
Austria: Eisenstadt, initiatives and prayers to combat sexual slavery. “People are not goods”.

The Diocese of Eisenstadt invites you to join the International Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking on 8 February. For the Vicar General Michael Wüger, this day of commemoration on the Feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita is a good time to strengthen the civil society network against sexual exploitation. According to Wüger, “people cannot be goods, anywhere in the world! Unfortunately, the sad reality of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution is not far from our homes contrary to what we would like to believe”. Parishes will celebrate this day with prayer vigils according to the schedule on the Diocese’s website www.martinus.at. The initiative “aims to set an example and raise awareness of trafficking in human beings. This is because in many European countries there is a market where slaves are traded as goods - a trade that disproportionately affects women, but also men and children”, Wüger points out. “Modern slavery” and “human trafficking” translate into various forms of submission and exploitation. The Austrian Bishops’ Conference, in cooperation with the Church Organisation SOLWODI (Solidarity with Women in Distress), has repeatedly spoken up “against this sad practice” and “wants to actively help people to easily set themselves free from undignified conditions”.

Valentina Bombelli