

## Bringing Gospel Values to Public Policy

# *Does the Church Belong in the Halls of Frankfort?*

By Jane Chiles

**A**t a time when the principle of separation of church and state has never been more debated in this state, it is most important that the role of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, the only religious denomination with a fulltime presence in Frankfort, be understood. Catholic social teaching compels the engagement of the Church in the shaping of public policy, both legislatively as well as within the various divisions of the executive branch of state government. The leadership of the Kentucky Bishops in this process, the staff of the Conference, the advisory committees of the Conference, and the participation of Catholics throughout the Commonwealth all contribute to the effectiveness of this important work. In its several decades of existence, this state conference work has become even more important as the devolution of responsibilities to the states (i.e. welfare, Medicaid) has brought increasing potential for significant work at the state level rather than at the federal level.

Does the Church have a right to speak its voice in the public square? Does the Church belong in the halls of Frankfort? My response to these questions is a resounding YES. Not only is it right for the Church to speak to the critical matters impacting the common good, but it is obligated to do so. Obligated is a word I use intentionally. Past experience reminds us that the silence created when the Church does not speak can result in a vacuum quickly filled by special interests with something much less than the common good as their goal. Who else is going to measure the value of policy proposals on the rights and dignity of the person or their impact on the poor and vulnerable?

As life has become seemingly more complex, issues have come before the General Assembly that, due to their nature, demand our engagement: abortion, the death penalty, advance directives, healthcare, embryonic stem cell research, criminal justice proposals and



Jane Chiles

many others. While some of the best work of the Catholic Conference has been done in coalition with other denominations and coalitions, sometimes our moral teachings cause us to stand alone. Sadly, the voices of faith communities are not always in unison. However, this does not cause the Conference to back away from such divisive matters.

There are clear examples throughout the years of the kind of difference the Catholic Conference has made: shaping of laws restricting abortion, limiting the expansion of the death penalty, prohibiting racial discrimination in capital cases (the only such law in the nation), developing morally acceptable advance directive options for Kentuckians, and working for affordable and accessible mental and physical healthcare. The Cabinet for Families and Children has consulted with the Conference on matters pertaining to children and their welfare. The newly implemented Medicaid plan received significant input from the Conference.

The Conference has also worked on matters of institutional importance including the passage of constitutional amendments protecting nonprofits from paying property tax and allowing charitable gaming in a limited and regulated environment. Designating funds to provide safe transportation for students in nonpublic schools and creating two positions for nonpublic school representation on the Kentucky High School Athletic Association Board of Control occurred because of Conference work with members of the General Assembly.

These achievements came about because the Kentucky Bishops reached common agreement on the appropriateness of the Church speaking to the specific issue at hand and then they worked in unison. Observing the Bishops commit themselves to the public policy arena, then grapple with complex matters and dedicate financial resources to this work helped me understand how important the witness of this work can be. To do this as a Conference is to know His work, to do His work. To do His work in unity with Catholics throughout Kentucky is rich testimony of the obligation we have to raise Gospel values in the public square.

*Jane Chiles, former Executive Director of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, chairs the Conference's Healthcare Committee.*

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*“We Are All Really Responsible For All.”*

# Promote Human Life: Say **NO** to Tobacco

By Ed Monahan  
Executive Director



Ed  
Monahan  
Executive  
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of Kentucky

On **World No Tobacco Day**, May 31, 2006, the Catholic Conference joined other faith groups at a press conference in the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort to announce the beginning of the Kentucky Faith United to Reduce Tobacco Use Campaign. (Visit <http://www.kyfaithunitedtoreducetobaccouse.org> for more information about Kentucky Faith United to Reduce Tobacco Use.)

