

SHEPHERD Program Movie Guide

Disclaimer: *The USCCB does not endorse these films and/or movies, they are simply viewing suggestions to increase awareness on issues of human trafficking. Due to the content matter (i.e. violence, language, sexual content), some films might be more suitable for mature audiences.*

This movie list is intended to help facilitate discussions about human trafficking with your local community. The issue of human trafficking is a very delicate one which not everyone feels comfortable talking about (in some cultures it might even be a taboo subject to bring up), but despite this it is a topic that we must learn to communicate about openly if we wish to see change. Our intent in forming this film compilation is for members of communities to help share them with their local community whether through parish meetings or other means. Feel free to use this as a platform to aid in your mission against human trafficking.

St. Bakhita

We first meet Bakhita in a rural village of Sudan when she is captured by slave traders. After years of being beaten and abused, a white merchant Federico Marin buys her from her current owner and brings her to Italy. Once in the Marin household, the daughter of the master Aurora takes a strong liking to Bakhita and chooses her as her nanny. Bakhita is treated like an outsider and accused of being wicked by other servants because of her black skin. Despite this, Bakhita proves to be generous to everyone she encounters even if they have wronged her. Befriending a priest, she discovers a life of hope and religious support. The hardest hurdle Bakhita has to overcome is that of acquiring her freedom to help others.

1. It is not always easy to help others who seem different than us but what can the Bible teach us about overcoming these prejudices based on fear?
2. Witnessing situations of human trafficking can be a transformative experience, have you ever experienced something similar?
3. How can we be more like Bakhita and work to forgive those who have victimized others and help them see a life of dignity and respect for others?
4. Sometimes we have to make sacrifices and do things we don't like in order to help others, what are some realistic sacrifices we can make in our daily lives to help the fight against human trafficking?

(For additional material on St. Bakhita, consider reading *Bakhita: From Slave to Saint* by Roberto Italo Zanini, translated by Andrew Matt)

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Not My Life

This documentary spans across 5 continents documenting the evil of human trafficking across the globe. There is a specific focus on child exploitation in forced labor, servitude, begging, sex trafficking, and soldier recruitment.

1. If we suspect human trafficking happening in front of us, what can we do as bystanders that is both safe and effective?
2. What are some ways that we can provide communities better access to law enforcement and anti-human trafficking resources?
3. How can we improve conflict areas so that victims are less vulnerable to exploitation?

Food Chains

How many times a day do you think about where your food comes from? Food Chains brings to light the struggle of Florida farmworkers as they fight the monopoly on the supermarket industry. While trend for organic and environmentally friendly crops gain popularity, little attention is brought to the workers who actually make this food possible. Many fieldworkers experience abuse and low wages and this film helps expose that dark side of the food we put on our tables. The specific group we see in this film is the Coalition of Immokalee Workers in South Florida as they battle corporations to help protect the dignity of farmworkers.

1. How can we as consumers help make a difference in the exploitation of farmworkers?
2. What are some things we should be demanding from the supermarket to ensure all humans are treated with dignity and respect?
3. How can we bring up this conversation of farmworker exploitation around our own dinner table?
4. How can we relate this national issue to the global issue of labor trafficking?

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Very Young Girls

This documentary follows the journey of young girls caught up in the world of prostitution in the US. Different aged teenage girls tell of their experiences in prostitution and their struggles to break free from their pimps. We meet girls at different stages of their lives, some barely escaping prostitution and others who have been successfully advocating against prostitution for years. Rachel Lloyd, who was a victim of child sex exploitation herself, became an activist and started a program called GEMS (Girls' Educational and Mentoring Services) aimed at helping these girls break free from ties to prostitution and rehabilitate them into society.

1. As community outreach members, what are some ways we can provide girls with hope and a new start?
2. Incarceration is a major problem for prostitution victims, how can we fight the perception of them as criminals when in reality they are victims?
3. Many young girls who turn to prostitution do so because their family life is in chaos, what are some preventative measures we can take to save them from turning to prostitution?
4. Victims of prostitution often feel judge or alienated from the community, how can we foster a sense of welcoming and belong for them?

Lives for Sale

Through this film we see the different journeys of immigrants as they venture out through the dangers of the US-Mexico border in pursuit of the American Dream. Besides just showing their journeys, we get a glimpse into the reason some immigrants are willing to risk their lives crossing for the chance of a better life. We get a rare glimpse inside the homes of impoverished immigrants who grapple with the choice of either staying or leaving. Through two personal narratives of young women, we also see the human trafficking side many immigrants are subjected to in the US. Many immigrants live in fear like these two women did and criminal groups prey on their vulnerabilities.

