
Human trafficking: Assembly of RENATE, Religious in Europe Networking Against Exploitation, underway in Fatima

The town of Fatima in Portugal is playing host to the Assembly of RENATE, the Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation, from 13 to 19 November. Over a hundred women religious are attending. The general theme of the Days is “On the move together towards 2030. Realising the dream - a world free of slavery”. The Days will explore specific thematic aspects. On Friday, there will be an opportunity to “discern and define” RENATE’s action strategies. Today, discussion will focus on “Church leaders committed to fighting trafficking”. Also taking part in the debate are the representatives of the Vatican Dicastery for Migrants and Refugees. Tomorrow, participants will address the regulatory and legal responses to trafficking in human beings. There will also be many opportunities for discussion in small groups, to exchange best practices and develop new ideas for action. “Here in Fatima, we are on a dynamic path of communal discernment”, said Network Coordinator Sister Imelda Poole. “Enriched by our rapporteurs, we are encouraged to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to our hearts, to awaken each of us to new hopes and ideas for RENATE’s mission in the future”. Every morning, before prayer, a video shows us the survivors’ stories: we want to keep “in our hearts the words they say and the feelings they awaken”. “We are only a small part of the global mission to combat human trafficking”, Sister Imelda said, but “the small, dedicated lives of people who respond with love can become catalysts of change”.

Valentina Bombelli