CCK invited Catholics and others of good will to promote human life by reducing tobacco use in Kentucky. The group called for comprehensive and effective public policy measures recommended by the national Center for Disease Control and other experts to prevent and reduce smoking and other tobacco use in the state, particularly among children and pregnant women, including:

- Increasing Kentucky's tobacco tax rates to at least the nationwide state average to help fund Kentucky's health care needs;
- Prohibiting smoking in all workplaces, including restaurants and bars;
- Providing a *minimum* of \$25 million per year funding for Kentucky's tobacco prevention and cessation programs as suggested by the CDC; and
- Ensuring no state government preemption of local efforts to prevent and reduce tobacco use or its harms.

“With this Campaign we have an important moral opportunity to help people, especially children and pregnant women, to stop smoking and to eliminate the harmful consequences of tobacco use,” said Fr. Paul Scaglione, pastor of St. Augustine Catholic Church in Louisville and Director of the Office of Pastoral Care for the Archdiocese of Louisville, who spoke on behalf of CCK and the four Kentucky Bishops.

“This tobacco reduction Campaign is also in our fiscal interest as individual taxpayers and as a state,” added Ed Monahan, CCK Executive Director. “If we seize this opportunity and spend a bit of money now, we can save significant money into the future. Kentuckians deserve a properly funded, aggressive smoking cessation program in Medicaid.”

Writing about tobacco use in the state, Kentucky's Public Health Commissioner Dr. William Hacker has noted the extensive impact of smoking, “When a woman smokes during her pregnancy, the effects are seen in the short term and generations into the future.”

What is the Number 1 public health threat in Kentucky? *Tobacco use*. What is the leading cause of preventable death, disease and excess healthcare costs in the state? *Tobacco use*. This according to Kentucky's Cabinet for Health and Family Services. No wonder. Kentucky ranks first in tobacco use in the country. The Cabinet tells us that 25% of pregnant women smoke, 15% of middle school and 34% of high school students smoke, and 33% of Kentucky's adults smoke.

Fr. Scaglione said, “Of all states, Kentucky needs this public policy initiative to reduce tobacco use.”

“Tobacco takes an inordinate toll in Kentucky in human life and has an adverse economic consequence which robs resources for other social needs in our state,” said Steve Bogus, Chair, CCK Social Concerns Committee. The Cabinet estimates health care costs in our Commonwealth attributable to smoking at \$1.2 billion annually.

With their commitment to the consistent ethic of life, Catholics are in a unique position to implement these tobacco public policy initiatives. In 2005 Kentucky's four Catholic Bishops issued *Health Care is a Moral Right, a Safeguard of Human Life*. They observed that to safeguard human life, “Health care is a responsibility of our society. Health care is the responsibility of each individual, every family, employers, communities, health care providers, health care facilities, and state and federal governments....”

In that statement, the Bishops encouraged parishes to establish Health and Wellness Ministries to assist parishioners and their families to take responsibility for their own health by providing educational opportunities, by promoting skills for communicating with health care providers, and by providing opportunities for health care monitoring. Jane Chiles, Chair of the CCK Healthcare Committee, called upon Catholic parish leaders to put into practice this tobacco reduction campaign, “We pray that these Wellness Ministries will join this campaign to promote health and human life by inviting parishioners to a tobacco free future.”

A copy of *Health Care is a Moral Right, a Safeguard of Human Life* is available on the publications page of the Catholic Conference website: <http://www.ccky.org>.



This is the second in a series of articles by the CCK Hispanic Committee on the **Catholic Campaign for Immigration Reform** which aims to reach beyond the networks of the participating national agencies, and to enlist the support of Catholic individuals and institutions in dioceses throughout the country.

Visit [www.justiceforimmigrants.org](http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org) for more information. Le invitamos a visitar nuestra página con regularidad, debido a que se estará actualizando constantemente con materiales, noticias relevantes y otra información que esperamos sea de su utilidad.

# You, Too, Were Once Aliens

By Sr. Sandra Delgado, O.P.

The human person is deserving of respect and dignity from the moment of conception. The Church teaches us that each person, from the tiniest embryo to the most elderly and frail of human beings, is deserving of the dignity that is due all persons. This is a truth of the Church. The alien must not be an exception to this truth. The alien among us is a human person who is also deserving of this dignity. The great debate in our country these recent months has dealt with the treatment of the immigrant, especially the non-legal immigrant.

