

1. Canada/US province

City of Saskatoon – Diocesan Social Justice Dept & parishes continuing the postcard campaign in view of the 2010 Olympics re trafficking of women;

-Partnership actions continue with “Nashi” to support Ukraine Safe Houses for Women who are rescued from trafficking. With Nashi a Day-long Workshop Oct 17 including guest speaker, Victor Malorek of W5 – introducing his new book *The Johns*.

-Re Climate Change - Province of Saskatchewan is planning to build 2 nuclear reactors on the North Saskatchewan River and one nuclear reactor at the Univ of Saskatchewan. They are on a watershed thus affecting millions of farmland acres and communities. Province-wide rallies are taking place to protest these gov. plans. This is a huge & devastating future prognosis. Protests involve much time & energy; collaboration at all levels & with all climate change groups and Anti-Uranium Mining Groups is on-going.

-Protests ongoing against gov plan to build a ‘NUCLEAR WASTE DUMP’ in northern Saskatchewan – do not want to become the “garbage can of Canada” [www.cleangreensask.ca](http://www.cleangreensask.ca)

City of Winnipeg

- Rossbrook House (Drop-in Centre where Sion sisters work) is a member of SEY (Sexually Exploited Youth Coalition) –a coalition of reps from Social Service agencies, youth serving agencies, police & provincial gov. SEY is implementing recommendations made after the death of a young sexually exploited woman. **One recommendation** has been approved for funding a rural healing lodge for young women who are sexually exploited. HOME (Hands of Mother Earth) will be culturally appropriate. **Second** initiative is establishing a Provincial Action Group – with reps of Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Metis Women’s Federation, Mother of Red Nations & Native Women’s Transition Centre. The group will aid in guiding the Manitoba Gov. in stopping abuse and exploitation of vulnerable women & girls. Along with this the province of Manitoba established an Integrated Task Force of the Winnipeg Police & Royal Canadian Mounted Police to give enhanced scrutiny to cases of missing and murdered women.

Canadian Federal Government Level: On Sept 30 the Canadian *Senate received Bill C- 268 to amend the Criminal Code* to make more severe the minimum sentences for offences involving trafficking of those under 18 yrs old. Pray that it is amended.

2. Australia/Philippines Province – Philippines –In REAL & Manila - sisters along with other religious leaders are putting pressure on the government to stop the rampant logging & deforestation of the Sierra Madre forest in order to prevent the massive flooding which has occurred there recently. This includes letters sent to the President since April to urge protection of Marikina Watershed as a protected area. This is a focus area which the Sion Ecojustice Group will work on over the coming year, including identifying other Australian Companies who have bought Lafayette Mining Shares &/or who are into mining & deforestation in the Philippines and other Pacific & Asian countries. Water [or lack of it] is also a crucial issue for us here. Work will be focused on this issue over the coming months.

Australia, Victoria – In the suburbs of Melbourne a Sion is working in a “Men’s Shed” (now more than 85 such centres are running in Victoria). These deliver programs to enable men to have different understandings/attitudes that value & respect women. Many are African refugees who are finding dignity & value in learning about local customs, legislation & settling in Australia. All toward helping their children & themselves stand tall as they begin life again within their Australian context & participate more fully within their local communities.

Re: ‘STOP the TRAFFICKING’ – Sion supports the initiatives of Australian Religious, including ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans)

### **3. UK- Ireland Province - Report: January 2008 – August 2009**

#### **A. Internal to Sion:**

For 3 months at the beginning of 2008 the whole province focused on UNANIMA. Information was provided, relevant websites shared and each sister encouraged to discover what is actually happening in her area and throughout the world. It was a time of learning and heightening awareness and as a result people in the province are able to comment on this issue and raise awareness amongst others whom they meet on a day to day basis. It was also an opportunity to pray for people who are and have been trafficked and for those directly involved in freeing people victims of sex trafficking.

- We had a province weekend devoted to the issue of sex trafficking. We had input on the reality of the situation both for the person being trafficked and the trafficking process itself. We also had some theological reflection on this issue and we had displays around the walls of the room highlighting different aspects of this issue.
- Every house in the province was provided with a UNANIMA “Stop the Demand” kit and encouraged to use this with friends, associates, parishes and any other context in which they found it appropriate to be shared. This has been used by several sisters for the purposes of prayer, raising awareness and encouraging practical involvement and support of people who are being trafficked. One feedback on this suggested that the process is slow in terms of getting a structured process off the ground regarding raising awareness but that she will persist as she’s keen for her parish Justice and Peace group to take this issue on board.

#### **B. Networking or Collaborating with Groups doing Actions:**

- Links continue to grow with the **Medaille Trust**, an organisation that deals directly with people who have been trafficked. Since our weekend on trafficking, one sister donates some of her budget to this Trust. We also refer people to their website for further information.
- Other organisations that sisters work for are:
  - **Women’s Aid** (which helps women and children who are in need, especially women who have been abused and/or trafficked).
  - **EMBRACE** – an organisation that supports and raises awareness about issues relevant to migrant workers and people seeking asylum and/or refugee status. Many of these people have been trafficked at some stage in their lives.

- Types of action: Letters have been written, postcards sent, donations made and study sessions either delivered or received. One sister has recently highlighted the fact that “The Body Shop” is running a campaign whereby they are raising awareness through their shops and website and they donating more than 50% of the sales from one of their hand creams to an organisation involved in this issue. I will be passing this information on to the province shortly, when they have settled after receiving the email requesting feedback on their activities to date regarding UNANIMA.

C. Educational Sessions:

- Some sisters have used the “Stop the Demand” pack to deliver educational sessions and they have shared this material with others who have opportunities to share this information.

D. Visited or worked directly with women and children involved:

- One sister works in this capacity

E. UNANIMA “Stop the Demand” materials:

- These have been used a lot and in a variety of contexts (cf. above)

F. Informal talking about the issue:

- Lots of informal talking has gone on and especially when some new situation regarding trafficking is reported in the news. Sisters have found the media coverage a good starting point to introducing the topic and use the opportunity to bring it to people’s attention and to raise awareness.