



MEDAILLE TRUST
REFUGE AND FREEDOM FROM MODERN SLAVERY

**Medaille Trust
special tribute magazine**

WALKING ON WATER

**Remembering Sr. Ann Teresa SSJA
1944 – 2022
Founder of Medaille Trust**



Combating modern slavery
by offering safe housing,
supporting victims,
raising awareness
and partnering with
law-enforcement agencies.

GUIDE



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Medaille Trust is one of the UK's largest providers of supported accommodation for victims of modern slavery.

We were founded through the vision and generosity of Catholic Religious congregations and our origins remain key to our identity. Our work is guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching: human dignity, solidarity, preferential option for poor and vulnerable people, and the dignity of work.

Our national network of safe houses provides personalised support, empowering clients on their path to a life that is free from slavery and exploitation.

In addition to providing clients with life-changing accommodation, Medaille Trust has now expanded our work to support survivors in the community through our Moving On Project.

We also work to promote justice and awareness. We work closely with law-enforcement authorities to inform and support our work.

Medaille Trust works in partnership with like-minded charities in other countries to help prevent human trafficking and to support those victims who return home. We also raise awareness in the UK, through the Look Up! campaign with the Archdiocese of Birmingham.

Thank you for your interest in our work and your commitment to ending modern slavery. If you would like to know more, please get in touch.

**Medaille Trust, Cathedral Centre,
3 Ford Street, Salford M3 6DP**

Visit: medaille-trust.org.uk
Email: enquiries@medaille-trust.org.uk
Call: 0800 0699916

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Medaille Trust is a registered charity, number 1117830

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Designed by Sam Moore
Printed by Bensons Printing Company Ltd,
12 Perry Rd, Witham CM8 3Y

WELCOME

“When people feel truly loved, they feel able to love, too.”



So said Pope Francis in September 2018 and as I reflect on the life of our founder, Sister Ann Teresa, for this special tribute edition of our Medaille magazine, I think love was at the

root of everything that Sister Ann Teresa did in her life. This is not surprising as the stated vision of the Sisters of St Joseph of Annecy is ‘To live and work together to create a world where love is paramount’.

Although by the time I took the reins as CEO in January 2018 she had already taken a less active role in the charity due to health reasons, I had the privilege of meeting her on a couple of occasions whilst working in the sector for another organisation. The time that I remember most was the first time that I met her at the convent in Landguard Road, Southampton.

I remember how she fixed me with those bright blue eyes of hers, and first took an interest in me (we’d never met before). I remember how struck I was at the time that she wanted to get to know me before we got down to business. Then, we talked about the business I had come for (I was trying to persuade Medaille to join a consortium of other anti-slavery charities). It was her

passion for, and knowledge of the survivors that was striking. It was obvious that she knew these ladies personally, had invested time in them and was, in the most powerful way, their advocate.

I learned an important lesson that day and it was that to be effective in advocating for a group of people, you first have to take time to know them. Thank you Sister Ann Teresa for the example you showed me and many others during your life. Thank you for the love that you showed to survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking and for the risks that you took for their sake.

You will read many inspiring stories in this magazine about Sister Ann Teresa. Medaille Trust, the organisation she founded and named, is part of her legacy and continues to show that love to survivors of modern slavery in a practical way. Thank you to all who continue to support us prayerfully, practically and financially – your support makes a real difference to survivors of modern slavery and honours the legacy of our founder, Sister Ann Teresa.

**Garry Smith
CEO, Medaille Trust**



*Sr. Ann Teresa,
Founder of
Medaille Trust*

GROWING UP WITH MARGARET HERRITTY (Sr. Ann Teresa) by Angela Vaughan, sister of Sr. Ann Teresa

On 24th May 1944, Margaret Ann was born at St Woolos Hospital Newport to my mum Patricia Alice Herritty and dad, William Herritty. Mum had been in labour for three days and there were discussions about whether to save her or the baby. We lived in a little terraced house with dad's sister Auntie Polly and her husband Uncle Mac. Dad worked long hours as a Furnaceman at a nail factory. We were three sisters, Margaret Ann, Patricia Mary and I. We had one brother, Kevin Patrick.