Who is the alien among us? The Holy Scriptures teach us that there should be no alien among us; that all should be welcomed into our communities.

*"When an alien resides with you in your land, do not molest him. You shall treat the alien who resides with you no differently than the natives born among you; have the same love for him as for yourself; for you too were once aliens in the land of Egypt. I, the LORD, am your God."* (Lev. 19:33-34)

This passage clearly refers to the Israelites living in Egypt under a forced situation. Today's immigrants to the U.S. are not forcibly kept in this new land. Or are they? The condition of the Israelites was one of slavery. In Leviticus they are reminded of their condition in Egypt and of their deep desire to return to their homeland. Is that the case today? Are people who are immigrating to this country forced to live in this foreign land? I would argue that they are indeed. What human person would willingly make a trip across the U.S. desert, and in some cases through other countries, merely for the adventure? How much are they giving up when they make that perilous trip and end up in a strange country with a different language and different customs? What conditions in their own countries force people to travel to a strange land? Desperation and hopelessness.

People in many rural parts of Latin America are unable to provide the very basics of food and shelter for their families because of the lack of jobs that pay enough to buy the necessities. People are unable to make enough money to provide their children with an education much more than the required primary school thus limiting their future to one not much better than that of their parents. And the cycle continues until one can find a way to break it. Many people have found that way – to emigrate to the U.S. – the land of opportunity for all. That is what our welcome mat has always said. People from all parts of the world have found their way here legally and illegally, been able to make this home, and find those opportunities, if not for themselves, certainly for their children.

Why do the people who have crossed our borders illegally, disobeying and disregarding our laws, deserve to be treated with dignity? For the simple reason that they are people and we proclaim ourselves to be Christians.

The Church in its many documents throughout history has stood with the immigrant and the most vulnerable. Pope Pius XII in *Exsul Familia (On the Spiritual Care of the Migrant)* reaffirms that migrants have a right to a life with dignity, and therefore a right to migrate to

ward that end. Pope John Paul II addresses America (referring to South, Central and North America as one) about its responsibilities in *Ecclesia in America*. He states, "The Church is well aware of the problems created by this situation and is committed to spare no effort in developing her own pastoral strategy among these immigrant people, in order to help them settle in their new land and to foster a welcoming attitude among the local population, in the belief that a mutual openness will bring enrichment to all." (65) The Holy Father also reminds us that the "Church in America must be a vigilant advocate, defending against the unjust restriction the natural right of individual persons to move freely within their own nation and from one nation to another. Attention must be called to the rights of migrants and their families and to respect for their human dignity, even in the cases of non-legal immigration." (236)

Pope Benedict XVI in his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)*, speaks of God's love for all humanity. In his opening statement he says, "Jesus united into a single precept this commandment of love for God and the commandment of love for neighbor found in the Book of Leviticus: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' (Mk 12:29-31) Since God has first loved us, love is now no longer a mere 'command'; it is the response to the gift of love with which God draws near to us."

The response to this love that God has given us can only be a true and unconditional love of our neighbor. We all know that this is not an easy road to follow, but as Christians it is a necessity.

The millions of immigrants in our country who are here without documents are hearing terrible things said about them. The millions of children brought here by their parents or born of undocumented immigrants hear the discussions and arguments and they begin to question their self-worth, their security and their future. The adolescent group at the Hispanic center in Lexington asks questions and wonders about their families. Some are living with one parent in Mexico and the other here. Some have made the treacherous trip having seen terrible things. Their families are like any typical family in the U.S., struggling to make ends meet and wanting a good life for their children. Their parents are able to work at jobs that pay far better than in their home countries. They all want to experience the welcome mat that immigrants from past generations experienced.

