Columns
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Trafficking



Amid the diversity of stories A Nun's Life Ministry shares is the common thread of religious life: a life of joy, service and commitment. (Unsplash/Robinson Recalde)



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It's hard to believe that it's our 15th anniversary this year at A Nun's Life Ministry! We've worked with hundreds of Catholic sisters over the years, and it has been wonderful to share their stories through podcasts, blogs and videos.

So it seems only fitting to celebrate our milestone year with even more stories of Catholic sisters. One way we're doing that is through new episodes of the In Good Faith podcast. We just released the first episode on Jan. 21, and more will be released throughout the year.

The episodes focus on social issues being addressed by Catholic sisters, such as human trafficking, homelessness, poverty, food insecurity, climate and education. The format of the episodes is interview style, enabling our listeners to hear directly from sisters, who are guests on the podcast. I'm honored to serve as host for the series, assisted by Sr. Ann Oestreich, Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who has been heavily involved in social justice action and advocacy for many years.

In the first episode, I talk with Humility of Mary Sr. Anne Victory about her efforts against human trafficking. She's been with the Collaborative to End Human Trafficking since its founding in 2007 by Catholic sisters in northeast Ohio. Anne works with many organizations in the region — law enforcement, health care, social services, businesses and others — that seek education about human trafficking. Anne provides resources that inform their policies and procedures, helping them meet the needs of trafficking victims with compassion and understanding.

The second episode, with Charity Sr. Joan Dawber, will be released in February. I talked with Joan about LifeWay Network, which provides safe shelter and other resources to women in the New York City area who have been trafficked. Joan founded LifeWay Network in 2007 with support from Catholic sisters in the area. LifeWay now operates homes where over 100 women have sought to reclaim their lives after being trafficked.

In both episodes, the sisters share about what sustains them in their ministries, which are both deeply rewarding and deeply challenging. They describe how their prayer, ministry and community life are interwoven, energizing them for mission.

These initial episodes reflect the pattern for the entire series. For each issue, there will be two episodes. One will focus on sisters' efforts to shape policies and practices in organizations in the public and private sectors. The other will focus on sisters' ministry with individuals whose lives are directly affected by circumstances of disadvantage and marginalization. In all episodes, sisters will be asked to offer insights that can encourage listeners in their lives of faith and service.

Episodes later in February and in March will feature Sr. Richelle Friedman, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is director of public policy at the Coalition for Human Needs in Washington, D.C., and Sr. Donna Liette, Sisters of the Most Precious Blood, from Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation in Chicago.

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Like all of our podcasts, the new episodes are shaped by the interests of our listeners. We learn a great deal from our listeners, who are from all walks of life. We understand that they value the wisdom of the centuries-old tradition of religious life, expressed through sisters' lives today.

The podcasts are a way to bring the tradition, in areas such as prayer, ministry and community, into conversation with the joys and challenges of everyday life in the 21st century. With every episode, our listeners will get a fuller picture of the ways that sisters respond, individually and collectively, to the Gospel call to be sowers of the Word. Amid the diversity of stories, however, is the common thread of religious life: a life of joy, service and commitment. No matter where a sister is serving in the world, the thread of her vocation is woven into the tapestry of religious life around the globe. The charism of religious life extends into the far corners of the world.

We also understand that listeners deeply value the stories of Catholic sisters and want to hear more. This is reflected in part by over 1.5 million downloads of podcasts that A Nun's Life has produced about Catholic sisters.

Here at A Nun's Life, we excited to share more stories as we celebrate our anniversary year. We believe the new series of podcast episodes will inspire

listeners, and we hope that the stories of Catholic sisters will continue to encourage listeners in their own vocation, wherever God is calling!