



Clothing...

...at what cost?

Mission: Inspired by Catholic Social Teaching, The Human Thread seeks to foster Catholics' awareness that promotes solidarity between consumers of clothing and the people who produce them in order to create a more just economy and sustainable communities.

"While blame quickly extended from the owners of the building and the factories it contained, to the government of Bangladesh, to the retailers who sold the clothing, the culpability extends all the way down the supply chain- to us"

-- Professor Jerry Davis, Ross School of Business, University of Michigan (Letter, NYT 5.08.13)

After hearing that the workers at the collapsed Rana Plaza in Bangladesh were making less than \$60 a month for 60-70 hour work weeks, Pope Francis bemoaned, "This is called slave labor."

In addition to safety issues of many factories, insufficient attention is given to worker livelihood (wages, healthcare, housing, etc).


The Joy of the Gospel exposes the globalization of indifference in a throw-away culture of mass consumerism. "Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people's pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility and not our own. The culture of prosperity deadens us; we are if the market offers us something new to purchase.

In the meantime, all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us" (Evangeliij Gaudium, 54)

Catholic Social Teaching began with Pope Leo's XII's concern about the exploitation of workers in Europe (Rerum Novarum). Its concerns are still valid today. We are called to reclaim Catholic Social Teaching in a way that contributes to a revitalized Catholicism in the US.

“As baptized members of the body of Christ, we are called to be ‘clothed with compassion’”

(Col. 3:12)

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- Tweet, email or write the companies that sell your favorite clothing brands and ask them: "Who made your clothes?"
 - Talk about this information with friends and family.
 - Consider alternatives. Shop Fair Trade, local, and second-hand/thrift stores.
 - Research your favorite companies and see how they rate in ethical, sustainable business practices online.
 - Investigate the sourcing policies of your school or organization's apparel committees. Are they fairly sourced?
 - Bring the campaign to your community, parish, or school!
 - Contact us for more information.

MADE IN EXPLOITATIVE CONDITIONS BY UNDERPAID WORKERS

THE ISSUE

On April 24th, 2013, 1133 people were killed and over 2500 were injured when the Rana Plaza factory complex collapsed in Dhaka, Bangladesh. This tragedy exposed the wide range of abuses connected to the sourcing of clothing. Amidst the destruction, the clothing and tags found in the rubble were those found in our own closets. We are connected as consumers to the people who create the clothes we buy. This campaign weaves the thread of materialism back to our Catholic Social Teaching, raising awareness of the slave-like conditions to which none of God's children should ever be subjected.

SUPPORTIVE GROUPS

- Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investing
- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Anti-Trafficking Desk
- Justice and Peace Desk, Conference of Major Superiors of Men
- Social Concerns Desk, Leadership Conference of Women Religious
- Franciscan Action Network
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- ICCR: Human Trafficking Leadership Group
- Catholic Mission Association
- Members of Coalition of Catholic Organization Against Human Trafficking
- Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother
- The Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order
- Holy Cross Sisters, South Bend, IN
- Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
- Catholic Relief Services Fair Trade



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CATHOLICS FOR CLOTHING
WITH A CONSCIENCE

"Things have a price and can be for sale.
But people have a dignity that is priceless
and worth far more than things."

-Pope Francis