As our family increased, the Council offered us a two-bedroom prefab house at Treberth Estate. Dad ensured we all attended 8 o'clock Sunday Mass at St Patrick's Church. Because we didn't have a car, we had to walk the long distance. Our reward was a full cooked breakfast when we got home



As children we attended St Joseph's Primary school in Maindee. Margaret ensured we safely travelled by bus – the fare then was a half-penny. But on the way home, we sometimes spent

our halfpenny to buy sweets and walked through the lanes home. The Parish Church of St Patricks centred around all our family celebrations and social events. Life was happy with each of us making our First Confession, Holy Communion & Confirmation.

We then attended Sunday afternoon Benediction. We then walked to Aunty Polly's for our delicious Sunday Lunch. When we were a bit older, Dad suggested that Margaret, Trish and I should join Maggie Bennett's Choir. This was good grounding for our love of music & singing in future years.

Margaret was quite a tom boy growing up and often dressed up playing Cowboys & Indians! Our school holidays were spent with kids from the Crescent. Mum always baked enough food to share with the local children - bread pudding, ice slices (her speciality) and welsh cakes (bakestones). We played hopscotch, skipping, swinging on a rope from the arm on the lamppost, making a bogie from old planks of wood, rope and spare pram wheels and whizzing down the hills. I sometimes arranged a concert which was erected outside Dad's shed. Dressing up, dancing and singing lots of songs, we then charged the local kids 1 penny to come into the garden!

As a family we had bicycles and would ride to Goldcliff for a picnic day enjoying the sea air. There was never spare money to have family holidays. But day trips to Barry Island were wonderful. Dad loved swimming with us in the sea. We also enjoyed rides at the fairground, including donkey rides. The day usually ended with fish & chips, pop, ice cream and lots of very happy memories.

Llantarnam Abbey

After six months of Margaret entering the convent, we were allowed to visit her. Margaret was full of excitement to see us. After our visits, Mum would get really upset and constantly cry. Dad decided to offer her an explanation as to why Margaret had decided to enter the convent. During the three days when mum was in labour and doctors were contemplating whether to save her or Margaret, Dad visited St Mary's Church and prayed that if God saved both mum and Margaret, he would offer her up to him. From thereon mum stopped crying. Somehow, this life Margaret had chosen was meant to be.

THE LIFE OF SR. ANN TERESA

by Helen Power (niece of Sr Ann Teresa)



Sr. Ann Teresa at a conference at The Vatican in 2009

Margaret Herritty, eldest daughter of Pat & Bill Herritty was born on 24th May 1944 at St Woolos Hospital in Newport, South Wales. She had two younger sisters Trish and Angela and one brother, Kevin.

Margaret started her education at St Joseph's Primary School, Maindee. Then she attended the Holy Family Secondary school in Newport where she excelled in all subjects, especially Shorthand and Typing. She soon found here, her best friend Kay who stayed in touch with Margaret throughout her life, including when she was ill. Margaret and Kay had a weekly job of taking the 'Biscuit' money to the bank each week. Kay often laughs and remembers the money was usually still covered with Jam! Margaret attended Gwent College for a year to study secretarial subjects. She left there at 16 and wanted to enter the Convent at Llantarnam Abbey but her Dad refused and suggested she get a job first for two years. She started work as a ledger clerk in the National Bank but Margaret's heart was still set on religious life. At 18 she left home to begin her new life at Llantarnam Abbey. Initially family visits were restricted. She was allowed to write letters home and her Mum treasured these letters. When her Mum died, most of the letters were found in a box tied up with a ribbon. In September 1963 Margaret's Clothing Ceremony was held during which she received the habit and was given a new name, Sister Ann Teresa.

In September 1964, Ann Teresa made her First Profession of Vows. Between 1964 and 1967 she assisted in the primary school at Stow Hill Convent.

Her Final Profession, at the age of 24, took place on 5th August 1968. She then trained as a business studies teacher in Bristol and later studied theology in Canterbury, gaining her Diploma in Theology in 1978. Her first teaching post was at Bishop Mostyn School in Cardiff, (1971-1972), after which she went to St. Joseph's Comprehensive School in Newport.

At St Joseph's Sr. Ann Teresa was Assistant Head of Year, Head of Commerce and Head of Religious Education. As a result of Sister Ann's energy, two charities were persuaded to donate two minibuses to the school. Then working with parents, staff and students, Sr. Ann helped to transform an old laundry into a superb Chapel which became known as the Joseph Witherington Pastoral Centre.