1. How can we as community leaders help educate our peers who might be opposed to helping at risk immigrants?
2. What are some steps we can take to improve conditions abroad and decrease the need for immigrants to place themselves in vulnerable situations of human trafficking?
3. As businesses what efforts can we take to make sure globalization doesn't impoverish foreign communities?
4. How can we more effectively train Border Patrol to identify victims of human trafficking?

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Human Trafficking-2005

Human trafficking is a reality we are often oblivious to, but law enforcement officers are sworn to protect victims from these kinds of abuses. When an immigration agent makes a discovery about a sex-trafficking ring in the US, she risks everything to put the elusive ring leader behind bars—even her own life. The movie stars actress Mira Sorvino, UN Goodwill Ambassador for Global Fight against Human Trafficking.

1. While some victims might consider suicide to end their suffering and exploitation, there are victims who might consider taking their own lives because they may not be fully welcomed back into their communities. What are some societal prejudices that could lead a victim to consider suicide? And how can we, as Christians, fight to end these prejudices?
2. Sex trafficking happens right under our noses, as civilians how can we help spread awareness?
3. Some victims are hesitant to reach out for help, judging from what you know about human trafficking, why do you think that is?

Bread and Roses-2000

The story centers around sisters Maya and Rosa who are both undocumented Mexican immigrants working as janitors. Maya crossed the border and gained employment through her sister. As both start working there, Maya meets Sam Shapiro, an organizer who advocates for “Justice for Janitors.” Through Sam, Maya learns of the power of workers’ unions and embarks on a journey to help fellow immigrant workers subjected to work exploitation. This newfound activism however, places Maya’s relationship with her sister and her safety in the US in danger.

1. As responsible employers and consumers, what are some steps to ensuring people we hire are not subjected to exploitation?
2. As workers, what are some steps we can to protect our rights as laborers?
3. If we are witnesses to labor exploitation or are experiencing it ourselves, what should we do to help fight it?
4. Many workers don’t know what rights they have even as undocumented workers, how can we help spread information so they are empowered?
5. How can we bridge the cultural gap between ourselves and victims in order to help them?

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Born into Brothels

This is a documentary that is filmed in the Red Light District of India. The film focuses on a specific group of children whose mothers are prostitutes within Calcutta. As viewers we get to see their childhood (or lack thereof) within the prostitution world. The filmmakers who immerse themselves in their world attempt to get them an education in photography in order to avoid their fate of joining the prostitution world like their mothers.

1. One simple way to help children avoid falling prey to human trafficking is through exposure to the world and showing them alternatives to the life they have been living in, how can we increase exposure for children at risk?
2. As a community how can we participate in outreach efforts to children like those in the film?
3. Education is a key way to save children from prostitution, what efforts can be made abroad through the Catholic Church to increase education?
4. How far should our intervention efforts go when we see children are at risk for prostitution within their families?

Black Gold (2006)

The coffee industry has boomed in recent years with new coffee shops [popping up at every street corner, but from where is this supply of coffee coming? This documentary takes an in depth look into the world of international coffee trade and the different lives affected by it. The film takes us to Ethiopia, a mecca for coffee growers, and explores the struggles coffee farmers face at trying to get a fair price for their coffee. The blatant exploitation is made abundantly clear as they fight to avoid bankruptcy while other companies make incredibly large profits at their expense.

1. As consumers, what is our role in the world of trade and what can we do to help fight exploitation?
2. Should we hold companies accountable to labor trafficking if they are knowingly exploiting farmers?
3. What standards should we hold these companies to?
4. How can we raise awareness on ethical consumer responsibility through the Church?

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American Courtesans

This documentary sits down with six prostitutes and explores their different stories and what led them to the world of prostitution. Through this emotional film, we see that in many cases prostitutes find themselves in that situation because of events outside of their control. Not everyone chooses this lifestyle, but are sometimes forced into it through circumstances such as poverty and family issues.

1. How can we help change the way prostitutes who fall prey to that world are viewed (they are seen as criminals instead of victims)?
2. Many victims fell to prostitution because of family issues and lack of a support network, how can we as a community provide the support network some at-risk children need?
3. Socio-economic status is also a major factor in who ends up in prostitution, how can we become active community members in neighborhoods with socio-economic problems?
4. What legal measures should be taken on victims of prostitution who are arrested?

The Pink Room

Cambodia, a place notorious for sex trafficking. This documentary follows Mien and other girls as they are thrown into the world of child sex trafficking. At a young age she was sold to a brothel, but through this story we see hope for a better future. After being rescued, Mien's story shows that this is not only a film about the problem of child trafficking, but also one which explores Cambodians' efforts to heal their community and help victims.