The U.S. Bishops' document, *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*, challenges us to experience conversion, a change of heart and a change of attitudes so that we can indeed live the commandment that Jesus taught us – to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are reminded that there are many tensions; there is division, and alienation among the faithful in our parishes across the country that deny the unity of the human family. "Such patterns, in the words of Pope John Paul II, 'show the urgent need for a transformation of structures and a change of mentality, which is what the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 asks of Christians and every person of good will. (Message for World Migration Day 2000, no. 1)"

The dignity of the human person will always be of importance if we keep in our hearts and minds the teaching of Jesus, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mk 12:31)

Sr. Sandra Delgado, O.P. is the Director of Hispanic Ministry for the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky.

# Legislators, Governor Make Moral and Economic Choices in State's \$17.6 Billion Biennial Budget

*State budget increases 10.7% while Medicaid funding increases 4.8%; public health increases 4%*

The principal public policy decision made by the Governor and General Assembly is the biennial budget for the Commonwealth. How funds are raised and allocated involve fundamental value decisions, especially when it involves \$17.6 billion of Kentuckians' money over two years. Money judgments reflect not only economic policies, but moral choices as well. In making funding determinations, CCK has encouraged state and national legislators to seek genuine bipartisan commitment focusing on the common good of all, especially the essential needs of the poor and vulnerable. *Questions about Kentucky's funding decisions loom.*

## State Increases

The state moneys in Kentucky's overall budget increased \$885.6 million from \$8.251 billion in the current fiscal year to \$9.137 billion in fiscal year 2007-08, a 10.7% increase over the biennium. While Medicaid is under assault nationally and in Kentucky for its expenditure increases, the biennial state dollars for Corrections in Kentucky increased by 11.8% compared to the increase in state general fund dollars for Medicaid of 4.8%. *Will the 4.8% increase be sufficient?*

## State Debt

There is new debt of \$2 billion. This is 6.8% of the budget, a new high. It will require debt payments of \$200 million for the next 20 years. *Is this an appropriate financial way to fund our needs?*

## Health Care: the Health-care-for-all Problem Grows

In their 2005 Statement, *Health Care is a Moral Right, a Safeguard of Human Life*, the Kentucky Bishops call for "access to affordable health care for all in a way that reflects a priority concern for the poor." Medicaid is the primary way healthcare is provided for Kentucky's poor. Significant changes to Medicaid have been made by the Fletcher Administration to convert it to a commercial model of benefit packages with benefit limits and co-pays. This approach is better than cutting beneficiaries from its roles; however, significant questions remain. *Whether the poor receive all necessary medical care is the ominous question.*

## Medicaid Funding.

As requested by the four Kentucky Bishops and many others, the Governor provided a total of \$329.5 million, \$85.3

million of which were general fund dollars, in necessary additional funding in the fiscal year that ends June 30, 2006 to meet the Medicaid deficit. As Kentucky's Medicaid program moved to a commercial insurance model, CCK worked with other advocates to insure there were no co-payments on poor pregnant women and children. Unfortunately CCK's and other advocates' efforts to have Medicaid begin *now* to provide aggressive smoking cessation and drug treatment benefits failed, despite the demonstrated fact that such programs would improve health and reduce Medicaid expenditures and despite the modest cost for the programs. Providing such treatment benefits in the future is inevitable with increased advocacy since the benefits help people and save the state money. The increase in state dollars for Medicaid was modest, especially in light of the mission it serves and the nearly 700,000 Kentuckians it helps. State General Fund dollars for Medicaid increased by \$49.6 million or 4.8% from \$1.028 billion in the current fiscal year to \$1.077 billion in fiscal year 2007-2008. *Will this be sufficient to meet necessary medical needs?*

## Funding for Tobacco Prevention and Control

In each year of the biennium \$2.2 million is provided to support the state's and local health departments' efforts to reduce tobacco use in Kentucky in the Department for Public Health's Tobacco Prevention and Control program. The money comes from the voluntary assignment of escrow payments made by tobacco companies that do not participate in the Master Settlement Agreement.