In 1997, Sr Ann was invited to start a new community in Southampton to promote Vocations to the Consecrated Life. Over time, a new enterprise gradually emerged. For seven years Sr. Ann worked with women in street-based prostitution. She helped many women during this time, finding work in nearby B&Bs and inviting them to share a meal at the house. In 2005, after she'd given a talk on human trafficking, a couple offered her a house for trafficked victims. After returning from the first Pontifical Conference on Human Trafficking in Rome she met representatives of Religious Congregations and a working party was formed to launch the Medaille Trust. The first safe house was opened in 2006 and the second in 2007. Today Medaille Trust runs nine safe houses.

Between 2015 and 2017 Sr. Ann developed health problems and it was decided that she should return to live at the Abbey. She took part in visits to Day Centres, and days out with family to the cinema or Barry Island. Later she joined the Forget me Not Choir for people living with Dementia. During her final week of life Sr. Ann's health rapidly declined but she remained peaceful. She slipped away quietly on Monday 7th March in the presence of her sister Angela and many of the Sisters. A faithful Sister of St. Joseph had finished her mission.

TRIBUTES TO SR. ANN TERESA...

We organised a number of Student Retreats and outdoor ventures together. I always found Ann Teresa to be a supportive colleague and a loyal friend. We worked together for seven years in Southampton publicising and raising funds for Medaille Trust. Ann Teresa had an unshakeable faith and an abiding conviction that the Trust would flourish. She invariably accepted difficulties as opportunities and always relished a challenge. Her energy, enthusiasm and her sense of justice were inspirational to all who knew her. Her firm convictions motivated others to believe in what sometimes seemed to be unattainable possibilities, yet such was her compelling vision that often potential became reality. It was my privilege to be her friend.

Sr. Henrietta Curran, former colleague at St Joseph's High School and current Trustee of Medaille Trust

Sr. Ann Teresa was a full circle, no gaps, no kinks, just a perfectly formed circle whose arms gathered us all safely inside to find shelter, understanding and love. She was more than a teacher. She was a friend to everyone and the family each pupil needed, whether they were clever or challenging, black or white; they were welcomed into her life.

She managed to get a former stable converted into a Chapel with its own walled garden so that anyone could find a quiet time to reflect when life was hard. I was with her when she travelled to a monastery to persuade a monk to create stain glass windows, no charge of course.



Sr Ann Teresa and colleagues when she co-founded RENATE in 2010

We all went that extra mile if her twinkling blue eyes happened to glance in our direction or she just asked. Her faith was all encompassing and she showed us the way into this beautiful world of love for one another with no reproaches or ugliness. She will not be forgotten by many generations who she taught how to love their own lives within their faith.

Norma Collins, former Arts Teacher and friend for 40 years

I was struck by her thoughtful and intelligent discussion of the issues facing the Trust. As I got to know her, I appreciated her practical compassion. She was kind and supportive of me personally as she was of anyone who came within her orbit.

Edwin Landles, former Finance Manager Medaille Trust

Sister Ann was a visionary whose drive and passion for freeing the oppressed led her to set up an organisation that has cared for and empowered so many men and women to escape their traffickers and start their lives again.

- Patricia Kenyon, former manager of Medaille Trust's first safe house

In 2004, at an awareness raising event, Sr Ann Teresa spoke calmly and quietly but with real passion about human trafficking needs in the UK. She was truly inspirational.

This led many congregations to support the financing of the Medaille Trust. Later, as members of RENATE, we had many conversations and particularly about her spirituality of creation and her desire for an understanding of the reality of the connectedness of everything in the throbbing, pulsating, ongoing creation taking place at every second of existence. She was a prophet in our world today, an inspiration coming forth from a deep simplicity of life.

Sr. Imelda Poole IBVM, friend and colleague at RENATE

I remember vividly, she was so passionate to help the women and girls she met in the streets and in the city she worked. She helped them and found many people who wanted to help her. What I mostly remember is that she told me: "I was offered a house and money to help the women and girls, I looked around me and even behind me, and nobody was offering to do it; so I had to do it myself. And that is what I did.

