

The Road Back

**Hope, Help, and Healing
for Survivors of Human Trafficking**

by
David and Lisa Frisbie

2020

Nazarene Missions International

Books

TO THE SHELTER

MIDDLE EAST STORIES OF FINDING
STRENGTH, COURAGE, AND HOPE IN GOD
by Kay Browning

THE ROAD BACK

HOPE, HELP, AND HEALING
FOR SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING
by David and Lisa Frisbie

WANDA

by Carol Anne Eby
Edited by Andrew Bennett

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the Church of the Nazarene, missions and compassion have shared a significant place in carrying out God's redemptive purposes in the world—purposes of restoration, peace, hope, and engagement in ministries of grace. Nazarene Missions centers around compassion, evangelism, and education, bringing focus to every missions endeavor. Nazarene Missions International (NMI) and Nazarene Compassionate Ministries (NCM) can hardly be separated at times in the minds and lives of those who engage in these ministries.

NMI and NCM share cross-over (overlapping) commitments to engage in the kinds of ministries that empower and release members of the Church of the Nazarene worldwide to serve the least, the last, and the lost. NMI, with its Top Five Areas of Impact: prayer, giving through World Evangelism Fund and Alabaster, engaging children and youth, and caring for missionaries through Links, is the global missions advocate in every local church, nurturing a spirit of missions and mobilizing into action, impacting people around the world. NCM's Priorities of Approach assure that all approved projects focus on one or more of the following: church-led, holistic, child-focused, community-based, and transformational. At the close of each chapter, these approaches or core

values will be brought into perspective in relation to the stories presented.

Nazarene missionaries partner with local churches to bring restoration, share the Gospel and build sustainability within a community.

Look carefully at many NCM projects, and you will find NMI supporting in prayer, giving, educating, and engaging to assure success in local communities. Several of the buildings and facilities referenced in this book have been made possible through Alabaster giving, and through the sacrificial services of volunteers and Work and Witness teams. Other projects and those who serve in them have benefited by missionaries on assignment, thanks to World Evangelism Fund giving. The interconnections or interdependencies are significant, and bear testimony to the commitments of the church at every level: local, district, field, regional, and global, to see restoration in the lives of those upon whom this book brings focus. The stories that you will read in this book cannot be told without NMI and NCM faithfully carrying out their ministries through local churches around the world.

One thing becomes clear, the blight of human trafficking, with its dehumanizing, demoralizing power over the powerless, is not something that happens only in “other places” or to “other people” we may never meet. It is on our doorsteps, in our neighborhoods, in almost every country. It rears its head in the most likely, and sometimes most unexpected places. We dare not turn a blind eye to it, but rather confront it, helping our people to know their

potential part in mitigating and even ending it. We pray for those caught in its deadly grip, and for those who serve on the front lines of rescue and restoration. We continue to give in order to build and establish strong centers of confrontation, change, care and transformation, and embrace our young with an extended embrace of The Eternal, Who values each person beyond measure. Our churches must be safe havens for those who have been hurt, and places of hope for those on the road back. The global network of churches of the Nazarene is present along that road to be a welcoming, helping, embracing expression of the love of God, capable of changing these wandering lives forever.

MEET THE AUTHORS

God's call to "serve missionaries" has taken David and Lisa Frisbie around the world to hundreds of local Nazarene churches and districts. To date (Spring 2020) they have traveled to 48 world nations, to 9 provinces and 2 territories of Canada, and to all 50 of the United States. They have served as on-site counselors, teachers and trainers, speakers and presenters, and as devotional speakers/preachers/evangelists for district and regional events.

Beginning with a call to serve Southern Europe Field missionaries and pastors in the 1980's, David and Lisa have been consistently involved in Western and Eastern Europe, expanding their ministry into the former Soviet states after the fall of communism. The liberation of former Soviet-bloc nations made it possible to bring the Gospel to these countries.

While speaking and counseling at a field conference in Eastern Europe in 2007, God brought David and Lisa into contact with a caring registered nurse in Romania. As you will discover more fully in Chapter 3 of this book, that meeting was truly a divine encounter. Since that God-moment, the Frisbies have been personally and professionally invested in the compassionate fight against human trafficking.

When the time came for Nazarene Missions International to produce a book about this topic, David and Lisa were

a logical choice to serve as the authors. They interviewed key Nazarene leaders, pastors, missionaries and others—in diverse global settings including Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. The book you are reading now is the result of global interviews with front-line workers who are fighting, in Jesus' name, against the evils of trafficking.

PROLOGUE

GOD'S SURPRISING CALL TO GET INVOLVED

On the night of April 28, 2007 God changed our lives forever. From that night on we would be prayerfully and personally invested in the fight against human trafficking. No longer could we ignore the victims of trafficking and their silent suffering.

One night changed everything. We were speaking at a field conference for pastors and missionaries in Bulgaria when God introduced us to a formidable, friendly, Spirit-filled woman. A registered nurse serving in an urban area in Romania, she was sensing God's call to get actively involved in the rescue of trafficking victims. As we prayed, listened, learned, and counseled with her—God called us into this mission. (We tell the extended version of this story in this book, in Chapter 3.)

Many thanks to Nazarene Missions International for their invitation to write this book, and for the opportunity to collaborate with Nazarene Compassionate Ministries. Thanks also to our friends at The Foundry Publishing, and their help and guidance in the book process. It is always a blessing to partner with The Foundry in creating new resources.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to Nazarene missionaries, including Duane and Linda Srader [SRAY-duhr], Joel

and Sara Mullen [MUHL–uhn], Jay and Teanna Sunberg [TEE–an–uh SUHN–buhrg], and others. Thirty years ago, the Sraders invited us to come and speak at a retreat for missionaries and families. From that day to this—serving those who serve has been our great joy and privilege.

We love and value all who serve in Nazarene missions.

DEDICATION HONORING THOSE WHO SERVE AND HELP

This book is dedicated to John and Marguerite (Mann) Nielsen [mahr-guhr-EET MAN NEEL-suhn] of New England, who left their home in 1965 to help the Church of the Nazarene launch a new school near Schaffhausen [SHAF-how-sen], Switzerland. John served as the first rector of European Nazarene Bible College (ENBC), gathering a caring and committed faculty while also creating a beautiful campus and grounds. From a modest start and with few resources, these energetic and creative Nazarene missionaries built a great institution which is currently teaching, training, and equipping pastors all across the European continent.

This book is dedicated to Duane and Linda Srader. This high-energy couple first impacted the lives of churches and families located in the Cape Verde Islands (now Cabo Verde). In Cape Verde they stayed busy building and advancing God's Kingdom, expanding the Church of the Nazarene and making forever friends. From Cape Verde, God called them to serve and help in the European nation of Portugal, where they planted churches, nurtured pastors, and mentored missionaries. It was not long until Duane and Linda's ministry extended across Western Europe and beyond.

This book is dedicated to Ron and Shelva Calhoun [SHEL–vuh kal–HOON]. After accepting a missionary assignment to the Republic of South Africa, the Calhouns mastered the Afrikaans [ah–free–KAHNZ] language and began teaching religion, theology, biblical literature, and pastoral practice in southern Africa. Across decades of service, this couple impacted countless lives through their teaching, through their wise counsel, and through the translation of books and resources into local languages.

This book is dedicated to Gary and Juanita Jones, whose compassion has enfolded us and whose authentic witness for Christ has challenged us across our adult lives and ministry. Dr. Gary Jones has served the Church of the Nazarene as a youth pastor, lead pastor, and assistant district superintendent. It was my (David's) privilege to have Gary for a youth pastor as I attempted to navigate the many challenges of adolescence. Lisa and I are grateful that God sent these two into my journey in such a strategic season.

This book is dedicated to Richard and Cora Graley [GRAY–lee], one of the finest and most honorable Nazarene pastoral couples we have ever known. We met Richard and Cora fairly late in their lives (and not exactly early in ours) as we served together in ministry at a local Church of the Nazarene in southern California. Richard served five Nazarene congregations during a 40-year career in pastoral ministry. Since retiring, he has served another two decades as a champion of pastors and their partners.

CHAPTER 1

ASIA AND PACIFIC

Nazarene missionary Harmon Schmelzenbach [HAHR–muhn SHMEL–zin–bahk] was born in Africa, and grew up on that continent. His wife Cindy was born in the United States of America and was raised in the scenic state of New Mexico, USA. Together, they have enjoyed serving as fourth-generation Nazarene missionaries on the Asia-Pacific region. Among lifelong Nazarenes the surname Schmelzenbach is synonymous with character traits such as dedication, devotion, commitment, compassion, and courage. In Harmon and Cindy’s ministry, this long-time tradition both expands and continues.

Although each has functioned in a variety of special assignments and roles, and until recently, Harmon served as the Field Strategy Coordinator for the Nazarene Melanesia South Pacific Fields. Cindy contributed as the Member Care Coordinator for the entire Asia-Pacific Region. Their influence and their leadership affected missionary health, missional and church planting strategies, and almost every

aspect of life and service on the mission field. Their wise and compassionate presence has brought a sense of the Holy Spirit into each situation they encountered, guiding them as they served and helped, taught and trained, learned and led.

Missionary couples and families face the same challenges as any couple or family, yet may find themselves thousands of miles (kilometers) away from a caring support network of family and friends. Their home church, another reliable source of prayer, support, and wise counsel—may also be many miles (kilometers) away.

In addition to the typical challenges faced by any couple or family, those serving in a nation other than their home are often confronted with specific cultural challenges. Problems arise as the missionaries or their children try to adapt or change in order to contextualize within a given culture or situation. We see no evidence that missionary couples and families have more crises or problems than other families—yet it would not be accurate to say they have any less!

When Nazarene Missions International invited us to write a book about the Nazarene efforts to fight human trafficking, we immediately reached out to both Harmon and Cindy Schmelzenbach for their wise advice, creative input, and relevant connections in the geographic area. Harmon and Cindy put us in contact with caring and committed Nazarenes who are making a forever difference in the lives of children and adolescents, as well as adults, who are survivors of trafficking.

In this first chapter of the book, we will profile some of what God is doing, through the Nazarene church and its

missional communities, to fight against the evil of human trafficking in the Asia-Pacific Region. You may be greatly encouraged in this chapter—God is at work! Join us for a tour of some of what God is doing to rescue, redeem, and restore the survivors of trafficking, including some who are very young. Here’s a look at what God is doing today, on the Asia-Pacific Region.

CONFRONTING A CORE ISSUE: OSEC

ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

The evil of human trafficking reflects itself in many different ways across the various parts of the globe. Although in Western countries we often associate the label of “trafficking” with the concept or idea of “forced prostitution or sexual services”—there are many other current and contextual forms of human trafficking, including forced labor. Not all forms involve an in-person sexual situation or physical encounter; though even physical touching that is streamed is often included in types of human trafficking. Children and others can be exploited via movies and video, via cell phone and camera photography, and increasingly via streaming pornography and other internet-based methods.

Across Southeast Asia and in the Philippines specifically, the online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) is a serious and growing threat. A number of local and intergovernmental task forces are at work on this problem, including several partnerships of high-level law enforcement agencies. There is a growing consensus that human trafficking for sexual purposes, particularly when it involves

children and teens as victims, is a destructive force in the community and the society.

Online sexual exploitation of children is a relatively new criminal activity, and it has specific dimensions that are somewhat unique to Southeast Asia. With OSEC, the young victims are not in the same physical location as those who purchase their pornographic and sexual services. Instead the victims are exhibited, displayed, and exploited on-line in real time, for pay and for profit. Anyone with a primitive web cam and a working internet connection can immediately become a trafficker in online sexual exploitation. Although it is often live, it is not necessarily streamed content; it could be digital media sold and then transferred. In the Philippines, widespread access to the world wide web, and widespread access to a variety of internet-based money transfer systems, combine to make online sexual exploitation, including the sexual exploitation of children, a viable and thriving enterprise for many. Cell phones and data plans are quite inexpensive in the Philippines, and this fuels ease of access.