## Bishops' Criteria for Health Care Reform

- 1) **Respect for Life** - preserving and enhancing human life from conception to natural death.
- 2) **Priority Concern for the Poor** - giving special priority to health care needs of the poor, ensuring that their health care is quality health care.
- 3) **Universal Access to Comprehensive Benefits** - providing universal access to comprehensive benefits sufficient to maintain and promote good physical and behavioral health.
- 4) **Pursuing the Common Good and Preserving Pluralism** - allowing and encouraging the involvement of all sectors, including the religious and voluntary sectors, in all aspects of health care, ensuring respect for the ethical and religious values of consumers and providers.
- 5) **Cost Containment and Controls** - creating effective cost-containment measures that reduce waste, inefficiency, and unnecessary care and establish incentives to users and providers to make economic use of limited resources and to control rising costs of competition, commercialism, administration and legal costs.
- 6) **Equitable Financing** - financing the delivery of basic comprehensive services through a formula that is based on ability to pay and assures full access to care for the poor and vulnerable.
- 7) **Quality** - establishing and using standards for evaluating and improving outcomes and ensuring appropriateness of health services.

## Public Health Budget

Many programs important to pregnant women, the unborn, and children are funded through the state's public

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# \$17.6 Billion Budget Still Not Enough; We Should Do More

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health budget. This year the state funding for public health increased 4% from \$85 million in the current fiscal year to \$88.5 million in fiscal year 2007-08.

The mark of good leadership is mobilizing people to make progress on their problems. Is sufficient progress being made on health care problems in Kentucky? The data speaks volumes. There are 577,650 or 14% of Kentuckians uninsured. Forty percent or 233,880 are persons under 100% of the federal poverty level. Seventy percent or 404,090 are low-income persons under 200% of the federal poverty level. Many Kentuckians are underinsured. The Kentucky Health Insurance Research Project, a federally funded study by the UK Center for Rural Health, the Kentucky Long-Term Policy Research Center, the University of Louisville, and the UK Survey Research Center has found that many of the 2.3 million insured Kentuckians did not get the health care they needed because of cost. Specifically, 22% of insured Kentuckians reported that they had not gone to a doctor when they were sick, 22% skipped a test, 26% did not fill a prescription, and 15% did not fill a prescription. We are far from having a public policy that meets essential health needs of Kentuckians and our progress toward achieving that end are anemic. *Why aren't we choosing to do more?*

## Criminal Justice:

### Advances Made in Treatment and Alternative Sentencing

In a 2003 article, "Three strikes and you're broke," columnist Cal Thomas said "We do retribution well. We should be focusing on restitution." Advancing restitution he argues means victims come first, taxpayers save money, and offenders become better citizens, rather than better criminals. In their 2000 Statement, *Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice*, the Bishops called "upon government to redirect the vast amount of public resources away from building more and more prisons and toward better and more effective programs aimed at crime prevention, rehabilitation, education efforts, substance abuse treatment, and programs of probation, parole, and reintegration. Renewed emphasis should be placed on parole and probation systems as alternatives to incarceration, especially for non-violent offenders." Under the leadership of the Governor, Chief of Staff Stan Cave and Corrections Commissioner John Rees, this year's budget does significantly advance the value of punishment having a constructive and rehabilitative purpose. *We can do more. Will we?*

### Corrections Funding

The Department of Corrections state dollars increases \$41.6 million or 11.8% from \$351 million in the current fiscal year to \$392.7 million in fiscal year 2007-2008.

Senate Bill 245 provided for intensive pretrial treatment of persons violating the law who were chemically addicted to drugs or alcohol. It passed the Senate but the House used this bill in the waning hours to amend as a tax bill and sent it back to the Senate which did not pass it.