Ivonne van de Kar,
RENATE Netherlands

God works in mysterious ways... In 2004, my wife Minnie and I attended mass in Whitchurch, Hampshire. It wasn't our usual church, not even our parish. There was an appeal on behalf of the Medaille Trust, a charity that neither of us had ever heard of. The speaker was this neat tidy woman who said she was a nun. Her name was Sr. Ann Teresa. She explained in detail the horrors experienced by trafficked women and the vision that Medaille had to rescue and help. All that was missing was a safe haven for them.

Shortly afterwards we visited Ann Teresa and the other nuns with whom she lived in Southampton and agreed to help Medaille by purchasing its first safe house. We remained in close touch until she became ill but her legacy survives and prospers not only in that first house that we sponsored but now in others.

Joe MacHale, sponsor of Medaille Trust first safe house

I met Sister Ann Teresa only once but she provided me with much to think about as I was embarking on opening a safe house. She

offered her time and shared her experiences. She gently probed and asked questions, making sure I knew what we were getting into and shared insights and thoughts. For this I am very grateful.

- Kate Garbers, Research Fellow, Support & Independent Modern Slavery Consultant

I first met Sr Ann Teresa, when she and Fr Des Connelly invited me to a meeting in Southampton to look at the possibility of setting up a safe house for trafficked people. The one big thing that struck me during our meeting was Sr Teresa's 'gentle smile'. It was so powerful, it lit up the room! Such was Sr Teresa's trust and belief in what she was seeking to do, she smiled her way through it, because what she was doing, she was doing for God and his people. Her sheer determination, belief and trust in God spurred her on, despite any obstacle. No obstacle was too much to stop her in her tracks and the evidence is there for all to see! May your gentle soul and smile rest in the peace of God's glory!

Fr John Martin, Diocese of Nottingham

In 2006, Sr Ann telephoned me to discuss the launch of the Medaille movement to offer support and safe living to victims of human trafficking. This coincided with the start of the first house and the need to develop within the Charity Commission parameters. This meant starting a board of trustees and I was invited to join her. Sr Ann's greatest emphasis was the welfare of victims and the day-to-day needs to rebuild the lives of victims. This is why she wanted to build up a supporting group to take care of the legal,