Sadly and surprisingly, half or more of those who traffic and exploit children in this way are immediate family members of the children involved. A parent, often a mother but perhaps some other family relative or close friend, will order the child to perform various lewd acts or pornographic situations while a video camera records the situation for the “benefit” of online, paying customers. Payment is arranged via the online financial transfer network, as well as

cryptocurrency¹ —a swipe of a credit card here, the debit of a bank account there—and the perpetrators prosper. Often, these are the parents of exploited children who prosper, though the child may not realize what they are doing is wrong.

The evil of this specific situation has at least two dimensions—the hideous tragedy of parents who are willing to exploit their own children for money, and the existence of numerous customers who are willing to pay, watching as these innocent young children are manipulated, abused, and sexually exploited. It is important to note that parents often see this as a “victimless crime”—as long as there is no direct touching. This highlights the desperation of poverty-burdened parents in the Philippines. It is also worth mentioning the English-speaking element. The reason this is exploited in the Philippines is because English is a commonly spoken language, and those who are buying this content are often from English-speaking countries.

Worldwide, Nazarenes cooperate with a variety of missions and agencies that work against these types of social evils. One such agency is the International Justice Mission (IJM), which has an ongoing and effective ministry in the Philippines—moving aggressively against the societal and moral evil of online sexual exploitation of children. IJM forms partnerships with law enforcement, clergy, and other organizations to strengthen and extend its reach and its

¹ Cryptocurrency is a digital currency, which utilizes encryption techniques to regulate the generation of units of currency and verify the transfer of funds, operating independently of a central bank.

impact. Among the organizations working in the region, IJM is one of the most effective and most positive forces at work to rescue and redeem victims of trafficking.

Operating from the campus and office buildings of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS, Manila, Philippines), Nazarene pastors and missionaries are networked with IJM and other organizations to effectively reach and rescue survivors of OSEC, bringing healing and hope to abused and exploited children. When an existing agency or mission is doing effective work, it is often more efficient to form partnerships than to attempt to create a new ministry. Whenever and wherever practical and possible, local Nazarene churches are in partnership with IJM and its important mission to fight human trafficking.

Recently the International Justice Mission reported these metrics from their ongoing work to thwart and prevent OSEC in the Philippines and beyond: to date there have been 157 rescue operations conducted, 527 survivors rescued in these operations; 224 suspects or perpetrators arrested and charged, and 69 criminals convicted for these and related crimes.² As the mission expands and its efforts continue to succeed, these meaningful numbers will rise daily. And as our Nazarene awareness of OSEC increases, Nazarenes will increasingly be on the front lines of rescue and restoration, healing and hope for the survivors.

² From the August 2019 fact sheet: All statistics are from IJM casework data from 2011 to August 26, 2019.
www.etsnews.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/IJMMPH_FactSheet2019_Aug2019.pdf

At the heart of our Nazarene work in this important battle, Leody Echavez [lay–OH–dee E–chah–vez] III serves as the NCM Field Coordinator for the Philippines and Micronesia. From his office at the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Echavez is networked with Nazarenes and others as they combat OSEC and other forms of trafficking. Among the duties that Echavez fulfills in his role are his key leadership in the areas of child protection, anti-trafficking, and fighting online sexual exploitation of children.

Through the efforts of Echavez and others, Nazarenes have created a resource that is literally the first of its kind in the Philippines. Near the campus of the seminary, they have created a new Assessment Center that responds to survivors of online sexual exploitation of children with a comprehensive array of social and psychological services, including holistic and spiritual care. This carefully created assessment center offers these and other services as of 2020:

- Receive survivors from place of holding
- Provide secure, home-like setting for survivors
- Provide basic or secondary education and classes via home schooling and/or modular classes
- Supply basic and life skill training and activities
- Provide professional psychological assessment
- Medical referrals to other relevant professionals
- Both psychological and psychiatric referrals to other trained professionals
- Trauma-focused counseling and therapy services

- Home and family (situational) assessment
- Coordination with other trained social workers
- Case conferences
- Referral to permanent placement settings including foster care agencies and facilities, long term shelter homes, and evaluation of survivor's place of residence
- Social preparation and social skills for survivors
- Assistance with transition to permanent placement
- Other services as evidenced in the context or case

Nowhere else in the Philippines is there such an assessment center, either in private (NGO—non-governmental organization) operation or in the ranks of governmental programs. Here, the Church of the Nazarene is literally pioneering a new work, creating an avenue of ministry to reach “the least of these” with effective hope and healing. Worldwide, this may be one of the most significant developments in the creation of effective care for the victims and survivors of trafficking. The Church of the Nazarene, through its field and regional efforts based at the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, has created a template that could be physically and culturally adapted to other settings where efforts to fight OSEC and human trafficking are being originated.

Serving under the name and banner of “Shechem [SHE–kuhm] Children’s Home”³ the new assessment center is a three-to-five-month program (per survivor) with a capacity of 15 to 20 survivors in residence. As of this writing, there

³ The building that serves as Shechem Children’s Home was made possible through Alabaster giving. Thank you for your faithfulness to give to Alabaster.

are 12 children who are survivors in residence at the center, receiving a full array of psychological and social services.

According to OSEC the birth family is often the source of the victimization, finding safe placements for trafficking survivors is a key priority. After assessment and treatment, with appropriate medical and psychological or psychiatric referrals, the operational goal is to locate a healthy and positive environment in which the child(ren) can grow and thrive. Here, the assessment center interacts with a variety of service providers, including other NGO's and social services providers.

The Church of the Nazarene partners with other faith-based organizations in the ongoing work of the center. Among the groups involved in partnership with the Shechem Children's Home are the International Justice Mission (IJM), the Philippine Children's Ministry Network (PCMN), World Hope International Philippines, the Wholistic Transformation Resource Center (WTRC), and last but by no means least—the global team at Nazarene Compassionate Ministries. Together, these groups form a united partnership aimed at serving survivors of human trafficking with the compassionate grace and redeeming love of Christ.

As a function of finding safe spaces and healthy places, the Shechem Children's Home works with relatives and extended family members, with foster care providers and settings, with social services and governmental agencies, and with many other organizations. Shechem Children's Home is at the epicenter of a new model of response, treatment, and care for survivors of OSEC.

Stephen Gualberto [gwal-BER-toh] serves as Chairman of the Board for Shechem. He also serves as the Field Strategy Coordinator for two fields: the Philippines-Micronesia Field. Stephen is a graduate of Luzon Nazarene Bible College (now called Philippine Nazarene College) and is married to Theresa, also a graduate of Luzon Nazarene Bible College. After graduating from the Nazarene school, both Stephen and Theresa earned their master's degrees in education, majoring in Educational Administration and Supervision at Philippine Christian University.

While Stephen serves his assignment as the Field Strategy Coordinator for a large, active, and busy field, Theresa coordinates child sponsorship on the field and additionally serves as the Field Office Manager. These two committed, educated, and accomplished Nazarenes and their family are at the heart of what Shechem Children's Home is achieving in the ongoing fight against OSEC and trafficking.

About Stephen and his service to Shechem, Leody Echavez offers the following observation: "He is the most compassionate person I know, in terms of addressing the different social issues that are happening in our society today."

Recently, two Nazarene universities in North America have sent teams of students to Shechem to serve and help, listen and learn. Mount Vernon Nazarene University in Ohio sent a team led by Dr. Brenita [bre-NEE-tah] Nicholas-Edwards. This team interacted with the children and house parents at Shechem, providing an open exchange of compassion, inspiration, encouragement, and

support. The team's efforts were greatly appreciated by the faculty and staff of APNTS and Shechem.

Point Loma [POINT LOH–mah] Nazarene University in San Diego, California, USA, sent their “LoveWorks” team for a three-week mission during the Summer of 2019. The team constructed two new playgrounds in the area—one located on the campus of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, and the other nearby on the property of the Shechem Children's Home. At Shechem the PLNU students enjoyed adding creative, colorful murals on the walls, complementing many murals that had been painted by the children and others. While in the area, the LoveWorks group also served and helped at two Nazarene churches, doing construction and cleanup work as well as conducting games, songs, and worship experiences for children and families of the churches.

Brian Balisi [ba–LEE–see], a student at Point Loma Nazarene University and a member of the LoveWorks team that served on the trip, reported that “It was amazing to see the teamwork that played a huge role in building something that the children could enjoy with one another.”

In additional remarks about the trip and its outcomes, Balisi explained that “This was a moving experience. We were able to witness how the generosity of the church has truly shaped the lives of these children and their families.”

Serving and helping across barriers of language, demographics, and culture, the Loveworks group experienced a sense of unity and common faith, realizing that God's love brings people together.

“Our time with the children was truly memorable,” Brian Balisi explained. “It has been a blessing to be able to experience life with such an extraordinary group of people. But the greatest privilege was seeing how God could unite Nazarenes from such different parts of the world. The Love-Works team felt the passion and joy of the Filipino people. More than that, they experienced the grace of God.”

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

“Maria” (not her actual name) typifies the horrific nature of the kinds of cases that Shechem Children’s Home routinely responds to and is involved with. Maria was only ten years old when police raided her home, arresting her birth mother for crimes within the spectrum of OSEC.

Prosecutors charged Maria’s mother with receiving on-line payments from others, often foreigners, who would instruct and direct the live sexual abuse of Maria and several older siblings, while they (the purchaser) watched via webcam.

When police raided the home in 2016, gathering data and evidence for use in the criminal trial of Maria’s mother, things began to change for Maria. She and her two sisters were routed to a temporary crisis center, and were able to stay together as a sibling set rather than being split into different shelter homes or foster settings. As prosecutors began to build their case and file charges, the girls were transferred—together—to a longer term residential shelter.

Maria's life is moving in a much different direction since her rescue from the evils of internet-based human trafficking. She is experiencing the normal delights of childhood, free from the fear of ongoing abuse and harm.

After several months of safe and positive experiences away from the abuse, Maria's temperament and personality show visible signs of recovery. "I like to color, I like to make jewelry, and I like reading," Maria explains to an interviewer. Asked to describe herself, she responds with "smart" and "kind" and "generous."

Launched in September 2018, Shechem Children's Home exists to serve and help children like Maria. When you support Shechem directly, or when you or your church contribute through the secure donation pathway established at the global offices of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries, you become a part of the solution—you become an active partner in what God is doing to redeem and restore.

For the sake of Maria and others, wouldn't you like to serve and help?

GLOBAL NCM VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries is guided by several key underlying principles as it approaches its global ministry responsibilities, including these core priorities and commitments that focus on accomplishing meaningful change in all of our global areas of ministry. As we consider what God is doing through Church of the Nazarene missions on the Asia-Pacific Region, let's highlight the role of these core values.

1. Local Nazarene church involvement and leadership. While this project has been supported by NCM and came into existence through NCM Philippines, the important work being done at Shechem Children's Home and in the fight against OSEC is being coordinated via field and district offices, so that local Nazarene congregations can effectively pray, volunteer, and help. Through Stephen and Theresa Gualberto at the field offices, and coordinated via Leody Echavez at APNTS, local congregations have access to detailed and professional assistance as they reach out to serve and minister to "the least of these" among the victims of human trafficking.
2. Holistic in approach. NCM's preferred approach involves consideration of the whole person—body, mind, soul—when developing ministry and mission protocols. This core value is reflected in Shechem Children's Home and its approach to the whole-person care of the youth and adolescents to whom it ministers. Those who are assessed and then become residential guests at Shechem have access to a wide range of medical, psychological, social, and ministerial services. Medical diagnosis and psychological treatment are central to the services being provided and offered. Spiritual care is constant and ongoing.

3. Child-Focused.

Those involved in the fight against OSEC are, by definition, engaged in the battle to prevent the “Online Sexual Exploitation of Children.” Here the child-focused nature of the ministry is visible even in the acronym. Clearly the focus is to protect children from predators and from being exploited. Additionally, the focus is to provide care and healing for those who have been exploited. Shechem Children’s Home is also, by definition, a child-focused ministry that involves attentive spiritual, social, and medical care for children whose lives have been impacted by the inherent evils of online pornography and sexual exploitation. At Shechem, vulnerable and exploited children find a place of refuge and safety, an oasis of healing and hope.

