



## NEWS FROM LATIN AMERICA

Our annual assembly was held in Pueblo Libre, Lima, between February 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. All of the sisters participated and the Associates and Members of New Forms of Consecrated Life participated in the Mission Day. We were especially happy to welcome Sister Raymonde Maisonneuve, Congregational Leader, and Sister Claire Vanier, Community Life Field Coordinator, who provided us with their enthusiasm and leadership for some days of the Assembly. We were very grateful for their presence among us.



Between February 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, the entire Holy Cross Family, i.e., priests, brothers and sisters of the two branches of Holy Cross, met at Chaclacayo, Lima. We lived some precious moments





strengthening the ties  
among us.

Following these encounters, we had the great experience of celebrating Esmeralda Merma Camacho's perpetual vow ceremony on February 24<sup>th</sup>, which was held in the parish of *Nuestra Señora de la Asunción*, Chucuito, Puno. Father Simón Pedro Arnold, OSB, presided over this beautiful celebration. In attendance were the sisters of Holy Cross, Esmeralda's family and friends as well as diocesan clergy and many people from nearby rural communities of Camacani and Rinconada.

May our best wishes be with Sister Esmeralda in her commitment to the religious life in Holy Cross.

Hermelinda Cacasaca Chura, CSC



**NEWS FROM THE  
RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND SOLIDARITY  
MISSION GROUP OF THE U.S. SECTOR**

For over six years, we have been educating ourselves on the issue of human trafficking. Through reading, viewing DVDs on the topic, hearing from victims of trafficking, we became aware of

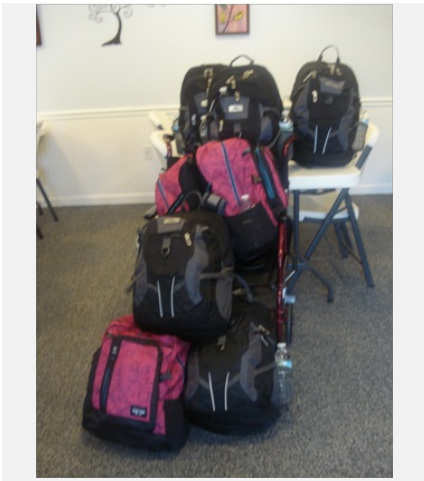


the enormity of the situation of human trafficking in the world, in our country and even in our own “backyards”.

This awareness spurred us to action; we wanted to become involved with victims of human trafficking. We started networking with Real Life Giving, a community outreach program which educates on trafficking in New Hampshire and encourages action and advocacy. Two years ago eight members of the group attended their workshop: *Human Trafficking 101*. This past fall we invited Real Life Giving to offer this same workshop to the sisters in the U.S. Sector and lay persons. There were about sixty in attendance. We plan to sponsor it again so more people can be made aware of this horrific issue.

We have also been involved in their Backpack Campaign. These backpacks provide personal care items to victims and at-risk adults and youth. Last year ten backpacks were prepared and given to Real Life Giving for distribution to these victims. With the help of the Sisters, Associates and Companions in the U.S. Sector, we have just prepared eight more backpacks which were given to Donna Plourde, Director of Real Life Giving, when she attended our Rights of Women and Solidarity Mission Group meeting on Monday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. We plan to continue networking with this organization in the future by using every opportunity to learn more about this topic.

Lucille Gravel, CSC



**JOSEPHINE BAKHITA**

**PATRON SAINT OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS**





On February 8, 2017, Pope Francis declared Saint Josephine Bakhita, former slave, the patron saint of trafficking victims. This beautiful icon of Saint Josephine Bakhita was offered as a gift to the Rights of Women and Solidarity Mission Group by Sister Françoise DeMers, a former member of our Mission Group.

Fran recently had the opportunity to study in Spain with a Russian iconographer. While there, she wrote many icons, Saint Josephine Bakhita being one of them. This icon will circulate among the members of the group and will have a prominent place at our meetings as we always pray to Saint Josephine Bakhita for the victims of human trafficking. It will raise our awareness and awaken our passion for actions to stop such a terrible practice. We are most grateful to Fran for her generous gift and for sharing her artistic talent with us.

Eleanor LaBranche, CSC



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