

June 6, 2011

## ***Sisters of Saint Joseph collaborate with St. Louis Hotel and ECPAT to address Human Trafficking***

**(St. Louis, MO):** Human Trafficking is among the many serious issues in need of healing both in St. Louis and throughout the world. While many call it a hidden crime, it exists not only in the St. Louis area, but in virtually every city and town in our country.

After months of collaborative conversation and planning, the [U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph](#) (CSSJ) is excited that the Millennium Hotel St. Louis is taking the steps necessary to sign and implement the six-point [ECPAT-USA Code of Conduct](#). By signing this code the [Millennium Hotel St. Louis](#) will take a stand against the sexual exploitation of children by helping ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking in Children for Sexual Purposes) fight child sex tourism. The [Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism](#), developed by ECPAT, sets a standard of responsible business practices that effectively crack down on child sexual exploitation.

Discussions with the hotel about the complex issue of human trafficking began when the Sisters of Saint Joseph first contracted with the Millennium for their national event. In speaking of the process that will culminate in the signing of the ECPAT Code of Conduct, Sister Kathleen McCluskey, CSJ, Executive Director of the Federation says, “As Jesus taught us, it’s all about building relationships of healing in our world. We wanted to host our national Event at a hotel that supports this mission and spirituality. From the moment they became aware of the horror of human slavery and the role that hotels can play in combating it, the management at the Millennium has been eager to learn and take action.

The Sisters of St. Joseph are pleased to have been partners in a collaboration with the Millennium, ECPAT, and Nix Conference and Meeting Management that has brought us to this important moment. In signing the ECPAT Code, developing policies and procedures for the prevention of trafficking, and educating every person on the staff, the Millennium St. Louis demonstrates a true concern for people, surely for their guests, but also for the world we all live in. They are taking concrete steps to combat a degrading and horrible abuse that threatens the whole human community.”

Of this collaboration, Nix says, “[Nix Conference & Meeting Management](#) is thankful for the opportunity to work with the U.S. Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Millennium Hotel St. Louis on this venture. We support the commitment of Federation of the Sisters of St. Joseph and ECPAT to combat human trafficking. We stand firm in our resolve to protect all children and will unite with others in the industry to bring awareness to the human trafficking issue.”

Dominic Smart, General Manager of the Millennium Hotel St. Louis comments, “It is important for all of us to join together to fight human trafficking. Everyone in our hotel will take part in the ECPAT training and be vigilant in helping to keep human trafficking and exploitation of children out of our hotel and our community. Having the Sisters of St. Joseph gather in our hotel brought this issue more clearly to our attention and everyone in the hotel has strong beliefs about it. As a father of three, like any parent, I am sensitive to this cause and feel that every child has a right to a healthy and happy childhood.”

The signing of the ECPAT Code of Conduct will take place on July 12, 2011 at the Millennium Hotel St. Louis during the [2011 Event of the U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph](#) where close to 900 Sisters and Associates from across the nation and the world will be gathered. Roman Catholic women religious have been key leaders in the national and international movement to stop the demand for human trafficking.

###

[The U.S. Federation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph](#) is a dynamic union of all the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the United States who claim a common origin in the foundation at LePuy, France in 1650. Today there are approximately 7,000 vowed members as well as 2,800 Associates in the United States. World-wide there are over 13,500 Sisters of Saint Joseph in over 50 countries.