4. Community-Based.

Both the fight against OSEC and the ongoing operation of Shechem are community-based efforts, coordinated in close proximity to the campus and buildings of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary. In addition, further coordination is aided by the regional office in Singapore (Mark Louw [LOH], Regional Director) and by several field offices—including the Philippines and Micronesia. The APNTS campus community, the local community in the

metro Manila area (principally Taytay [TIE–tie]) and the communities of faith in the vicinity are active in these ongoing efforts to protect and support children.

5. Transformational.

Each chapter of this book describes ministry that is high-impact and by nature highly transformational. Although we have time and space to only discuss a few of the cases in specific, excellent reports have come from recent ministry teams (Point Loma Nazarene University, Mount Vernon Nazarene University) who have visited and helped at Shechem. These eyewitness accounts from recent on-site ministry teams confirm and echo the comments of many others: lives are being transformed by the power of Christ's saving grace, and by the caring and compassionate ministry of Global Nazarene Missions—expressed in the context of Manila, throughout the Philippines and beyond. The history of "Maria" described in this chapter is typical and indicative of many of those who are being rescued, restored, and assisted. The holistic transformation of vulnerable and exploited children, bringing them into physical and emotional health, as well as spiritual and soul care, is at the very heart of all that God is doing through NCM on the Asia-Pacific Region.

CHAPTER 2

AFRICA

Among the blessings of being a pastor on Oahu, Hawaii, USA is this one: Missionaries always love to come and speak in your services! When you call a missionary and inform her or him that you're phoning from Windward Church of the Nazarene in Kaneohe [kah–nay–OH–hay]—the missionary's response is universally welcoming and positive.

Come and hold a deputation service for us in Hawaii? Go ahead and check your stopwatch. You're about three seconds from "yes." Missionaries love to speak and serve in Hawaii—typically they bring their families along (we greatly encourage and welcome that) and the whole family enjoys some island time.

Gail Ragle [RAY–guh], our caring and committed NMI President for the Hawaii Pacific District Church of the Nazarene, experiences similar success. When you invite a missionary to come and speak at an NMI Convention—in Honolulu—there is once again a consistently positive response. Another welcoming factor—for those missionaries who travel between Asia and North America, the tropical

islands of Hawaii are a frequent stopover for major airlines, both domestic and international. Missionaries appreciate the convenience of stopping through Oahu en route.

Another key blessing of being lead pastor of a church on Oahu is this: each summer we conduct ministry internships in most categories of our ministry. Student interns apply online and are chosen after a careful and prayerful process of written and video interviews. Typically, our interns come from Nazarene schools—with Point Loma Nazarene University and Southern Nazarene University in Oklahoma, USA, being well-represented in recent years.

Hawaii is a missional experience for the interns, and for others who come to serve as pastors, teachers, or leaders. It is multi-cultural and highly diverse. It has its own indigenous language, which in recent years is enjoying a significant revival. Once on the verge of extinction, the Hawaiian language is now being widely taught and carefully learned by today's students. In addition to the Hawaiian language, you will find significant cultural groups in Hawaii—from Samoa, Korea, the Philippines, Japan and China—as well as other Pacific Island cultures and nations. Each of these demographic clusters produces opportunities to study and learn, crossing cultures and gaining language skills, expressing the love of Jesus in ways that are contextually appropriate and spiritually astute.

Among several dozen recent interns, there are many whose service and ministry seem exceptional, including the intern at the core of this chapter. To name only a few—Natali Perez [NAH-tah-lee PE-rez] from Point Loma Nazarene

University served with much distinction and became greatly loved by the Windward Church of the Nazarene congregation and community. She is pursuing graduate study in social work and expects to serve students and their families.

Another exceptional intern is Meg Crisostomo [kris-OHS-toh-moh], also sourced from among the student population at Point Loma Nazarene University. A native Californian, Meg adapted and adjusted to Hawaii very successfully. She was immediately welcomed at our Christian school (Windward Nazarene Academy) which serves students from Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8. Meg became a teaching assistant and quickly gained other responsibilities in administration and publicity.

Meg enjoyed her internship so much, and was so well received, that she returned for two more summers of internship service. After that, she agreed to serve as our church's Coordinator of the Internship Ministry Program. Upon graduation from Point Loma Nazarene University, she moved to Hawaii to join the work God is doing across the Hawaiian Islands. She has also completed an online master's degree program at Northwestern Nazarene University—studying family issues and youth ministry, in order to serve and lead wisely.

There are many others who deserve mention, but for the purposes of this brief chapter, let's meet Madison Barefield [MAD-uh-suhn BAYR-feeld], an intern at Windward Church of the Nazarene during a recent summer. As Madison studied and learned, served and helped, God gave her a sensitive heart for “the least of these”—including

children and youth, women and adults who are victims of trafficking.

After serving with distinction during her student internship at Windward, Madison spent three months in the Republic of South Africa, studying for her degree. Africa tugged at her heart—as did the specific plight of the women and children being trafficked for sexual purposes. When she completed her undergraduate degree program, Madison served in southern Africa for five months, during which time she felt strongly called to relocate to the area, serving and helping in a highly effective anti-trafficking ministry there. So after three months in country, followed up with another five months in country, she prayerfully enlisted for a two year term of service—fully aware that her calling might lead her to stay longer.

Her prayerful search for a way to help led this former Church of the Nazarene student intern to a faith-based organization located in the Republic of South Africa. S-Cape [es-KAYP] was formed with a specific mission: to create a place of refuge for the women and children being rescued from sexual trafficking, providing them with health care, counseling, discipleship, legal aid, employment assistance and more. Since its creation, S-Cape has expanded its mission and developed new resources for survivors, as well as new pathways for healing and restoration.

Windward Church of the Nazarene student intern Madison Barefield has now become significantly involved in the anti-trafficking movement on location in the Republic of South Africa. Madison serves as the Social Enterprise

Development Manager for S-Cape, with the goal of providing meaningful employment and income for recovering victims, as they regain health and re-enter society.

Within the remainder of this chapter we will explore what God is doing across the African continent, especially through the lens of a local, effective faith-based organization that is creating pathways of rescue and recovery for the survivors of sexual trafficking.

The numbers furnished by Business Tech, a highly-regarded news firm based in the Republic of South Africa, are staggering and sad.⁴ Business Tech reports that about 250,000 persons are currently being victimized by human traffickers within the RSA. Of these, 80 percent are women and children who are being sexually exploited and trafficked.

The story only gets worse. Business Tech estimates that only one (1) percent of the victims of trafficking are rescued during their lifetimes. If this approximation is correct, then of the 250,000 persons being trafficked—perhaps 2,500 may one day be rescued. This is a sobering statistic, and it's the kind of raw data that encouraged Madison to look for ways to serve and help—especially in the direct recovery and restoration of those who are being rescued.

Across southern Africa, children and youth—especially young females—are being tricked and trapped, transported from place to place, ensnared in a life of drugs, abuse and forced sexual trafficking. Government efforts are emerging,

⁴ These statistics are gathered from the Global Slavery Index 2016. See BusinessTech article: www.businesstech.co.za/news/general/126761/south-africas-slavery-shame-250000-people-who-are-slaves-in-our-society

but are still in their infancy. At this point, the abuse of trafficking is widespread and continues on, largely undeterred.

From 2008 to 2010, a courageous woman named Miryam Cherpillod [MIR-yam CHER-pil-ahd] was co-director of a nationwide campaign to raise awareness of human sexual trafficking, with the goal of prevention and protection. Thousands of persons were impacted by the program and its publicity campaigns. As the prevention campaign gained more momentum, victims of trafficking began coming forward, seeking a way out.

The program was succeeding broadly—awareness was being raised, steps were being taken to prevent future enslavement and abuse—yet meanwhile there were many women and children wanting to find a way of escape. At that point there was no visible pathway within the RSA that led toward a successful release from the captivity and forced service of sexual enslavement. The emerging existence of so many trafficked victims led to the initial founding of S-Cape in 2010, with the goal of creating a safe space for rehabilitation, restoration, and recovery.

The Republic of South Africa passed the Trafficking in Persons Act in 2013, with the stated intention of putting a foundation in place for effective efforts at both prevention of trafficking, and also rescue of those who are enslaved. The RSA equivalent of the USA's FBI has a unit actively created and working on this complex social evil. So there is definite hope on the horizon—structural, governmental, societal—and yet in this current moment there continues to be so much trafficking, and so few successful efforts at

deterrence, intervention and rescue. Into such voids, faith-based organizations and other NGO's have a significant role to play in the ongoing fight against trafficking.

Formed and founded in 2010, the ongoing ministry of S-Cape is centered in Cape Town, Republic of South Africa. S-Cape was created with a specific mission: to establish a place of refuge for the women and children being rescued from sexual trafficking, providing them with health care, counseling, discipleship, legal aid, employment assistance, and more. Since its creation, S-Cape has expanded its mission and developed new resources for survivors, as well as new pathways for healing and restoration. At the heart of S-Cape's ministry is a former student intern from a Nazarene church in Hawaii—whose life was forever changed when God invited her to join the fight against human trafficking and sexual exploitation. Through the Church of the Nazarene, there are countless opportunities to go and serve in a variety of transformative ministries, supported by local churches, districts, fields, and regions. This is a wonderful example of those global connections.

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

“Kathryn” (not her actual name) was recruited in a large city, as she played the gambling machines in a casino-like setting. While Kathryn was inserting coins and playing on the gambling machines, she was approached by a girl she had seen in the area before. Because Kathryn had seen the girl previously, and in the same general area, she was not on her guard.

The girl initiated conversation and struck up an apparent friendship. After talking for a while, the girl invited Kathryn to come with her to another large city, where they would find “a good job” due to her connections. The girl further explained that, while Kathryn was searching for a job, she was very welcome to stay in the home of the girl’s boyfriend. The girl even offered to pay Kathryn’s bus fare to the new city! So, after only a few hours of conversation, here was a seemingly great opportunity—free travel to a new city, a free place to stay for a while, and the promise of a “good job” in the near future. Who would say no to such an attractive offer? Kathryn didn’t say no—she was glad to accept.

Once she arrived in the new city, Kathryn quickly learned the truth. On her very first night in the new setting, her “friend’s” Nigerian boyfriend explained the rules of the new home. “Every night at 7 PM, you have to dress up sexy, then get out there and earn money to cover your food and lodging here!” Kathryn was given drugs, and was expected to accept and take drugs routinely.

Kathryn pretended to agree, but secretly looked for a way of escape. She prayed that God would deliver her from this captivity and this terrifying way of life. She cried out to God in despair, asking God to save her.

As she approached a “client” in his car one evening, Kathryn begged the man to take her directly to the nearest police station. For whatever reason that night (Kathryn believes God provided) the man did exactly as she asked. Although he had not used her “services” he gave her some money. He drove her to the nearest police station. The police station, in

turn, placed her in a temporary shelter where she would be safe. From the temporary shelter she made her way to the S-Cape shelter home.

Kathryn's contact with the S-Cape ministry impacted her life in a positive direction. After treatment and care, and despite several challenges—testing positive for HIV and discovering she was pregnant—Kathryn regained health and was able to return to her home and family.

Here is an excerpt from a note she sent back to S-Cape, after staying at home for a while:

“Let me share the good news of God's blessings with you! Today my aunt offered to let me run her shop, for myself, starting at the end of this month. I am so in love with God because He kept His promise. He delivered me, and He said that He will never leave me or forsake me! He is with me—every step of the way.”

Kathryn is one of many success stories happening today in the Republic of South Africa as a committed team of workers and volunteers fight human trafficking—one life, one person, and one rescue at a time.

A NAZARENE INTERN'S TESTIMONY

How has her encounter with human trafficking impacted Madison's life and changed her worldview and life purpose? Let's find the answers in Madison's own words of testimony.

First Steps: “When I first learned about human trafficking, it was about the economic type of trafficking; forced or cheap labor. I think the major shift that happened in my life was that I became a lot more aware of my purchases. As I started doing research and learning about all of the

industries that are inundated with trafficking, I was a bit overwhelmed. I started with small steps, like only buying fair trade coffee or fair trade chocolate. Eventually that transitioned into buying only ethically sourced clothing and shoes, and more.”

