

# Canopy of Prayer

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contributor

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## Dear praying friends in Europe

At the time of the Old Testament it was not uncommon to make child sacrifices, such as for the god Moloch. Whoever reads the words of the biblical prophets about it, encounters a holy indignation. "The people of Judah have done evil in my eyes, declares the Lord. (...) They have built the high places of Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom to burn their sons and daughters in the fire—something I did not command, nor did it enter my mind." (Jeremiah 7:30-31) Today there are also child sacrifices. No longer for Moloch, but for the gods 'money' (Mammon) and 'pleasure' (sex). Human trafficking is big business. Thousands of children are sold for money in prostitution. What is our response?

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## Human trafficking

Human trafficking is a 'hidden' crime, just like many other forms of violence, which means that it can be difficult to discover that someone is a victim. Human traffickers do their utmost, of course, to keep the crime hidden. Victims themselves are usually trapped in a web of violence, coercion, threat and blackmail, and they often come from a vulnerable situation that can take a long time to get over before they acknowledge that they are a victim and they dare to tell someone.



Partly for these reasons, the exact number of victims of human trafficking is unknown. Several organizations have made estimates. In 2013-2014, 15,846 women, men, girls and boys were registered as victims of human trafficking within the European Union. Given the complexity associated with the registration of human trafficking, the actual number of victims is expected to be considerably higher. The annual gains from all forms of human trafficking is estimated at EUR 29.4 billion worldwide (source: Europol's report on the financial business model for human trafficking from 2015)

The need in this area seems to be greater rather than smaller in Europe. In 2016, Europol came up with the news that 10,000 refugee children in Europe had disappeared that year. The European police organization fears that many of these children have come into the hands of drug gangs and groups that abuse the minors as sex workers or slaves.

Many women and girls working in prostitution are originally from Eastern Europe. They have been lured into it by human traffickers with beautiful promises. For this reason, International Justice Mission (IJM, [www.ijm.org](http://www.ijm.org)) will soon open an office in Romania, to prevent human trafficking in Eastern Europe from there, to liberate victims and to bring human traffickers to justice.

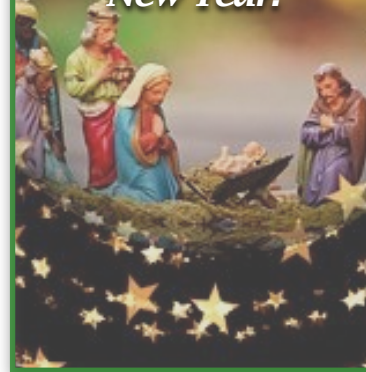
The Dutch newspaper "Algemeen Dagblad" reported on 18 October this year that the police and judiciary increasingly see extremely young victims of human trafficking. Daphne van der Zwan, public prosecutor: "Some pimps offer underage girls for 30 to 40 euros. (...) Customers sometimes even ask if it is not allowed for free. The girls are really seen as a tool."

Victims of human trafficking are often psychologically severely traumatized. At IJM we notice, however, that for them, with the right help and guidance, it is still possible to build a new life again. However, this is a matter of great patience, love, intensive care and prayer. Victims of human trafficking really need our prayers.

## Prayer

- Pray for organizations like IJM that liberate victims of human trafficking and try to challenge human traffickers in court.
- Pray that more and more politicians in Europe will open their eyes to the horrible practice of trafficking and that they will do everything in their power to fight against it.

Thank you for joining with us in prayer for Europe during 2018. May God grant you a blessed Christmas and prosperous New Year.



## Additional prayer points:-

1. **Brexit**, danger of chaos given a "No Deal" situation.
2. **Protection** against terrorist attacks during these days of less control.
3. **Belgium**, after the resignation of the Prime Minister this week.

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