### Alternatives and Treatment

In their Criminal Justice Statement, the Bishops encourage alternatives to incarceration and treatment. Significant pro-

gress has been made on funding alternative approaches to incarceration. There is substantially more funding for Community Corrections, which provides grants for alternative sentencing programs run by judges. There is needed new money for drug treatment and for half way houses. The Community Corrections yearly budget doubles to \$1.2 million. While additional funding is needed, this is the first increase in funding for this program in many years. Home incarceration funding increases by \$960,000 in 2007 with 263 additional beds and \$1,095,000 for 2008 with 300 additional beds. Funding for halfway houses increases by \$10.4 million over the biennium, adding 347 beds in 2007 and 622 in 2008. In the second year of the budget, \$1.2 million is provided to increase drug treatment beds by 122. The total additional funding over the biennium for these alternate sentence and treatment programs is \$14.8 million.

### Privatized Services

In their Criminal Justice Statement, the Bishops "question whether private, for-profit corporations can effectively run prisons. The profit motive may lead to reduced efforts to change behaviors, treat substance abuse, and offer skills necessary for reintegration into the community." The Bishops do not want prisoners' human dignity to be undermined by their becoming a unit of production for profit. The state's biennial budget does provide for more private prison beds in Kentucky and half way houses to be run by private vendors.

Increases in funding for private prison beds and private halfway house beds totals \$12.4 million over the biennium. The amount of funding for private prison beds increases by a total of \$1 million in each year of the biennium for 56 additional beds at the Otter Creek private prison. All of the new halfway house beds will be provided by private vendors at \$3.7 in 2007 and \$6.7 in 2008.

In 1961, in *Mater et Magistra*, Pope John XXIII's encyclical on Christianity and social progress, the Pope taught that taxation in any form should be based on one's ability to pay: "In a system of taxation based on justice and equity it is fundamental that the burdens be proportioned to the capacity of the people contributing." (n. 132)

In 2006, we missed an opportunity to raise additional revenue that better proportioned taxing to the capacity to pay. House Bill 506 would have created \$192 million in annual revenue by decoupling the state estate tax from the federal estate tax reduction, creating two new tax income brackets at the high end; and applying sales tax to certain services. It would have also established an earned income tax credit for Kentucky's poorest at 15% of the federal level. *Why didn't we enact these commonsense revenue provisions?*

Our faith calls us to continue to provide witness to the moral dimensions of the critical revenue and budget decisions made in Frankfort.

To learn more about the economy and Catholic social doctrine contact CCK for copies of the Kentucky Bishops' pastoral letter, *Economic Justice in 21st Century Kentucky: Holding Ourselves Accountable*. This series of 7 brochures is also available on our website: [www.cky.org/publications.htm](http://www.cky.org/publications.htm).

# Trafficking in Human Beings, 21st Century Slavery

The little known, but deadly, practice of the modern day slave trade is attracting the attention of Kentucky lawmakers. During the recent session of the General Assembly, Senator David Boswell, at the request of constituents in the Owensboro district he represents, sponsored Senate Bill 11. He was joined in this effort by Senators Denise Harper-Angel, Daniel Mongiardo, R. J. Palmer, Joey Pendleton, Jerry Rhoads, Johnny Ray Turner, and Ed Worley.

After a hearing in the Senate Judiciary Committee, it was unanimously recommended for passage and received unanimous support on the Senate floor and was sent to the House.

The House Judiciary committee amended it somewhat and voted to recommend its passage and, after a lengthy wait in the House Rules committee, it received a unanimous 97 — 0 vote on the House floor.

But, it was too late. Because of the House amendments it had to go back to the Senate for final approval and time ran out on this important measure and it failed to pass.

The Catholic Conference of Kentucky supported the legislation and sought to expand its provisions to conform more closely with federal law, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000. This legislation recognized the need to address a worldwide violation of the human rights and dignity of thousands of persons, chiefly women and children.

In 2005 the U. S. Department of State issued a required annual report in which it noted that of the “estimated 600,000 to 800,000 men, women, and children trafficked across international borders each year, approximately 80 percent are women and girls and up to 50 percent are minors.”