Sexual Trafficking: “When I initially started working with survivors of sexual exploitation and trafficking, it challenged me in countless ways. I became much more compassionate, humble, and also hopeful. I have met some incredible women who have literally gone through the experience of hell on earth—but who are now full of the most genuine hope, love, and joy. I have met women who, in spite of being exploited and victimized and trafficked by others, somehow have come to realize that God is good, and that God loves them with all His heart.

“God continues to restore and reconcile us. I have watched as women were reunited with their families after as much as 10 years of separation, and the forgiveness and restoration that are present in those moments—is nothing short of heavenly, right here on earth.”

Personal Impact: “Starting my own journey of healing has helped me become a better advocate for the women we serve. While my trauma looks different from theirs, there is something powerful about embracing your own process, and having others see you in the midst of that. We are all healing from something, and to know that we are not walking this journey alone is very powerful.

“I have learned that no darkness is too dark for God. I have learned that all is not lost, even when it seems like it is.

There is hope—even when it feels like the entire universe is conspiring to keep these women in slavery, and to keep them from hope and healing. I have learned that God is always ready to help these women walk into the health and the fullness that He has for them.”

“The story is not over—not for them, not for us, not for anyone. God is not finished yet—so neither are we, until we see the Lord’s Prayer answered, and we see God’s kingdom and Lordship here on earth as it is in heaven.”

GLOBAL NCM VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE

As we consider what God is doing through the Church of the Nazarene in Africa, let’s look at God’s activity through the lens of NCM’s core commitments.

1. Local Nazarene church involvement and investment. Every Nazarene church has the opportunity to teach and train the next generation of leaders. At Windward Church of the Nazarene in Hawaii, that specific mission is stamped into the DNA of our church. One of our highlight programs is a summer internship ministry, which brings us “the best and the brightest” students from Nazarene universities. These gifted students learn children’s ministry, youth ministry, worship ministry, compassionate ministry and many other aspects of church life. They then go on to lives of service and accomplishment around the globe. One such ministry intern, described in this chapter, now serves in a leadership role in South Africa,

helping to direct the fight against human trafficking in that nation. As the local Nazarene church that helped to train Madison—and benefitted from her heart for ministry and for service, Windward Church of the Nazarene is proud of her!

2. Holistic in approach.

From the beginning, S-Cape's methodology has been to care for the whole person—body, mind, soul—in its treatment protocols. Mental, physical, and spiritual care is encompassed by the scope of services being offered, including referrals to other providers where relevant. S-Cape is gaining national recognition in the Republic of South Africa and is developing a reproducible model that would function well across the continent of Africa.

3. Child-Focused.

Some of the survivors who have been rescued through the ministry of S-Cape are youth and adolescents; some of these have children of their own. Other rescued survivors are adults with dependent children, varying in age from infants to teens. S-Cape is constantly and intentionally involved in creating effective ministry to children, a focus on children, and children's issues—health, wellness, safety, and education are among the priorities addressed in the S-Cape care protocols.

4. Community-Based.

S-Cape staff members and helpers are drawn from the immediate local metropolitan area, and also come from nearby cities. As the ministry has expanded, the name and reputation of S-Cape have been strengthened by God as a witness to the integrity and the quality of the services being offered and the lives being changed and supported. S-Cape has an outstanding reputation within the community that it serves, and is increasingly recognized by the government agencies and by other nonprofit organizations.

5. Transformational.

The ministry focus of this chapter is high-impact and by nature highly transformational. If you could meet any of the survivors who have been aided by S-Cape—you would be in awe of the transformation that God has wrought in each life. The power of darkness is broken; the authority of God's light transforms lives with radiant hope and ongoing healing. S-Cape is a community of faith that is being used by God to radically transform lives in Cape Town, South Africa—and beyond.

CHAPTER 3

EUROPE

In April 2007 God changed our lives forever. From that moment on, we would see differently, pray differently, think differently, and act differently. That place in time became a defining moment for us, David and Lisa Frisbie. *The Road Back*—our labor of love—is one outcome of a Divine encounter that permanently altered our trajectory and significantly redefined our ministry.

The date was April 28, 2007. We were speaking and counseling at a field conference for the missionaries and pastors of the Southeastern Europe Field, Church of the Nazarene Global Missions. We were in Balchik [BAHL–chik], Bulgaria, a small industrial town on the coast of the Black Sea. As always at such events, there were a few pastors and missionaries attending from several nearby nations and regions. The conference was crowded, always noisy, filled with God’s Holy Spirit, punctuated both by laughter and by tears. It was, as the planners had hoped it might be, a time of refreshment and renewal for stressed-out Christian ministers and their families—teachers, pastors, social workers, and missionaries.

Teaching sessions thoroughly filled our mornings. After a brief break for lunch, our afternoons were spent in direct counseling sessions with missionaries and pastors from many nations—usually in the presence of a translator. In the evening, we helped conduct worship services. On one particular night, we closed the devotional and worship session with an open altar, inviting people to come forward and pray, interceding for others or perhaps asking God for a fresh touch of His mercy and blessing. Our message that night was not an evangelistic sermon—all of the conference guests were either Nazarene pastors or Nazarene missionaries, together with their spouses and children. We were already believers, just maybe believers in need of some fresh encouragement and hope.

Moved by God's Spirit, many came forward to pray. Men prayed with the men; women prayed with the women. Some prayed out loud, in the language of their native country. The room was flooded with prayer and praise, punctuated by moments of laughter or tears.

That night, although we came together from many different countries, we were one as the body of Christ – giving and receiving, praying and being prayed for. Spontaneous groups gathered around those who were praying, raising their hands in the air and asking God for a fresh infusion of His presence. The altar time that night was prolonged and beautiful and refreshing. And after an extended period of prayer and praise—there was only one person still praying.

The one person still praying was a woman from somewhere in Eastern Europe, praying together with Lisa. Both

women had tears in their eyes. I prayed silently before approaching them, then knelt down by my wife to offer my prayers and my assistance, if useful.

It became a moment of Divine encounter.

As I knelt down beside Lisa, the other woman suddenly looked up in my direction. As long as I live, I will not forget the expression on her face, the tears in her eyes, or the emotional impact of her haunting question.

“How can I help these women?” she asked me, entreating for an answer.

God used that question to change our lives.

In the ongoing conversation that followed, the woman poured out her heart. Her name was Monica and she was a qualified and well-trained registered nurse. She worked in a medical clinic in her native Romania. She was married to a wonderful Nazarene pastor; together they lived in an urban area in the midst of one of Romania’s largest cities.

“How can I help these women?” was her question. And as we learned, what she meant was “How can I change the lives of persons—usually women and children—who are enslaved in the terror of human trafficking?”

Outside her clinic, outside her church and outside her home, the woman was surrounded by the visible victims of trafficking. She watched them stand outside at night, barely clothed, waiting for a car to stop or a drunken tourist to approach. She saw them in the early mornings, as their long night of slavery ended—coming back to their captors to pass over their earnings. Weak and weary, she saw the look of hopelessness in their eyes. She saw the welts and bruises

on their arms and faces; damage inflicted either by the "customers" or by their employers, their captors.

After living in the midst of so much hopelessness for so long, here was a woman who was ready to do something. But what? But how? What she brought to the altar that night, on April 28, 2007, was simply an open heart, the tears of a compassionate nurse, and a haunting question.

"How can I help these women?"

Together, we began to pray and search for answers with her. The next day, we included her pastor/husband in the conversations and the prayers. Now there were four of us—bonding together despite the thousands of miles (kilometers) between our homes and our nations. We prayed and asked God for His wisdom. We prayed and asked God to show us a way to rescue and release those held captive by this evil.

Little by little, day after day, God began to hear and answer our prayers, providing His wisdom and His insight. Although we left Balchik, Bulgaria without a specific solution in view—just many prayers, a persistent dream, and a determined woman—we could sense God at work to prepare the way, empowering hope and healing for the victims of human trafficking in Romania and the surrounding nations.

BABY STEPS

An often-misquoted Chinese proverb roughly translates as "a journey of a thousand miles (1,609.34 kilometers) begins with a single step." What the wise and insightful proverb fails to mention is that while you are taking that

first step, and then the next few steps, and the ones after that—you may not feel like you're making any progress at all.

One year after the April 2007 conference we gathered again in Bulgaria for a follow-up conference with much of the same group. Although we had been in steady and regular contact with the woman and her husband via telephone, text, and email, the four of us had not seen each other in person during the intervening year. By now we felt much closer—we had shared many conversations and much prayer time—but there was little to report in the way of tangible, visible progress.

Where should we begin? We were asking God to show us the small steps, the tiny but concrete choices that would lead us sequentially forward, leading to the creation of a safe space, a place of rescue, a treatment center filled with healing and hope. God had identified some of those upcoming steps for us during the initial conversations and prayer times a year earlier. We knew that what was needed was a non-governmental, nonprofit organization (NGO) through which to raise funds and build infrastructure. Ideally, that nonprofit would be based in Eastern Europe but would be easily accessible by donors across all of Europe, within North America, and beyond.

We needed to locate a viable site—an apartment or a group of apartments, a former hotel or motel, or perhaps a large home. We needed a staff—counselors, nurses, housekeepers, cooks, plus teachers and others who could educate and train those who were being rescued. Although we didn't know it yet in April, 2008, we would also need a trained

security force, with armed guards in place around the clock at the eventual Rescue Center. Where would we find caring and committed persons to serve as the staff? Where would we find trained persons to serve the medical and therapeutic counseling needs of the survivors? How would God supply, when we had so little to offer to the process—mostly dreams, hopes, and prayer.

There were so many needs, right from the start, and so few supporters or donors. Where would one even begin? Not surprisingly for a former Eastern-bloc nation, there was a lot of "red tape" to overcome. It was difficult or impossible to create a new nonprofit, obtaining approval and certification by the government. Barrier after barrier loomed ahead; efforts to incorporate or to form a new entity failed repeatedly. Time after time, prayer after prayer, the doors seemed more closed than they were open. Yet without a doubt, God was at work—keeping the dream alive, keeping the prayers current, and keeping the trans-Atlantic and cross-cultural communication flowing. It was clear that God had placed a burden on the right heart, in the right place, at the right time. It was clear that God had chosen an Eastern European nurse to carry this torch and to lead this mission. And by God's amazing grace, He was allowing us to be "midwives" at the birth of a new ministry.

We had a perfect place to start: God had supplied us with a great leader in Monica.

This woman with tears in her eyes, the woman in whom God birthed this dream and through whom He created a place of rescue—this awesome woman would lead the new

ministry. A survivor of communist rule who was herself nearly killed as the Ceaușescu [chow-CHES-kyoo]⁵ dictatorship collapsed in 1989—she was (and is) fearless in the face of opposition and determined in the face of setbacks.

Trained as a nurse, married to a pastor—Monica was active in ministry to women and children already. She had the heart for the role, and the determination of an entire army. Formidable both in prayer and in person—God had supplied the leader.

Yet there were many things that we seemed to lack, one year after first listening to the dream. There was not yet any government approval to create or operate a new nonprofit organization. There was not yet an apartment or a house or a building from which to launch the residential aspect of rescue and recovery, though there was a building owned by two doctors who had committed to establishing a medical foundation. Ultimately, that building was sold and the money was used to purchase an appropriate residential center in a suitable area.

We did not have a staff of medical professionals and therapists, beyond the godly woman who would serve as the director. There was so much that we did not have, even one full year after our original prayers had been prayed! Yet there was much that God had supplied—God had birthed this dream in the heart and soul of a wise woman who was well

⁵ Nicolae Ceaușescu (26 January 1918–25 December 1989) was a Romanian communist politician and leader. He became Romania's head of state in 1967, serving as president from 1974 until his overthrow and execution in the Romanian Revolution in December 1989.

qualified and God-called to lead the ministry. After a full year of praying and planning, we had a better perspective on the goal. We could see the basic contours of the next several steps—but, not much farther ahead than that.

Progress comes step by step. It would be four more years before the Center officially opened, although the work began (rescue, treatment, recovery) somewhat before the center was unveiled and operational. By the end of 2012, God had supplied a suitable house in a residential area—with approval for the intended purposes. God had begun to assemble a staff and a team, and needed support was beginning to flow in.