1. Many girls turn to sex trafficking to make money for their families, how can we teach girls to see more value in themselves and seek alternative measures?
2. As a community how can we help victims regain a sense of dignity after being rescued from their perpetrators?
3. Prevention efforts in Cambodia focus on building relationships with children at risk, how can we work with Cambodian residents to help their efforts?
4. What do you believe causes some families to see their children as objects and how can we shift these views in order to prevent child trafficking?

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Buffalo Girls

Thailand is notorious for sex-trafficking, but there is another form of child trafficking that isn't in the spotlight yet: Muay Thai children boxers. This documentary follows the lives of two 8 years-olds, Stam and Pet, who compete in boxing matches in order to help support their families. Whereas boxing is considered a sport among us, to them it is a means of survival and bloodshed.

1. What makes these children's circumstances different from children in the US who engage in karate competitions and how should we raise awareness?
2. Should children be allowed to fight in the ring as a form of employment or is it a human rights' violation?
3. What consequences should parents face if they subject their children to this? In many cases most do it in order to provide them with better lives, but does this make it right?
4. How do we approach cultural differences which make this a sport in Thailand but to us it seems like child labor?

Prostitution behind the Veil

The documentary follows the lives of two women who engage in prostitution in order to support themselves and their children. Along the way they struggle with drug addictions. The two women live on the same neighborhood in Iran and we see the complicated roles religion plays in this world of illegal adultery which is circumvented by Sighe (temporary marriages that can be as short as a two hour session or years long).

1. How can we work as a community to offer support and a path for change for women like in this film instead of judging them?
2. How can religion play a role in helping combat human trafficking?
3. Women and men are often judged by different standards when it comes to the sex world, how do we bridge these gaps and help everyone lead a dignified life with mutual respect?

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Trade of Innocents– 2012

The opening scene is set in a dirty room in Southeast Asia. There is a bed with grimy sheets in a corner and a girl waiting to be used by the next customer. Alex is the next customer as he poses undercover (in reality he is a human trafficking investigator) and bargains with the pimp. Meanwhile, Claire (Alex's wife) is volunteering in the same Southeast Asian community with girls who have been rescued from the sex trafficking world. Years before the couple had lost their child to kidnapping and this grief pushed them to fight child trafficking abroad. Child exploitation has become a major crusade for them as they fight to preserve the innocence and dignity of girls in their community.

1. As tourists visiting foreign countries, what are some things we can do to fight human trafficking abroad instead of unknowingly supporting it?
2. What can we do from home to help fight human trafficking abroad? (Think about ethical consumer responsibilities)
3. How can we improve law enforcement in foreign nations to help fight human trafficking more effectively?
4. We see an example of therapy groups in which the victims talk and paint, what are other ways we can, as a community, make survivors of trafficking feel more welcomed among us?

Not Today– 2012

Growing up in a wealthy family, Caden Wells never had much to ask for. As a 20 year old, he is having the time of his life. But what happens when his life is turned upside down while on vacation?

Caden travelled to Hyderabad, India expecting to party with his friends, but he was faced with a harsh reality. After encountering a starving father and daughter, he refused to help them, only to feel guilty afterwards. As he tries to find the man and his daughter again to right his wrong, he only finds the father—to his horror, the father has sold his daughter so she won't starve to death. Caden and the father begin the journey to get the girl back and along the way make some personal discoveries.

1. The protagonist in this film realized what a life of privilege he had been living, do we ever stop to reflect and thank God for the privileges we enjoy, knowing that most people around the world don't have even a taste of them?
2. What are some actions that you can take to increase in solidarity with victims?

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3. Looking back, if you have ever travelled abroad, have you ever seen signs (that you maybe couldn't identify before) which may point towards human trafficking?
4. What would be the best, safest way to help someone you think may be a victim of human trafficking in a foreign country? (Maybe look back to the SHEPHERD toolkit)
5. What do you think of Kiran selling his daughter so she wouldn't starve and how can we prevent this from happening to other children?

Eden (2012)

This film tells the story of a young Korean-American teenager who was abducted and forced into prostitution in New Mexico. Through her harrowing experiences she meets other girls in the same situation, but she faces the option of either remaining a victims to her captors or helping them with other young girls and becoming part of the criminals herself in order to survive.

1. Do you believe the protagonist went too far in trying to work with her captors for survival and if so how can we as a community work to understand her choices instead of blind judgement?
2. What are some generalizations/ideas of human trafficking that you saw in the film which might not be completely true and how can we fight these trafficking stereotypes?
3. Where is the line between victim and criminal blurred? How can we distinguish between the two?

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