The report explains that the majority of these persons are then subjected to commercial sexual exploitation. Criminal organizations operate much like drug traffickers and carry out their ugly practice not only across borders, but within national boundaries. The data above does not include those trafficked within their own nation.

The full report is available at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>. According to a spokesperson, the 2006 report will be on the website soon.

In an annual report released by the Vatican in January 2006, “Herod: the Slaughter of the Innocents Continues,” the authors stated that human trafficking involves more than a million children each year, in what has become a \$1.2 billion business. Most of these victims are between 8 and 16 years old, destined for forced labor, criminal activities or prostitution; some newborns are also sold for adoption.

The full report is available in French, not English, at [www/fides.org/fra/dossier/2006/dossier\\_bambini2.doc](http://www.fides.org/fra/dossier/2006/dossier_bambini2.doc).

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has become involved in providing services to victims of trafficking. This past February Sister Mary Ellen Dougherty, man-

ager for outreach, education and technical assistance in the Bishops’ human trafficking program, told an audience of church personnel that 16,000 persons are trafficked into the United States each year, but most of them go unnoticed.

Since passage of the federal law, she said only 947 persons have been certified as victims of trafficking. Under the law, international trafficking victims who are certified are entitled to refugee status and the Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services department helps them resettle and rebuild their lives.

In April the Administration for Children and Families at the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services announced a contract award to USCCB to

provide comprehensive support services to victims of human trafficking. The objective is to streamline support services to help victims of human trafficking gain access to shelter, legal assistance, job training and health care to establish lives free of violence and exploitation.

“Human trafficking is at the forefront of social issues addressed by the Catholic Church and the U.S. Bishops,” said Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, California, chairman of the USCCB’s Committee on Migration. “We recognize the depth of this challenge and are honored to continue serving in this important work.”

In June 2004 the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See sponsored “A Call to Action: Joining the Fight against Trafficking in Persons.” Sr. Mary Ellen delivered an address, *The Role of Faith-based Organizations in the Fight against Trafficking in Persons*.

She named three reasons why faith-based organizations are likely to be effective in anti-trafficking work: their commitment to justice; their access to networks; and their staying power. She also described the strategies needed to implement the work: educating themselves and others about the issue; providing direct services to victims; and build coalition with others to work on ending human trafficking.

The full text of her address is available at <http://vatican/usembassy.it/text/policy/events/tip2004/dougherty.asp>.

The Catholic Conference of Kentucky awaits the pre-filing of a bill to create a state law designed to punish traffickers and protect their victims. Organizations and individuals working with immigrant populations advise us that the practice of modern day slavery is taking place in Kentucky. Having a state law in place will strengthen the hand of law enforcement authorities in local communities where the resources of the federal government may not be sufficient to address this issue properly.

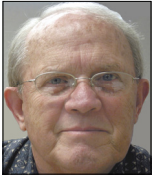
Visit [www.usccb.org/mrs/traffickingweb.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/mrs/traffickingweb.shtml) for more information and for educational materials available for use in parishes, especially with members of social concerns and respect life committees.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO?

**If you suspect a trafficking situation that has not yet been reported or investigated, call the Trafficking in Persons and Worker Exploitation Task Force complaint line at 1-888-428-7581 or the Trafficking Social Services Referral Line at 1-888-373-7888.**

## Tax Credit Legislation Will Be Back

Harry Borders,  
Executive  
Director,  
KLEA



We have carefully followed the development of school choice legislation across America over the past fifteen years with a certain degree of envy.

State after state has successfully enacted vouchers and tax credits and while some made the process work easily, others have struggled mightily for years before success.

Kentucky seems destined to follow the latter group, not by choice, but by necessity, as we must work extra hard to overcome the total fixation that our lawmakers have toward public education to the exclusion of all the non-public schools. This is not a condemning statement, just an accurate assessment of how Kentucky views education at this point in time.

The General Assembly is charged with developing and funding our system of public schools in the Commonwealth as set forth in our State's constitution, particularly the 1890 revision of that document that we live with to this day. This is as it should be. We need a strong school system for all of us. Since 70% of Catholic students in Kentucky attend public schools, we have a vested interest in making sure that these schools are the best they can be. The more funding the better, if that's what it takes to educate all our children well.

