

Story of sisters who help victims of family violence becomes a documentary



The congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd have launched an initiative to support women and children experiencing domestic abuse. The numbers are shocking. In Taiwan in 2008 alone there were 75,438 cases known to the government, in 2009, the number rose to 83,728, in 2010 98,720.

Taipei (AsiaNews) - Approaching women and their children who are victims of domestic violence, to give them the courage to denounce their men, also assisting in psychological terms to help them create a new, safer life. This is the support service recently started by the Sisters of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd, which has now become a documentary, which will be screened next month in Taipei and Kaohsiung (Taiwan's second city, in the south).

The documentary produced by the congregation of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, founded by St. John Eudes and St. Mary Euphrasia, wants to raise public awareness of family violence and encourage the public to be aware of their right to a safe and secure existence.

The congregation is present in Taiwan since 1987, by invitation of the Archbishop of Taipei, as a non-governmental organization "Good Shepherd Social Welfare Services." The NGO has set up a secret safe-house in Taiwan to protect women in difficulty in which they look after every stage of the process from the police report to the subsequent legal protection of victims. Above all, help is offered to children who have witnessed their father's violence against their mother, which leaves deep psychological wounds.

The NGOs documents with several interviews that the dream of normal children is to grow up and start a family, get a degree, secure a profession. But "if you ask a child afflicted by domestic violence, they simply say they want a sheltered life, without suffering any violence," says a mother who works as a lay assistant at the NGO.

The title of the documentary is "A quiet life" (in Chinese: Pingan hao rizi), is a story of courage. six women who have suffered domestic violence are involved, and some of their children have participated in the production. Their stories speak of their path from the terrible experience to the new life offered

to those protected by the "Good Shepherd Social Welfare Services."

The suffering in many cases also lead to attempted suicides. Those who have never found themselves in such a situation can not even imagine the painful process. But these women today are aware that thanks to their testimony and this documentary, they may encourage more people to undertake this journey of freedom from violence. Having the courage to testify in front of the camera, they show the courage of victims. "In fact - says one of the producers of the video - if you see the documentary you realize the strangeness of having to endure all this violence without rebelling or running away. For this reason, hearing from these women, you discover that this is a long road that starts from oppression of the silent sharing with their children, to the discovery of an unexpected strength within themselves', which leads to the claim of right to a safe and happy life. "

The United Nations has established a program from 2009 to 2015 aimed at uncovering cases of domestic violence. The numbers are impressive. In Taiwan in 2008 alone there were 75,438 cases known to the government, in 2009, that number rose to 83,728, even 98,720 in 2010. "These statistics are sad, but we firmly believe that these women and children will come into the open to tell their stories" the producer continues. "Even if their voices so far are few, we are sure they will be heard". The "Shanmujijinhui" (this is the Chinese name of the NGO) uses a very simple motivation to approach and encourage victims: each person has a right to a peaceful and secure life. To protect these people, the documentary will not be posted onto the Internet. This year there are only two opportunities to see it, one in Kaohsiung Saturday, September 8 and Sunday, September 16 in Taipei.

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