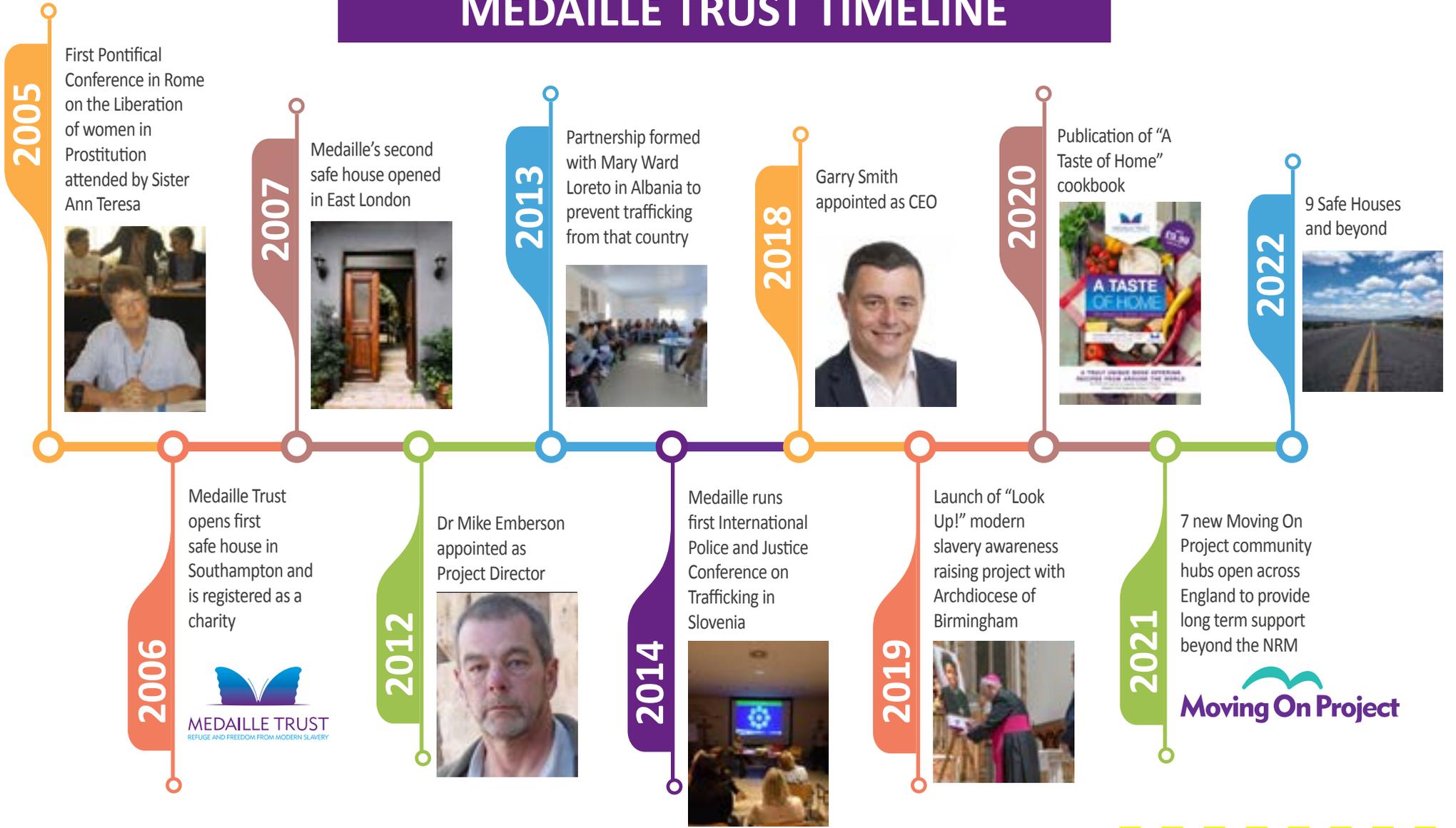
financial and real estate aspects. Sr Ann was careful to ensure that excellent staff were appointed to ensure victim support and she led the first team for the first house, in the direction she wanted Medaille to go. Sr Ann already had in mind to open other houses to grow the mission. Her many contacts with religious orders, meant expansion was not long in coming. She put her personal stamp on Medaille Trust and when the number of houses grew to eight, the same spirit was engendered across them all, with victim support way ahead of the many aspects of government and house organisation. The strong development of Medaille was achieved as Sr Ann appointed strong and capable salaried staff to live out her vision - a vision which continues to this day.

Brother Francis Patterson, former Chair of Trustees of Medaille Trust

She was inspirational with a deep concern for justice and a tenacious zeal for serving the poor. She once told me that she had never understood what it was like for someone's cupboards to be bare until she met some of the young women she was working with who, literally, had no food. We organised a Christmas "hamper" project whereby each tutor group made up a box of treats and necessities for a local family which were transported from the school hall to the car park in a chain of probably hundreds of schoolgirls! A great role model for women's ministry in the church with a vision that went far beyond the Religious but was always holy.

Ruth Cunio, teaching colleague and friend

MEDAILLE TRUST TIMELINE



Trafficking for sexual exploitation

by Sr Ann Teresa published on Thinking Faith, 19th November 2008

Trafficking for sexual exploitation is the movement of human beings across borders for the purposes of prostitution. It involves the active recruitment and transportation of (mainly) women and children by means of deceit, threat or other forms of coercion. It is always an abuse of power, and it is global in scale. Trafficked women, children or young men will have been betrayed by somebody – a family member, an informal contact or a friend. They will be beaten and raped within a short time of leaving home. On arrival at the destination country they will have their personal documents confiscated by the traffickers, and will be forced to have paid sex with many others several times each day. They will be held in severe debt bondage to their ‘owners’ for the expenses incurred in their trafficking. Depressed and traumatised, they often attempt suicide, but will be too afraid to talk to the police because of threats to themselves or to their families.

The disparity between the numbers of desperate people needing help and the scant number of safe places available led to the formation, in 2006, of The Medaille Trust. This is a charity founded by Catholic Sisters, Brothers and Priests with the aim of helping women, young men and children who have been freed from sex-trafficking. This ministry sprang from the experience of working with women in street-based prostitution and from studying prostitution as a global issue. This study led to a growing awareness of sex-trafficking as a major issue of our time.

There are many underlying causes of the growth of sex-trafficking. A major one is the constant demand for prostituted people. The internet and globalisation have played a major part in this, as well as package holidays linked with sex tourism.