MORE THAN A BUILDING

Almost immediately, word of the center spread throughout the social services and ministerial network of the large city. For so long, this environment had needed a place of refuge for persons (primarily females, often with children to care for) who were trying to escape from the horror of human trafficking. Now there was a place; word spread quickly and the Center quickly filled to capacity—and beyond.

Between the early months of 2013 and the closing months of 2014, the center and its ministry grew at an exponential pace. It was almost impossible to keep track of the metrics and the markers. Looming in the background of each “number” of new persons helped, there was often a tragic and dramatic back story, intersected by the grace of God and the grace-filled ministry of the Center’s leader.

One reason for the center's swift and sure success was the integrity and tenacity of God's chosen leader. Monica Boseff [BOH-sef], wife of a Nazarene pastor, became the face of hope for an entire generation of suffering women and children. She was in and out of government offices, social service offices, and churches. She traveled from Eastern Europe to various sites in Western Europe and in North America, telling the story of the center and enlisting additional support from congregations and donors. Security guards and other staff members were added to the team.

The center was featured by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), expanding the reach and influence of the mission so that additional donors would notice. The Center's work caught the attention of the State Department of the United States of America. There were (and still are) so few highly effective, fully contextualized treatment centers for those who are fleeing from captivity and trafficking. The options are limited; success is rare. During a visit to Romania by then U.S. Vice President Joseph Biden [BIE-den], the center and its director received an award from the United States State Department. The award was presented to Monica Boseff in person, by Jill Biden, wife of the vice president.

Very quickly, key metrics were accomplished. The day came when 100 survivors had been rescued from trafficking. After months and years of praying and preparing, suddenly the rush of time accelerated. Soon there were 200 persons that had been rescued—with each individual life story, God was creating an important, meaningful, and essential part of the rescue narrative.

Editor's Note: The program focuses on an intentional pathway—from victims, to survivors, to fighters against further human trafficking. It is an 18-month program, that begins with rescue. Collaboration with the Department for Fighting Organized Crime and Human Trafficking establishes the initial referrals of women who have been trafficked to the Center. Each case is assessed, calling upon qualified psychologists, social workers, and lawyers. Three contracts are signed once a victim is admitted: a confidentiality contract; assuring the woman that she is in a safe house, that assistance will be provided through competent services; and that rules will be followed to protect, nurture, and guide her into an integrated life in society—a life of dignity and freedom.

The survivor and the Center's team work with the lawyers to see the case through the court systems. Physical, emotional, educational, and social background evaluations are conducted. Staff are always with the survivors to support them in the long process. Spiritual life is addressed, and opportunities to pursue spiritual development are given. Many of the survivors come to the local Church of the Nazarene, expressing a palpable hunger and deep thirst for God, freedom, and peace in their lives. Educational opportunities are made available to help develop suitable skills, grow talent and voice, and to help survivors find affirming work in society. The holistic transformation restores dignity to each life. Every person has value, any person can rise from their broken past, and each one who graduates from the

program continues to be supported by those who love her. Survivors are taught how to manage money, and are assisted in finding housing, and raising their children without the haunting shadows of the past destroying their future. To date, 85 percent of the more than 400 survivors who have graduated from the program are living healthy, integrated lives, independent of the Center.

Through the efforts of this treatment center created by Nazarenes in the formerly oppressed nation of Romania, there in the heart of the capital city, God has placed a beacon of hope, a place of safety, a center of healing and recovery. By God's grace, each one delivered from trafficking and choosing to move forward and live that grace out in their lives, becomes a powerful voice of freedom and hope.

With so many stories to choose from, the space constraints of this small book force us to choose only a few. Accordingly, here are a few glimpses into some of the creative ways that our loving God has used the Center to "release the captives" and to heal the wounds of the broken.

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

The phone rang at the Center. The caller was concerned about a neighbor across the street, who was apparently being trafficked by her husband. The caller had watched and listened, quietly noting the physical abuse and forced trafficking that her neighbor was enduring at the hands of her trafficker, her husband. So at some point, after fully

understanding the nature of the problem across the street, the caller began asking around within her network. Did anyone know of an organization that could help? Was there a phone number to call? Did anyone know of a group or an agency that might assist in the rescue of this and other trafficking victims?

These inquiries led the caller to our Center. Now the caller was on the phone, describing the situation as she had personally observed it. Primarily, the caller wanted to know some very basic things: How could she help? What might she do?

The center's advice to her was strategic. The caller was instructed to watch for a time when the neighbor's husband (who was forcing his wife into trafficking) appeared to be away from the house. At that point, the caller should knock on the woman's door. If the husband was at home, after all, the caller should merely ask to borrow some flour or sugar. But if the husband was absent, the caller should tell the woman that an immediate rescue was possible. The woman should grab her identification papers (only) and her young child—and flee instantly, at that moment. The caller would transport her and her child to the center.

Praying, and praying together with another family member, the caller watched and waited for her opportunity. Finally, an occasion presented itself. Gathering her courage, the caller walked across the street to her neighbor's house. The husband was away. Quickly, the caller explained the situation: "You and your child can be safe. There is a place you can live, where people will help you start a new life, away from

the violence, away from the trafficking. But you must choose right now—this moment—and you must act quickly!”

Trembling with disbelief, the trafficking victim looked into the face of the compassionate neighbor at her door. “This is not the kind of life I want for my child,” she cried. “I want my child to be safe, to grow up in safety and be healthy.”

As instructed, the victim gathered her identification papers and her child. Her neighbor immediately took both the mother and child back to her own home. When it was fully dark, they discreetly and carefully walked to a bus stop, taking a bus to the opposite side of the country. The caller-neighbor, now rescuer, paid for the bus tickets and traveled with the victim and her child to the destination.

As the bus arrived in the distant city, the center had staff waiting to meet the survivor and her son, plus the rescuer. To the survivor, the Center immediately gave welcome and hope, food and housing, plus initial assessment and counseling. To the rescuer, the center’s offer was sincere: “Come back to the Center with us, and share a meal with us. You can go back home a little bit later.”

“Oh no,” the rescuer replied. “It is enough for me to know that this woman and her child are safe now. Since I know they are safe, I will immediately go back to my own home. But, thank you for your kind offer!”

At her own expense, and at much risk to her own safety, this woman had rescued a neighbor and her child from violence and trafficking. She had bought their bus tickets to travel to the place where the center is located. And now, without waiting for any additional thanks and without

accepting even a meal as gratitude—she paid for a bus ticket, and rode the bus for 10 or 12 hours back home.

The woman who was rescued—and her child—are doing very well.

The woman who did the brave rescuing and the transportation of the survivors—went home and resumed her business.

THE YOUNGEST VICTIMS

For reasons that you will readily understand, the details here will be kept to a minimum. There will not be much description of what we are reporting here. You will understand the minimal nature of the narrative when you grasp the situation.

Among the now 400-plus rescues in which the Center has been involved, some are more graphic and memorable than others. Acting on information that was revealed by a former victim of trafficking, the government of Romania launched their largest-ever raid on pornographers. The outcome of that successful raid was the breaking of a large network of child pornographers, whose videos and internet pornography involved children as young as three and four years old.

As the raid unfolded, very young children were rescued from literal slavery. Kept chained in dark basements and forced to perform painful and horrifying acts on camera, for the financial benefit of their captors, these children were suddenly “free” as a result of a coordinated, combined government operation. But what could the government do with these suddenly liberated infants and children? Where should

they be sent? What could be done with them? Who would take care of them?

The phone rang at the Center—which is not a ministry to children, and which is not directly engaged in the war on pornography and internet-based exploitation. The phone rang, and the government asked if the center could accept and care for these suffering children—victims of abuse, pornography, and sexual exploitation. Having already reached its capacity and its limits, the center tried to explain that there was simply “no room” and “no place” for these suffering children.

Yet as the conversation continued, the government was insistent. “We have no one else to turn to,” the authorities told the center. “There is no one else who will help. We know that you do excellent work with women and children. We know that these children will be safe with you.”

So with some reluctance, and after considerable prayer, the director of the center agreed to receive—and find places for—these youngest victims. Each and every story was heartbreaking. The wounds and the medical issues were many. It was difficult—even for a trained nurse or an experienced social worker—to see the wounds and to hear the stories of these young children. And you understand why we do not share the horrors or describe the difficulties in these few pages.

For here and now, we should focus primarily on the outcome.

One day young children were chained and suffering, abused and wounded, exploited and trafficked with no

hope in sight. And then on the next day, by God's grace and through the ministry of caring Nazarenes, these same children were set free! Now they were loved, nourished, treated, helped, cared for, and settled into safe places. Now the healing could begin for "the least of these." Now their personal stories could change from the darkness of evil to God's life and light.

In this particular raid, and in this specific situation, two dozen children were rescued from some of the darkest and basest types of trafficking in existence. God used the Center—primarily established to help women escape from their captors and begin new lives—to help very young children recover from horrible treatment and terrifying abuse. Back in April 2007, could anyone have imagined this rescue?

God could—and did. God's grace reaches and saves the least of these.

GLOBAL NCM VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE

As we consider what God is doing through the Church of the Nazarene in Eastern Europe, let's look at God's activity there through the lens of NCM's approaches.

1. Local Nazarene church involvement and leadership.
In this case, the director of the Center—the leader whom God supplied—is not only a registered nurse and a skilled administrator, she is also the wife of a Nazarene pastor, both of whom came to Christ in the earliest days of Nazarene missions in Romania. The message of holiness and transformation has

provided strong foundations for this work. Right from the start, a local Nazarene church was central to the emerging ministry of rescue and hope, providing space for project activities, as well as volunteers. And the story gets even better: The name of the local Nazarene church through which this ministry was formed and is supported: The Blessing Church of the Nazarene! Can you imagine a more appropriate name for a church engaged in this ministry?

2. Holistic in approach.

From the beginning, the Center's approach has been to treat the whole person—body, mind, soul—in its care protocols. Medical diagnosis and treatment is central to the ministry; the leader is herself a registered nurse. Doctors are available and accessible as well. Second, the issues of cognition and learning are addressed via literacy training, the continuation or the beginning of education (degree completion, classes for children) and courses in practical areas such as self-sustaining jobs, parenting skills, and basic life skills. Finally the care of the soul is addressed through chaplains, pastors, and caring believers among the staff and helpers at the Center. In this way, the "whole person" of each survivor receives care and attention.

3. Child-Focused.

Some of the survivors who have been rescued through the ministry of this Center are very young children,

not yet in adolescence. Others are youth and adolescents who have already given birth to children of their own. Still others are adults with dependent children, varying in age from infants to teens. The net result is that the Center is constantly involved in ministry to children, focus on children, and children's issues—health, wellness, safety, and education are among the priorities in the Center's approach to Child-Focused care.

4. Community-Based.

As we have discussed in these pages, "it takes a village to raise a child." Center staff and caregivers are drawn from the immediate local community, and also come from nearby nations. As the ministry has expanded, the name and reputation of the Center have been strengthened by God as a witness to the integrity and the quality of the services being offered and the lives being changed and supported. The Center has an outstanding reputation within the community that it serves, and is increasingly recognized by the government at national and local levels.

5. Transformational.

Each chapter of this book describes ministry that is high-impact and by nature highly transformational. If you could meet any of the survivors who have been aided by the Center—you would be in awe of the transformation that God has wrought in each life. Lives that were once bound in darkness have

now been liberated through the power of God's Holy Spirit and through the brave, determined, and fearless efforts of Monica Boseff and her team of caregivers and helpers. Each and every day—lives are being transformed for eternity.

CHAPTER 4

CALIFORNIA

Just north of the US border with Mexico sits one of the most populous states within the United States of America: California. At the southernmost tip of California, San Diego County covers more than 4,500 square miles (11,655 square kilometers) of scenic geographic area—a vast expanse of mountains, valleys, arid desert areas and tropical coastlines, as well as numerous heavily populated cities and neighborhoods. In and of itself, San Diego County is larger than either the entire US state of Delaware or the entire US state of Rhode Island, or the country of Gambia, West Africa. And this is just a county we’re describing; only one county among the 58 counties that make up the state of California.