The balance of our children are educated in parish and inter-parochial schools and they are the focus of our attention for now. The Kentucky League for Educational Alternatives

(KLEA) is charged with the mission of producing funds from a variety of sources, to be used for the good of our Catholic schools.

Our immediate goal is to assist our schools with the enactment of a business tax credit that would allow industry to participate actively in the educational process, both public and private. This is the model legislation that I shared with you last year in a column in this newsletter.

Rep. Jim Gooch of Providence introduced HB 630 and, this time around, we assembled a very strong team to assist him in the process. We had a good balance of co-sponsors and successfully lobbied the Appropriations and Revenue Committee (A&R) to call the bill for a hearing. Overall, we made a strong and compelling argument and earned the respect of members of the A&R Committee and other legislators in general. Ironically, public school teacher unions—the Kentucky Education Association (KEA) and the Jefferson County Teachers Association (JCTA)—vigorously opposed HB 630 even though these tax credits would yield millions of dollars for the improvement of the schools their students attend.

We did not pass our tax credit this time around, but came away greatly encouraged about our future chances.

We intend to dialogue with our counterparts in public education in the interim to seek common ground for passage of a measure that will satisfy all our needs in light of the fact that we all advocate for Kentucky's common good, our children.

## When Did I Visit You in Prison?



The Catholic Conference of Kentucky and the Kentucky Council of Churches are jointly sponsoring a statewide prison and jail ministry gathering on Saturday, September 30, 2006, at The Catholic Center, 1310 West Main Street in Lexington.

This event is open to those who already participate in prison ministry and to all those who would like to begin serving Christ in this fashion.

Kentucky has an increasing number of persons locked up. These men and women require our attention. Because faith has a transforming effect on all of our lives, genuine religious

participation contributes to their rehabilitation and renewal.

Therefore, all jails, prisons, or detention facilities should have a regular and ongoing Catholic ministry.

The goal for the day is to foster this ministry, supporting those already performing it and seeking ways to invite others to be part of this effort.

On page 8 is a registration form. Please complete the form and mail it to the Conference before the deadline, September 15, 2006. The day starts at 11am and concludes at 4 pm. Lunch is provided for all participants.

# REGISTER TODAY

## STATEWIDE PRISON & JAIL MINISTRY GATHERING

JOIN THE CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF KENTUCKY AND THE KENTUCKY COUNCIL OF CHURCHES FOR A STATEWIDE PRISON & JAIL MINISTRY GATHERING ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2006, 11:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND MAIL REGISTRATION FORM BY SEPTEMBER 15, 2006 TO:  
 CATHOLIC CONFERENCE OF KENTUCKY  
 1042 BURLINGTON LANE, FRANKFORT, KY 40601

FIRST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ LAST NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PARISH \_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL OR SPECIAL NEEDS YOU MAY HAVE \_\_\_\_\_

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT REGISTRATION, PLEASE CONTACT  
 KAREN CHAMBERS AT 502-875-4345, OR VIA  
 E-MAIL AT [CCKSTAFF@CCKY.ORG](mailto:CCKSTAFF@CCKY.ORG).

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE**  
**SEPTEMBER 15, 2006**

**SEPTEMBER 30, 2006**  
**11 A.M. – 4 P.M.**  
**LUNCH PROVIDED**  
**@THE CATHOLIC CENTER**  
**1310 WEST MAIN ST.**  
**LEXINGTON, KY 40508**



**CATHOLIC  
 CONFERENCE  
 OF KENTUCKY**

1042 Burlington Lane  
 Frankfort Kentucky 40601

502-875-4345  
 Fax: 502-875-2841  
[cckstaff@ccky.org](mailto:cckstaff@ccky.org)  
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**Plan Ahead: Catholics @ the Capitol**  
**February 13/14, 2007**