Many men see paying for sexual services as a legitimate form of leisure and entertainment. For these men, the commodification of sex and women provides a context in which, not only is commercial sex normalised, but it is associated with entitlement – with enough money you can buy whoever and whatever you want. As one man said: ‘It’s just like going to Tesco’s! We need to change social attitudes and change our perceptions of prostitution and challenge the attitudes of many men.

In 2005 two Sisters attended the First Pontifical Conference in Rome, on the Liberation of Women in Prostitution and Trafficked Women. The leaders of the Conference wanted to know what was happening in each country with regard to prostitution and trafficking and what the Church was doing about these issues. They drew up a pastoral strategy to deal with this new form of slavery. This Conference inspired the two Sisters to invite Religious throughout the UK to come together to explore the possibility of collaborating to help enslaved people in this country. The response to this invitation was such that The Medaille Trust was formed.

I am a Sister of St. Joseph of Annecy and we were founded by Jean Pierre Medaille SJ in 1650, to help the poorest and most marginalised people. I see my ministry with women in street-based prostitution which led to the trafficking work with The Medaille Trust, as responding to the core of my vocation. Trafficked women are treated as ‘non-persons’, and in the UK they are invisible, voiceless and treated as commodities, as things. Many of our Congregations were founded to work with the most vulnerable people, and the victims of trafficking certainly fall into this category.

A large number of Religious Congregations support this ministry by providing funding, property or personnel and the experience has been like the ‘Feeding of the 5,000’. Because each Congregation has given what it can, some of the most wretched people in our country are being empowered.

When I first sensed that God was calling me to leave my work with street-based prostitution and to move into the unchartered waters of providing safe housing for trafficked people, I felt overwhelmed. When we interviewed the staff for our first safe house, we gave them three-year contracts, but we only had enough money for one year. At that time, the Medaille Trust wasn’t really functioning and I felt that God was asking me to walk on water – to trust that the money would come at the right time. It did come, and not only the money, but so much more as well because Religious Congregations shared so generously.

Recently, I rediscovered Liberation Theology, in particular the work of Jon Sobrino and Gustavo Gutierrez. For me, this has been like finding the ‘Treasure in the Field’. The work of these theologians resonated with my experience of working with women in street-based prostitution and with trafficked women. My life has been turned upside down and my reading has enabled me to experience God anew; the God who says ‘Set my people free’, Jesus who asks us to walk on water, to trust, to let go. In particular, I was struck by Jon Sobrino’s statement: “Without the poor, there is no salvation. Without the poor, there is no Church. Without the poor, there is no Gospel”. His understanding of “the poor” was not only the economically poor, but the outcasts of our society and those who are treated as ‘non-persons’. I agree with his statement that conversion means seeing life through the eyes of those at the bottom of the pile, and that God can only be known through the poor.

I visited one of our safe houses and asked the staff what working with the women was doing for them personally. I am well aware of what we are trying to do for the women, but I had a deep-down conviction that this is a two-way process. One member of staff said: “I have had my ups and downs in life, but when I am with the women I am constantly reminded of how lucky I am and what a charmed life I have lived by comparison.” When listening to the staff, I kept hearing: “I feel privileged to work with the women and to be part of their lives. It is a blessing to be with them”; “I love my job, I love coming to work”. There aren’t many people who can say this today! Recently two significant people who run the service for The Medaille Trust shared a meal with the women. They said afterwards, that it was one of the happiest meals they had ever had, and I understood what they meant because of my own experiences of sharing meals with women in street-based prostitution.

Religious Congregations have always sprung up to respond to the great needs of the times, and I see this collaborative ministry of The Medaille Trust, as doing just that. Every country in the world is caught up in trafficking, as a source country, a transit country or a destination country. We need all the networks that already exist in the Church and other supportive networks in order to help our desperate sisters and brothers. I believe that we are simply doing what God asks of us in the Old and New Testament, namely to have a preferential love for the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, to let the oppressed go free. This ministry is enabling us to see the world through the eyes of the outcasts of our society, of those at the bottom of the heap – which Jon Sobrino calls ‘Conversion’!