Current population estimates for San Diego County place it in the range of 3.3 million persons, or about one tenth of the 39 million persons in the state. Because of its proximity with Mexico, the border areas of San Diego County have long been reputed to be corridors for trafficking—in drugs, in weapons, and also in humans. Some of the trafficking in

humans merely involves voluntary smuggling—people paying to make the dangerous, expensive, and illegal trip from Mexico or Central America into San Diego County, as a point of entry into the United States. Some of the trafficking is much more sinister: the involuntary trafficking of persons for sexual exploitation. Despite walls and fences, the challenges of trafficking continue to confront and confound law enforcement on both sides of the border.

Several decades ago, a thriving holiness school named Pasadena [pas–uh–DEEN–uh] College in Pasadena, California made the prayerful decision to leave Los Angeles County, moving farther south to a coastal location in San Diego County. Now located in the Point Loma area of San Diego, and now known as Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), the school enjoys an excellent and well-earned reputation as a first-rank educational center.

The school has recently ventured into online and adult education, including adult degree completion. The result is that the total number of students at Point Loma, including both traditional undergraduate and those in various other degree programs—has now reached nearly 5,000. Of these students, close to two thirds are in undergraduate degree programs, with the remaining third studying at the graduate level in one of PLNU's many high-acclaimed academic programs.

When Jamie Gates,⁶ a 1992 graduate of Eastern Nazarene College and a 1995 graduate of Nazarene Theological

⁶ Jamie Gates is the son of Charles and Judy Gates, who served as Nazarene missionaries for nine years in South Africa.

Seminary, arrived to serve at Point Loma he was searching for ways to combine his heart for compassionate ministries with his interest and training as a cultural anthropologist. Studying economic, political, and social justice issues in Southern California, Gates was struck by the relative lack of information related to issues of human trafficking. Out of his concern, Gates helped to found and form the Center for Justice and Reconciliation (CJR) on the campus at Point Loma Nazarene University. And although a relatively young organization, CJR has already gained a national and international reputation for its excellent work studying human trafficking in San Diego County and beyond.

Recently the United States Department of Justice awarded a grant to CJR, for purposes including the study of human trafficking from economic, criminal, and social perspectives. Chief architects of the study included Gates from Point Loma, along with Ami [AIM-ee] Carpenter, an educator at the nearby University of San Diego.

Together, Gates and Carpenter helped research and produce the report “Measuring the Extent and Nature of Gang Involvement in Sex Trafficking in the San Diego, California/Tijuana, Mexico Border Region (2013-2016).” Their groundbreaking research was sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), which is a research, development, and analytical branch of the U.S. Department of Justice. The NIJ has been at the forefront of funding and commissioning research related to human trafficking within the United States.

Briefly, here are some of the findings from the multi-year research project, relating to human trafficking in this specific area of the country:

- As many as 8,000+ victims of human trafficking per year
- As many as 110 separate gangs involved in trafficking persons
- An estimated US \$810 million in illegal and unreported revenue
- Human trafficking is the second largest type of trafficking in the region, second only to chemical/drug trafficking
- An average of 4.5 persons are trafficked by each individual trafficking facilitator (i.e. pimp, gang member, etc.)
- 16 years old—average age at which victims are recruited into and enslaved by the trafficking networks
- On average, victims are trafficked for three years before coming to the attention of local law enforcement agencies
- Social media is often a recruiting platform for traffickers. Gangs are known to recruit via social media, including Facebook and Twitter.
- Significant recruiting efforts are taking place in middle schools and high schools throughout the region
- A significant and growing number of those persons who are sex trafficking facilitators (recruiters, traffickers) are female

In addition to his collaborative work on the NIJ research project, Gates has leadership roles in many other anti-trafficking networks and movements. Among his current commitments are serving as co-chair of the Research and Data Committee of the San Diego County Advisory Council on Human Trafficking and the Criminal Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC). He is the founder and current director of the Human Trafficking Research and Data Advisory Roundtable (HT-RADAR). He is leading a project aimed at creating drama-based educational programs for students in San Diego's middle schools and high schools, where trafficking recruiters are already active. The project hopes to build awareness of the methods used by trafficking recruiters, toward a goal of reducing the number of those recruited.

Well-known in San Diego County and increasingly throughout the United States, Gates serves as an expert witness when legislators are crafting legal strategies to stem and oppose human trafficking. He is networked with other faith-based organizations that oppose trafficking, helping them organize and grow.

Yet over and above all of these many avenues of leadership, Gates is perhaps most recognized for his work to implement an innovative scholarship program for victims and survivors of human trafficking. The program is already operational on the campus of Point Loma Nazarene University, where lives are already being transformed by the spiritual impact and witness of a Christian campus, and the economic impact of a scholarship fund which benefits survivors.

“BEAUTY FOR ASHES”: A SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS OF TRAFFICKING

In the words of this pioneering Point Loma Nazarene University program:

“Aside from a deep faith in Christ and a supportive community to surround them, there may be no more important long-term intervention for the rehabilitation of survivors of human trafficking than the loving, academically challenging, and carefully mentored environment of a Christian university education.”

Toward this goal, Point Loma Nazarene University and its Center for Justice and Reconciliation established the “Beauty for Ashes” scholarship fund in 2014. The original goal was to raise the approximate price of one year of college education (about US \$40,000 at that time) in order to help one survivor to experience a Christian university education. Since that initial effort, the involvement of caring donors has helped the program to grow organically and to thrive economically.

Program sponsorship began in 2016, and in December 2018, the first two “Beauty for Ashes” scholars graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University. Then in May 2019, a third survivor-scholar graduated from PLNU.

PROFILES OF A LEADER

Kim Berry-Jones is the director of the “Beauty for Ashes” scholarship program at Point Loma Nazarene University.

Kim has a lot of PLNU in her history and her heritage. Her parents graduated from Pasadena Nazarene College (which relocated and became PLNU). Her grandparents also graduated from Pasadena Nazarene College. So, Kim is herself a third-generation student at what is now Point Loma Nazarene University—a living success story, and a tribute to the godly heritage of a Nazarene university founded in 1902 in Southern California.

Kim's journey into leadership of the scholarship fund for survivors began with a sense of calling. Although not specific yet (she had no idea that the fight against sex trafficking would become her cause and her passion) she was filled with a sense that God had "more" for her life. She was succeeding in business and was leading the Business Alumni Association at her alma mater, PLNU. She owned a marketing company, Canopy Marketing, for two decades. There was success in her life, and there was leadership on her resumé—yet she sensed God at work, preparing her for a larger calling and a wider mission.

At about this same time, Kim's local church began to sense a burden to "bring back" a park in their neighborhood. The park had long since been overrun with violence, gang activity, and drug and alcohol abuse. Crime was rampant and neighbors were often afraid to be in the park, even during normal daylight hours. Praying and attempting to be prepared for almost anything, the church began its outreach ministry in the park. Expectations were low, but anticipation was high.

Let's let Kim talk about this mission in her own words:

“What we found when we went to the park were hurting people who longed for relationship, and this began a journey for my church that fundamentally changed the way we see our role in the community.”

Another “found” item in the park was a 13-year-old girl who was being trafficked out of the park every night by her father. At the time, Kim had her own 13-year-old daughter at home. The idea that a girl the same age as her daughter was enduring the terrors of human trafficking—captured Kim's attention. She knew that she needed to do something. But what? And how?

At about this time, Kim learned about the Center for Justice and Reconciliation at Point Loma Nazarene University. She interacted with Jamie Gates and learned more about the socioeconomic dynamics of trafficking. Kim and Jamie talked about potential ways that PLNU might get involved in the fight against trafficking, and specifically in the rescue and recovery of the survivors.

These conversations, combined with the research of the CLJ, led to the formation and foundation of the “Beauty for Ashes” Scholarship Fund. So far as anyone at PLNU can determine, this scholarship program is the first of its kind in the nation, and perhaps globally. This scholarship pathway is a template that others could follow, creating and establishing educational opportunities for survivors.

As noted earlier in this chapter, three persons (all female) have now graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University via the “Beauty for Ashes” fund. And the story

continues to unfold: As of this writing, the first of those three graduates is now enrolled in a Master of Social Work (MSW) program, and is working on campus at PLNU to build a holistic support system that empowers student success.

Kim reports that the administration of Point Loma Nazarene University is fully supportive of, and committed to, the “Beauty for Ashes” Scholarship program and the ongoing work of the Center for Justice and Reconciliation. Almost daily, new contacts and connections are made with other social services providers and other faith-based organizations that want to make a difference. The landscape of the anti-trafficking movement is changing rapidly—and at the forefront is the awesome work of the Center for Justice and Reconciliation, including Beauty for Ashes.

Let’s return to Kim’s own words for her testimony about how this type of mission and ministry has impacted her spiritual journey.

“This work has profoundly changed me. As a lifelong believer, as I rounded the corner of my 45th year of life, I knew that something inside me was shifting. I knew what it meant to ‘follow God’ and I knew that it meant loving others.

“But what grabbed hold of me was the idea that Bob Goff uses as the title for one of his books: *Love Does*. That simple idea—that love is about specific and tangible actions, not just words—was transformational for me.

“Once I discovered that human trafficking and sexual exploitation was a scourge in my own neighborhood—right where I lived—the rest was a simple response for me.

How could I take the skills God had given me—and use them to make a difference in this battle?

“The fact that I get to use my abilities and my passions to do meaningful work in a place I love (PLNU) has been an amazing journey. When you have the courage to bring what is within you out into the larger world—miracles happen. God takes our ‘little’ and gathers it together with the ‘little’ efforts of others. When this happens, we can actually change the world!

“We can shine our light into the darkness, and we can trust that the darkness will not overcome us. We can live in the space of knowing that in the end, God wins.

“In the meantime we are called to stand in the spaces where people are unseen, forgotten, and marginalized—and to call others to see and remember and to bring their gifts and commitments into the same space. We form a circle of the caring and the committed, with our tiny efforts empowered by God’s grace.

“And in the midst of great darkness, there also exists great hope!”

A SURVIVOR'S STORY

“THE BEAUTY FOR ASHES” SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Jessica Kim is a survivor of the terrors of human trafficking.

In her case, her stepfather was the trafficker, and her victimization began when she was only 12 years old.

The stepfather entered Jessica’s life when she was 7 years old, and immediately he began to evidence what can now be

seen, in retrospect, as typical “grooming behavior” used by sexual abusers and recruiters for trafficking. Working to wean her away from her mother, Jessica’s new stepfather showered her with attention, affection, and gifts—sometimes while taking her away from her mother on extended trips.

When the trafficking began, her stepfather made her feel guilty about the family’s need for financial help. He placed the responsibility for earning money squarely on the shoulders of his 12-year-old stepdaughter. He sent her out into the world of sexual trafficking to earn money, insisting that if Jessica didn’t go to work, the family would not have food to eat. If Jessica did not do as she was commanded, the family would be unable to pay the rent and would lose their apartment.

At one point, Kim tried to escape—but was caught by her stepfather. She continued to suffer, and she continued to do what was needed to survive. Yet at the same time, she began planning and looking around for a way of permanent escape.

Her eventual escape at age 18 required a year of wise planning, made more difficult by the fact that her stepfather, who was also her trafficker, had custody of all of Jessica’s legal documents and identification. Eventually, she was free of the sexual abuse and the forced trafficking—and it was time to somehow build a new identity and a new life.

When Jessica learned that Point Loma Nazarene University was offering a scholarship program for survivors of sexual exploitation and human trafficking, she decided to apply. It was a life-changing decision for her. She was accepted into the program, receiving the “Beauty for Ashes”

scholarship and going on to complete her degree from PLNU as one of the first "Beauty for Ashes" graduates.

Today, she is giving back. While working on a master's degree in social work, Jessica is helping to create anti-trafficking resources that can be used in middle schools and high schools throughout San Diego County and beyond. She wants to reach out to others who may be suffering as she was, bringing them useful information—and concrete, tangible pathways to hope and a better life.

