

More than 100 attend Brighton vigil, pray for end to human trafficking

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(Sisters of St. Joseph)

As motorists, cyclists and pedestrians passed by the Brighton vigil, a group stood in silence and holding dozens of signs proclaiming one message, "stop human trafficking."

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

To mark the fifth annual Human Trafficking Awareness Day, which is observed across the country today, about 125 people participated in a silent prayer vigil and public witness held at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse in Brighton on Sunday afternoon.

Aiming to raise awareness and pray for an end to human trafficking, local Catholic Sisters from a variety of congregations in the Boston area hosted the gathering for the third year at [the campus](#) along Cambridge Street, event organizers said.

The vigil ended with prayer after many of the participants processed outside from the chapel where the vigil had begun in prayer, according to the religious organization that hosted the event. As motorists, cyclists and pedestrians passed by, a group stood

in silence and holding dozens of signs proclaiming one message, “stop human trafficking.”

“A reporter who joined us shared how his commitment to this issue stems from the discovery of human trafficking right in his hometown north of Boston,” religious leaders said in a press release. “A high school senior who attended the vigil told us that she selected human trafficking for her senior social justice project because of a friend from her country of origin whom she believes was trafficked. She wants her peers to know it can happen anywhere.”

The event was coordinated by the Anti-Trafficking Coalition [ATC] of the Boston Unit of the [Leadership Conference of Women Religious](#).

“Human Trafficking is modern-day slavery,” the release said. “While many call it a hidden crime, it exists right here, right now in the Boston area ... Human trafficking forces men, women, and children into pornography, prostitution and other sexual exploitation, as well as labor exploitation.”

The coalition will host its fifth symposium addressing the issue of human trafficking on Sat., May 5, officials said. This year’s topic is: “Consumerism and Human Trafficking.”

The goal of the ATC is to, “raise awareness of the reality of human trafficking both locally and globally and to alert concerned people of good will about how individuals can make a difference in eradicating human trafficking.”

A [resolution](#) passed by the U.S. Senate in 2007 marked January 11th as a day of awareness and vigilance for victims of Human Trafficking worldwide. In recent years, the issue has gained new awareness and become the focus of some new legislation, [including in Massachusetts](#). [Last week](#), President Barack Obama for the [second-straight year](#) declared all of January “National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month.”

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