

# Don't Trade Lives this Easter

As we approach Easter and remember the death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, we are reminded again of the consumerist madness of the sale of untold amounts of chocolate that we 'must' buy for our family and children. Whilst there is something I like about the idea of giving at times like Christmas and Easter, in these days when we are made more aware than ever of the consequences of our purchasing choices, we need also be aware of the power that we have to exercise our choices wisely, in ways that will benefit the most vulnerable people in the world.

If we are going to buy Easter eggs this year, have a think about where the chocolate is coming from and what processes are performed to have that sweet tasting stuff in our hot little hands. Much of the chocolate that we eat is the result of trafficking and child labour in cocoa farming in West Africa. We are the grateful recipients of a long process that keeps thousands of the world's poor in a state of helplessness and vulnerability.

To help combat this, World Vision has launched a campaign called 'Don't Trade Lives'. This campaign will initially focus on the issue of chocolate in the lead-up to Easter, and will then address specific issues such as Australia's role in trafficking, trafficking into child labour situations, and trafficking into the sex trade.

The scale of the problem is enormous. Just last year we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the abolition of slavery with the release of the film 'Amazing Grace' which showcased the life of the great reformer, William Wilberforce. However, the problem still exists today. In fact it exists in greater numbers than when Wilberforce was finally successful in pulling the rug out from under the foundation of the British Empire. Today there are still more than 27 million people around the world who are the victims of trafficking.

In its campaign, World Vision is urging the following:

- Calling for Australians to use their voices and purchasing power to demand ethical chocolate – that is, chocolate that is child labour-free and human trafficking-free.
- Calling for industry to change their practices. Manufacturers and retailers need to hear directly from us that we, the Australian consumers, will not tolerate exploitation in the chocolate that we eat.

It is important to note that World Vision is not calling for a boycott of chocolate or any chocolate brands, as this would only hurt poor farming families more without adequately addressing the underlying problems.

As we remember the sacrifice and grace of the crucified God this Easter; as we remember the one who suffers along with the millions locked in slavery each day, let us remember that we too can play our part in following Him along the road. We can imitate Jesus by refusing to submit to the powers that be and identifying with the poor and vulnerable in the choice of chocolate that we buy.

*Find out more by going to [www.donttradelives.com.au](http://www.donttradelives.com.au)*

*by Nils von Kalm  
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