Jamie Gates, director of PLNU's Center for Justice and Reconciliation, notes that trafficking victims are often students while the trafficking is happening. "We have plenty of examples of victims who are being sexually exploited via trafficking while they are still going to (middle or high) school. With these victims, they are literally going to school during the day—and being forced into trafficking at night, by those who are controlling them."

Jessica says she hopes to help many others find a way of escape.

"I know for that many of us—if the doors are opened—then we can step up. That's all we need. We need an opportunity to show our true selves."

Kim Berry-Jones, the director of PLNU's "Beauty for Ashes" Scholarship program, believes that the scholarship fund will enable many other survivors to be transformed by God's grace, and by a Christian university education.

"This scholarship program says to all survivors: There are people out there that you matter to, and there are people out there who want to help you find a new life for yourself."

As donors continue to fund the scholarships, stories of hope will continue.

GLOBAL NCM VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE

God is working through the Church of the Nazarene and Point Loma Nazarene University, and NCM's key priorities are affirmed in these ministries.

1. Local Nazarene church participation.

The core ministries in this chapter of the book derive from a Nazarene university campus and its gifted leaders, including the son of missionaries. Meanwhile, local Nazarene church involvement is definitely a factor in the ongoing life of this ministry. Directly on campus at Point Loma Nazarene University, San Diego First Church of the Nazarene has been highly supportive of "Beauty for Ashes," as well as the Center for Justice and Reconciliation. Led by Pastor Dee Kelley [DEE KEL-ee], San Diego First is an activist church in the highest and best sense—committed to making a difference. Other Nazarene churches in the San Diego metro area are also involved in the ongoing work and ministry described in this chapter.

2. Holistic in approach.

From the beginning, the Center for Justice and Reconciliation at PLNU has taken a whole-person approach to ministry and care. The same mind-set guides the activities and ministries of the related

“Beauty for Ashes” program, which provides scholarships to survivors of human trafficking. Through the services and agencies of Point Loma Nazarene University, care for the body, mind and soul are integrated into the ministry protocols of CJR and “Beauty for Ashes.” It is accurate to say that most, if not all, of our Nazarene universities bring a holistic philosophy to their various programs of education and spiritual impact. In this way, the “whole person” of each student receives care and attention.

3. Child-Focused.

Some of the survivors who have been rescued through the ministry of this Center for Justice and Reconciliation are teens and adolescents. As we discussed in this chapter, gangs are actively recruiting young teenagers into the enslavement of human trafficking—often using social media and other on-line activities as the “bait” or the “hook” with which to lure the victims. The Center for Justice and Reconciliation is conducting nationally-recognized work to help keep children and adolescents safe from traffickers. And as the survivors are rescued, they receive care and attention that addresses the unique needs of persons who endure the horrors of this specific evil. A focus on rescuing and protecting children is central to this ministry.

4. Community-Based.

The work of the Center for Justice and Reconciliation is community-based in at least two dimensions.

The first dimension is the campus community at Point Loma Nazarene University—students, faculty, administration, and other constituents are engaged in this ministry. CJR and the related "Beauty for Ashes" scholarship program are rooted in and also drawn from the PLNU community. The second dimension is the broader local community of San Diego County and Southern California, including the border with Mexico. In this broader geographic community, the work of the Center for Justice and Reconciliation is receiving increased notice and attention as its research and its programs lead to successful outcomes. Already, Point Loma Nazarene University has a well-earned reputation for excellence throughout its local community and the broader state. Day by day, the work of CJR and the "Beauty for Ashes" program serves to enhance and extend this reputation for excellence, Christian commitment, and social justice.

5. Transformational.

Each chapter of this book describes ministry that is high-impact and by nature highly transformational. Although we have only been able to highlight a few of the many transformational stories coming out of the Center for Justice and Reconciliation, and the "Beauty for Ashes" scholarship program at PLNU, it is obvious that God is doing amazing things in the lives of those rescued and assisted on the road back

to health and value. God's grace is abundant, and His power to change lives is amazing! Lives that were once bound in darkness have now been liberated through the power of God's Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 5

TENNESSEE

At the center of the state of Tennessee, Rutherford County, USA, is home to more than 300,000 people, making it the fifth most populous county in the entire state. Like other counties across Tennessee and throughout the United States, the social services offered to county residents include an active and thriving domestic violence prevention and response program. Among the prominent features of the response services is a residential center where the female victims of domestic violence, together with their dependent children and adolescents, can reside in "safe space" as they heal and recover from the wounds of their past abuse.

As a child, Heather Edwards and her family were blessed by this program, finding refuge and wholeness in the social services programs of Rutherford County. So perhaps it is no surprise that, after graduating from college, Heather dedicated the next five years of her life to actively serving at the women's shelter, becoming part of the live-in residential staff. While helping in this role, she also worked as a Child Advocate, assisting minors and dependent children

who resided at the shelter as their mothers recovered from violence. Heather enjoyed the opportunity to "give back" to the very same program that had helped her own family, years before.

Today, Heather is giving back in yet another way. She is employed as the residential manager for "Rest Stop"—a highly effective ministry for survivors of human trafficking, based in Nashville, Tennessee, USA. While she serves and helps at this respected and effective ministry, Heather is also enrolled in the graduate-level counseling program at nearby Trevecca [tre-VEK-ah] Nazarene University in Nashville, where she is pursuing a masters of arts degree in Marriage and Family Therapy (M.A. MFT).

Also on staff at Rest Stop is Sydney Hayslett [SID-nee HAYS-let], an enthusiastic 2015 graduate of Eastern Nazarene College. While pursuing her studies in the field of psychology at ENC, Sydney did a student internship at Amirah [ah-MIR-ah], a shelter and safe home in Massachusetts. It was here that God began to form her heart toward caring for the survivors of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

After graduating from ENC with dual degrees in psychology and business, Sydney learned about the ongoing ministries of Rest Stop. Beginning her work at Rest Stop by working in the residential staff, Sydney transitioned into her current role as the coordinator of communications, and the coordinator of volunteers. Newly married, Sydney and husband Adam are both committed to the cause at Rest Stop.

A NAZARENE CHURCH LEARNS TO SERVE

Rest Stop is a product of the compassionate outreach and community ministry launched by the nearby Hermitage Church of the Nazarene in Nashville. While serving as the Community Life Pastor at Hermitage Nazarene from 2001 through 2015, Dr. Rondy [RAHN–dee] Smith created and founded Rest Stop Ministries as a response to visible and unmet needs within the local community. Today she serves as the Executive Director for Rest Stop, overseeing all of the ministry operations and championing the rescue and recovery of trafficking survivors.

Dr. Smith is an ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene. She earned her Master's degree in Organizational Communication from the University of Kansas, then went on to complete a doctoral degree in Organizational Development at Nashville's Vanderbilt University. For a full decade, from 1991 to 2001, Dr. Smith served as Associate Professor of Management for Trevecca Nazarene University; where she directed the graduate degree program for TNU. Her organizational and leadership skills enhance the business and financial operations of the ministry.

Notable board members of the ministry include Dr. Corlis [KOHR–lis] McGee, former president of Eastern Nazarene College, and a former professor of economics for Trevecca Nazarene University. Dr. McGee's experience in organizational and business leadership bring valuable perspective to ministry operations. In addition to the board of directors, a related advisory council includes leaders from among the survivor community, as well as church partners,

business owners, social services providers, and other persons and organizations with an interest in serving.

Collectively and collaboratively, the board, the staff and the advisory council at Rest Stop are leading an effective ministry to trafficking victims that could serve as a valuable template for others to follow, in North America and beyond. Rest Stop, birthed from a local Nazarene church, is staffed and led by numerous Nazarenes.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM:

TENNESSEE AND BEYOND

Human trafficking is a global problem, one that often goes unrecognized in prosperous countries while flourishing in places of poverty and economic stress. Here, summarized briefly, are some difficult facts about the landscape of human trafficking today.⁷

- There are an estimated 27 million persons who are enslaved today, more than at any time in our world's history
- Among those who are enslaved, about 20 percent are male, with the larger group—80 percent, being female
- Among females who are enslaved, roughly half are underage children who are being trafficked and exploited for sexual purposes
- Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is estimat-

⁷ See this link to some global human trafficking stats from Polaris, “a leader in the global fight to eradicate modern slavery”: www.polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/facts

ed to be a US \$34 billion business, making it the second-largest criminal activity in the world, while it is also the fastest-growing area of criminal activity

- Nearly 300,000 children in the United States are at risk annually for trafficking by the sexual exploitation industry
- Every 2 minutes, a child is trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation in the United States (U.S. Department of Justice)
- Nationwide, in the United States, the average entry age for trafficked persons is 13
- Nationwide, in the United States, cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation include children, primarily females, as young as 5 or 6 years old
- Within the state of Tennessee, 94 minors are trafficked each month, for an annual total of 1,128 within the state⁸
- “Human trafficking and sexual slavery in Tennessee is more common than was previously believed possible,” according to Mark Wynn, Director of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation
- 85 percent of Tennessee’s counties have documented cases of human trafficking for sexual exploitation
- Four Tennessee counties each reported more than 100 cases within their county borders in a 24-month reporting period

⁸ Information from the National Human Trafficking Hotline with Tennessee demographics: www.humantraffickinghotline.org/state/tennessee.

- Nashville, as it contains a junction of three major interstate highway systems, is a known center of the sex trafficking trade
- As of 2020, there are very few residential shelters in Nashville that exist for the purpose of aiding survivors of human trafficking
- At this intersection of human need and a scarcity of human services, Rest Stop Ministries is making a positive difference in many lives
- Rest Stop Ministries is pioneering the statewide effort to prioritize recovery and counseling services for female victims of trafficking
- Rest Stop Ministries is part of an award-winning collaborative effort in this area of service, contributing to a No.1 ranking in 2017 and 2018 from the non-profit group Shared Hope International, which rates and ranks the anti-trafficking environment in 41 of the 50 United States.

Set against this backdrop of human need and significant suffering, God has raised up Rest Stop Ministries to serve and to help.

Rest Stop describes its mission this way:

“The mission of Rest Stop Ministries is to comprehensively restore survivors and to stop the oppression of human trafficking.”

Evocative of what God is doing in the Philippines, in Romania, and in so many other places and settings, Rest Stop has a heart for the survivors, and an active interest

in thwarting the evil efforts of traffickers—now, and in the future.

Rest Stop goes on to describe its vision for operations:

“The vision of Rest Stop Ministries is to grow and develop our residential restoration program into a model of excellence, and to launch a social enterprise that supports both the financial independence of our graduates and also the sustainability of our programs.”

In this we hear echoes of Madison Barefield’s assignment in the Republic of South Africa. Madison’s role in that setting is to develop social enterprises that create financial opportunity—leading to personal financial independence—for the survivors of trafficking. As Rest Stop understands, and as S-CAPE in the Republic of South Africa also realizes, one of the best defenses against recidivism (persons returning to previous habits and practices) is the development of personal freedom and financial independence, through a viable social enterprise. Both Rest Stop and S-CAPE (mentioned in Chapter 2) are at work on business models that will create and sustain empowerment for the formerly powerless victims of oppression and exploitation.

Caring for the whole person, developing a holistic model of ministry, means caring about systems and methods that enables survivors to support and care for their children, and to plan for a future that includes safe housing, healthy choices, and financial security.

Launched in 2015, Rest Stop is already experiencing significant progress in accomplishing its mission and in developing its vision. Actively networked with other nonprofit

and faith-based organizations who are resolved to work on this issue, Rest Stop is becoming known as a valuable and much-needed resource. As of this writing (2020) the following services are currently offered through Rest Stop and its team of caring Christian counselors and workers:⁹

- 24-hour residential care and supervision
- Long-term residential treatment for survivors of sex trafficking
- Restoration programs that provide residents with on-site counseling, caring case management, and intentional daily activities aimed at providing the residents with opportunities to rest, to learn, and to heal
- Group counseling and group meetings, aimed at fostering community and building a sense of connectedness and support with others
- Information and referrals for medical care, vocational training, remedial or continuing education, chemical dependency such as drug or alcohol treatment, a range of mental health services, and other referrals as needed
- Transportation for program-related appointments, medical and mental health care, as well as social and spiritual activities that may occur off-site.