HER LEGACY - MEDAILLE TRUST TODAY

Today Medaille Trust is one of the UK's largest providers of supported accommodation for victims of modern slavery, with nine safe houses. We have provided shelter and support to more than two thousand people fleeing abuse and exploitation. Our Moving On Project works with survivors of modern slavery, helping them access counselling and support, access education and employment, and integrate into the community. We partner with police to bring the perpetrators of modern slavery to justice.



Wellbeing Wednesdays are held every week at our London West Safe House and involves our residents and staff coming together to cook and eat together.



An Albanian Feast to celebrate 31st birthday of a modern slavery survivor in Manchester



Birthday party for one of our Swindon safe house residents who turned 70. Party sponsored by several Swindon businesses



At our Southampton Safe House we are teaching our survivors of modern slavery how to save lives with first aid skills



"Garden of Happiness" Art workshop with Modern Slavery survivors in London



Modern slavery survivors visit allotment in Southampton where they grow fresh fruits and vegetables



Residents and staff at London East Safe House share a meal to celebrate Eid



Feet massages and pampering for Modern Slavery survivors in Kent



A card made by Modern Slavery survivor in Hampshire

Please pledge your support and make a donation.

If you can, please *giftaid it*. Thank you.



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- Information about leaving a legacy to Medaille Trust in your will
- To be removed from our postal mailing list or our email list

Thank you for your kind donations and continued support.
Please know that every £ makes a difference.



SISTER ANN TERESA BURSARY – A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO OUR FOUNDER

As a testament to Sister Ann Teresa's life-force and passion, a bursary fund has been set up in her name, uniting her passion for education with her compassion for those fleeing exploitation.

The Sister Ann Teresa Bursary will help pay fees and expenses for survivors of modern slavery who wish to pursue education and training opportunities. Education offers survivors a positive route to independence, while improving their wellbeing and social support. Yet all too often the cost of the course, buying the equipment and tools needed to attend, and the associated childcare and travel costs, stand in the way.

Our aim is to provide bursaries up to £1,200 each, to survivors of modern slavery who are receiving support within one of our safe houses or through the Moving On Project. We believe this will help to remove the financial barriers that prevent them from realising their full potential.

Launching the bursary, Medaille Trust Chief Executive Garry Smith said: "Education and training empower people to become more confident and independent. Our charity has tried over the years to equip modern slavery survivors with the skills needed to thrive when they leave our safe houses. However, all too often, the tuition cost of a course, buying the necessary equipment, paying for transportation, and the cost of childcare are too much for the vulnerable people we support. This bursary seeks to help remove those barriers to education and training so that the survivors of modern slavery who we support can achieve their full potential. It is the sort of initiative Sr. Ann Teresa would have embraced, and it is a fitting tribute to her."

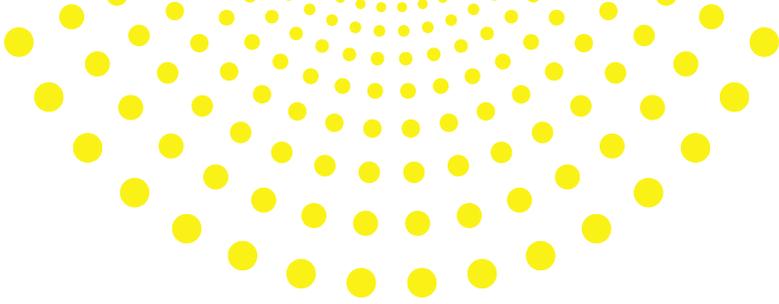
If you would like to donate to the Sister Ann Teresa Bursary, please fill in the form in this magazine and send it with your donation. You can also donate online by visiting our donate page at www.medaille-trust.org.uk/donate and in the comment box put Reference - SAT Bursary. Once we have reached our £10,000 target, keeping the Bursary running for the next two years, any further donations received will be directed to the Moving On Project. This project helps to empower modern slavery survivors to thrive in their community.



Sr Ann Teresa running a workshop with Carmelite Friars in 2009 in Aylesford



Sr Ann Teresa in 2009 at a conference which led to the launch of RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking against Trafficking and Exploitation).



Medaille Trust is a member of Renate, COATNET, CSAN

Chair of Trustees: Simon Young
Founder: Sister Ann Teresa SSJA
Editor: Mark Bhagwandin

   @medailletrust



MEDAILLE TRUST
REFUGE AND FREEDOM FROM MODERN SLAVERY

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