Youth Day with such an amazing group of people! Thank you to Ahmad and Guillermina for their generous hearts in sponsoring me for this trip and to their children Edris, Nicolette, Sophia, and Sabrina for their friendship. A big thank you, also, to the other members of our group for making this trip

an unique and joyful experience! Especially, Fr. Martin of the Miles Christi Order of Priests who served as our spiritual guide during our journey.



CIH is Hiring!

The Refuge Teacher, Assistant House Manager, & Child Care Workers

Please go to our website childrenoftheimmaculateheart.com for more details or call our office at (619) 431-5537.

Spring Wine and Beer Tasting Event

Saturday, May 18th, 6:30pm-9:00pm



Please join us in supporting the survivors of sex trafficking that we serve by sipping fine wine and craft beer along with paired appetizers catered by Sahara Restaurant Catering. Many thanks to Claire Reiss for hosting this event at her home once again! Not only will you have a wonderful evening supporting our apostolate, but you will be able to hear the latest news about the opening of The Refuge, a residential therapeutic program for trafficked minor girls from Children of the Immaculate Heart's House Manager, Amy Sorensen. Rob Moscato will also speak about his work as a chaplain in juvenile hall working with trafficked minor girls. You will want to check out our silent auction as well!

For more information and ticket purchase please visit

<https://cih-wine2019.eventbrite.com> or call 619-431-5537

Also, if registering for more than one person, please provide the names of all guests by emailing officemanager.cih@gmail.com.

Free valet parking available with ticket purchase.



Children of the Immaculate Heart has a meal train for our weekly women's group. We hold a support/development group for our clients every week, giving them the opportunity to be together, support each other, and grow in their personal human development. If you are interested in cooking for our ladies, please visit this link!

<https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/q3nk7l>

CIH Wish List

- Alarm clocks
- Gift cards to Office Depot & STAPLES
- Pull out couch
- Wall mounts for bike (4)
- All-in-one micro-phone/amplifier system for event
- Gift cards to grocery stores
- 2X - 3X women's clothing
- Dry and canned food
- PowerPoint projector
- Duffle bags (5)
- Comforter (2)

CIH has a Car Donation Program!

Please consider donating your vehicle to CIH! *Car Easy* will come pick up your car, boat, or trailer whether it is running or not! Cars can be donated from anywhere in the country. To start the process just call 855-500-7433 or type <http://careasy.org/details?4567> into your web browser. Proceeds go to support our programs!



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