Rest Stop offers a variety of useful services to its residents, including classes and training in many relevant aspects of life success. Among the topics that have been, or are currently offered at the center, are these:

⁹ Further information may be found on the Rest Stop website: www.reststopministries.org/client-services-1

- Building self-esteem and self-respect
- Conflict resolution and peacemaking
- Creating a resume' for job applications
- Cooking and culinary skills
- Learning to communicate effectively
- Financial planning
- Preventing relapse and recidivism
- Healthy and effective parenting
- Spirituality and the care of the soul
- Healthy life skills
- Creating and enforcing wise personal boundaries
- Coping with stress and other coping skills
- 12-Step meetings with other residents

Other topics may be included as resources become available, or as needs arise within the residential care facility. Classes and training are created toward the goal of improving the current lives and the future prospects of residents. Helping women (and their dependents) go from victimization to self-realization and success is a meaningful and rewarding process that keeps the Rest Stop team encouraged and positive about their work.

There is much hope on the horizon.

The state of Tennessee has created a State Human Trafficking Task Force that comprises an interrelated network of collaborative partners from various state agencies, from nonprofit organizations and their leaders, from state legislators, from state and local law enforcement agents, from

among the community of survivors, from subject matter experts, from academic researchers, and from leaders in the local community. The partnership gains strength daily; Rest Stop is one among the partners and is making a contribution to the emerging success of the task force as it battles human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Since 2011, the state of Tennessee has passed 36 separate pieces of legislation dealing with various aspects of human trafficking. The efforts of the nonprofit organizations and community leaders, together with law enforcement professionals, have borne much fruit in the state legislature, with the result that the problem of human trafficking is being seriously and structurally addressed by the state government.

In 2013, the state of Tennessee Department of Human Services issued their comprehensive plan for the delivery of services to the victims of trafficking. Formed in 2015, Rest Stop fits squarely within the parameters of this strategic approach, providing services and opportunities that are emerging across the state, yet still in scant supply. As a pioneer in this field, Rest Stop is gathering attention from the coalition (task force) and beyond, and is being recognized for its pursuit of excellence in caring for survivors and their families.

Every day, and in many ways, Rest Stop Ministries is making a difference.

GLOBAL NCM VALUES IN PERSPECTIVE

As in previous chapters of this book, when we consider the work that God is doing through the Church of the Nazarene in Tennessee and beyond, we recognize the meaningful change taking place in lives through ministries of care and compassion to those who have fallen prey to human trafficking.

1. Local Nazarene church involvement and leadership.

As was the case in Eastern Europe (see Chapter 3) the ministry described in this chapter was a direct outgrowth of an existing Church of the Nazarene in the same geographic area. Rest Stop Ministries grew out of the caring and compassionate ministry being done by the Hermitage Church of the Nazarene in the greater Nashville, Tennessee area. As with the Romanian ministry, it was a pastoral staff member who became the founder and developer of the new ministry program aimed at serving survivors of trafficking. Dr. Rondy Smith served on staff at Hermitage as the dream for Rest Stop Ministries began to take shape. From the very beginning, the new ministry had support from the formational Nazarene congregation—support that included prayer, giving, and volunteer assistance. Nazarenes populate the current staff of Rest Stop Ministries, including current and former students at nearby Trevecca Nazarene University which is headed by pastor, author and noted theologian Dr. Dan Boone.

2. Holistic in approach.

From the beginning, Rest Stop's approach to ministry has been to treat the whole person—body, mind, soul—in its care protocols. A wide range of services are offered, with referrals and recommendations to any services that are not currently provided in-house. As with several of the ministries profiled in the preceding chapters, issues of cognition and learning are addressed via literacy training, the continuation of a high school or college education (degree completion, other classes) and courses in practical areas such as self-sustaining jobs, parenting skills, and basic life skills. Finally, the care of the soul is addressed through caring ministry from volunteers, staff, and helpers at Rest Stop. In this way, the "whole person" of each survivor receives care and attention.

3. Child-Focused.

Some of the survivors who have been rescued through Rest Stop are already the parents of young children. Others are mere youth and adolescents who have given birth to children of their own. Still others are adults with dependent children, varying in age from infants to teens. The net result is that Rest Stop is often and capably involved in ministry to children, with a focus on children and children's issues. Health, wellness, safety, and life skill education are among the priorities in Rest Stop's approach to Child-Focused care.

4. Community-Based.

Rest Stop staff and volunteers staff are drawn from the immediate local community, and also come from nearby cities. As the ministry has expanded, Rest Stop's well-deserved reputation for high quality has been strengthened and enhanced as the broader community takes note of the services and programs being offered. Local communities of faith are also taking notice, and are beginning to provide prayer, support, and referrals.

5. Transformational.

It has been our intention through each chapter of this book describes ministry that is high-impact and by nature highly transformational. The survivors who have been helped by Rest Stop staff are by God's grace made new. The road back is not always easy, but with the loving care of those involved in this ministry, and the grace of God, the destination is altogether different in these lives. Each is bound for a life of fulfillment, joy, and possibility that once would have seemed improbable, if not impossible. Lives that were once bound in darkness have now been liberated through the power of God's Holy Spirit and through the positive, excellent efforts of Dr. Rondy Smith and her team of caregivers and helpers. Each and every day—lives are being transformed for eternity.

EPILOGUE

GOD KEEPS ON WRITING THE STORIES

John closes his gospel with the realization that many other stories happened; each and all of them might well have been reported. In the Gospel of John chapter 20, verse 30, the writer makes his observation this way:

“Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.”

We feel much the same way as we close out this report about some of the ways that our global Church of the Nazarene is rightfully involved in the ongoing fight against human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

The stories that are included in this book have been told briefly and succinctly. Each story could be expanded for more benefit. Even more so, there are many other stories which were not included here, yet which merit our full attention.

There is ongoing Nazarene-led work across Africa, North America, Europe, Asia, and in many of the places where God’s people gather to pray. It would be a blessing to feature those ministries and those stories in a future book project.

For now, we are grateful to pass along what God is doing in the Philippines, in South Africa, in Romania, in Southern

California, and in Tennessee. Be assured of this: God is powerfully at work in many more places, to deliver His children from oppression.

ACT ON IT: HOW YOU CAN JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING

As the authors of this book, we were aware of human trafficking long before we felt called by God to become actively engaged in the battle against this particular evil. We were aware, but not active. We were informed, but not engaged.

For more than a decade, we pastored an inner-city Nazarene church. While serving in that role God gave us the opportunity to witness to many who were involved in trafficking (most on a quasi-voluntary basis) and God created miracles of His renewal and His restoration.

As we lived and worked in an urban ministry setting, we became involved with a ministry called “Celebrate Recovery” which, although initially aimed at helping persons recover from chemical addictions such as alcohol and drugs, has become a full-orbed mission with components including recovering from sexual addictions.

Ironically, even after a dozen years in a gritty, high-crime environment, we still did not sense a call from God to be personally involved in anti-trafficking efforts. We were content to live out our calling as ministers, responding to

trafficking survivors with a “one rescue at a time” mind-set and method.

Looking back, we feel no guilt about our minimal engagement with anti-trafficking efforts. The deepest desire of our hearts was (is) to serve God; we tried to live close to Him, so that His merest whisper would guide our steps and our pathways. If God had wanted us to get involved in anti-trafficking efforts sooner—we believe God would have called us.

On April 28, 2007—God did call us. Our encounter with a caring registered nurse (married to an inner-city Nazarene pastor) was used by God to conscript us into active duty. Today, more than a dozen years later, we have watched God rescue more than 400 survivors and have watched God’s grace transform lives with salvation, restoration, and hope.

Which brings us to you. Are you, the reader, sensing God’s call to become more active and more engaged in this particular ministry? If so, the ideas and resources below will help you prayerfully explore the possibilities of compassion, commitment, and change.

Here are several worthwhile "entry points" for your further education, connection, prayer, and then potential service in the global battle against the evils of human trafficking.

1. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries

As an expression of the global Church of the Nazarene, and of the missional and evangelistic outreach of the church, Nazarene Compassionate Ministries

partners with local Nazarene congregations around the world to clothe, shelter, feed, heal, educate, and live in solidarity with those who suffer under oppression, injustice, violence, poverty, hunger, and disease. NCM exists in and through the Church of the Nazarene to proclaim the Gospel to all people in word and deed.

Among the issues that are central to NCM's ongoing mission are health care, holistic child development, and anti-human trafficking efforts globally. Nazarene Compassionate Ministries partners with local congregations for anti-trafficking efforts that include education, awareness, and prevention. These efforts aim toward a goal of reducing the risk of persons being caught up in trafficking, as well as aiding and assisting in the recovery of survivors, through a holistic approach to care.

As a partner with and a member of the Wesleyan Holiness Consortium, the global Church of the Nazarene helped to draft a "Declaration of Freedom" which was then endorsed by the membership of WHC, including NCM. The anti-trafficking ministry of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries aligns with this key document.

2. FAAST

The Faith Alliance Against Slavery and Trafficking (FAAST) is a growing network of churches, denominations, faith-based ministries, and other caring believers—formed for the purpose of working together against this global problem. FAAST describes its mission

as "mobilizing and equipping" communities to combat slavery and human trafficking, and to restore survivors.

At the national (USA) level, FFAST leaders conduct ongoing research, training, networking, and the creation of special projects that help caring Christians connect with others who are engaged in the fight. Collectively, the participation of member congregations, denominations, and organizations multiplies the impact of the efforts, creating a larger-scale response to an admittedly large-scale issue.

FFAST sees itself as a force multiplier and as a strategic coordinator of individual efforts to make a difference. By coming together and working together, the strength of the individual organization is aligned with the strengths of others who share a common purpose and a similar determination. Already, in the few years since it began working on this issue, FFAST is creating momentum for change.

Editor's Note: Nazarene Compassionate Ministries is an active and participating member of FFAST.

3. Freedom Collaborative

Freedom Collaborative is an alliance of organizations dedicated to the ongoing fight against human trafficking at the global level. Affiliated groups include USAID, the United Nations (UNDP), Winrock International, and others.

Freedom Collaborative is primarily an online entity, producing content that assists organizations in coordinating their efforts, gaining traction toward effective action.

Webinars are produced on a variety of related topics; the Freedom Collaborative website provides access to recordings of previous webinars.

The group has a strong presence in Southeast Asia, and is involved in bringing together governmental and non-governmental (NGO) groups toward the common purpose of ending human trafficking and achieving human freedom.

The collaborative describes itself as "a hub of critical information and resources" relating to anti-trafficking efforts, intended to facilitate networks and connections between and among agencies working to solve this problem. Like FFAST, the Freedom Collaborative sees itself as an effective force multiplier for related groups.

Editor's Note: The authors of this book (Dr. David and Lisa Frisbie) are members of the Freedom Collaborative through their own organization, a recognized 501(c)3 educational nonprofit called "Healthy Habits for Parents and Families," which is based in California. One of the primary ministries of Healthy Habits is the fight against human trafficking, in Eastern European nations and globally.

Pray for the continued development of these ministries around the world, for those who lead them, and for those

who volunteer to assist. Ask God what He would have you do, right where you are, to make a difference in the lives of others, both near and far.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE ABOVE MISSIONS AND MINISTRIES

Nazarene Compassionate Ministries:

www.ncm.org

Other Nazarene/NCM endorsements found on the NCM website:

www.ncm.org/antitrafficking#resources-antitrafficking

www.abolishhumantrafficking.com

www.stopthetraffik.org/library

www.globalslaveryindex.org

www.productsofslavery.org

www.netsmartz.org

www.betterworldshopper.com

www.engagetgether.com/church

www.ncm.org/antitrafficking

FAAST:

www.faastinternational.org

Freedom Collaborative:

www.freedomcollaborative.org

www.libertyshared.org

Healthy Habits for Parents and Families:

Dr. David & Lisa Frisbie

Box 8269, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

National Human Trafficking Hotline

Call: 1-888-373-7888

Text: “BeFree” to 233733

Live Chat: www.humantraffickinghotline.org

