

**DAY SIX: Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>**

## **CHILD BRIDES**

Each year 15 million girls are married as children.

### **The Story of a Child Bride**

On her wedding day as an 11-year-old bride, Noora remembers her childish delight at receiving gifts and being thrilled because friends and family gathered for a three-day party in her honour. Noora didn't realise that dressing up as an adult and putting on jewellery meant she was now the bride of a distant cousin. He was three times her age, and saw marriage as a means to act like a depraved animal.

(Source: [www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013](http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013))

### **Question:**

What is my reaction to this true story?

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### **Global Facts about Children**

- If all children learned to read, 171 million people could be lifted out of poverty.
- 5.3 million children under five died in 2018, whilst 1.3 billion live in extreme poverty.
- 34.3 million girls of primary school age are out of school (Oct 2019)  
<https://www.globalpartnership.org > data-and-results >>
- "31 million additional gender-based violence cases were expected globally in the first six months of COVID-19 lockdowns and an additional 15 million cases are expected for every three months that lockdowns continue.  
(COVID-19 and Gender-Based Violence: Workplace Risks and Responses – IFC, part of the World Bank)

'Girls Not Brides' is a campaign of 'The Elders', a group of former leaders that has become a global partnership of 800 civil society organisations. They are committed to ending child marriage and enabling girls to fulfil their potential. [www.girlsnotbrides.org/](http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/)

**Pope Francis** has pledged:

"..To work strenuously for the protection of minors and their dignity, including online." He said a coordinated, international approach is needed, to protect children from "corruption of their minds and violence against their bodies".  
(Rome 6<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2017)

**UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, most of these reference women, and children, particularly SDG # 5:

### **Achieve gender equality and empower all Women and Girls**

**Target 5.3:** *Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.*



[www.google.ie/search?q=free+images](http://www.google.ie/search?q=free+images)

**UN Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC)** Article 4: *Governments have a responsibility to ensure children's rights are respected and protected.*

**CEDAW** (Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women) Adopted 1979 with the aim of:

- ✓ Reducing feminized poverty and exclusion
- ✓ Ending violence against women
- ✓ Achieving gender equality during peace and war

Suggest reading this during **16 Days**  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

### **ACTION I will take to protect children:**

- ✚ See what you could do by reading:  
<https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/take-action/>
- ✚ Offer support to organisations working to protect and look after children's welfare.
- ✚ Watch: 'Child marriage' | UNICEF (2020)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yToMyZLdcEs>
- ✚ Campaign to ensure all children receive their basic rights in your country.  
<https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/>  
<http://srsq.violenceagainstchildren.org>

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*Prepared by the 'Future We Need' (FWN) a faith-based group, with members from the Columbans, Franciscans, Josephites, Mercy, Presentation and Salesians.*

(Updated November, 2020)

**CHILD MARRIAGE:** marriage before the age of 18 is a human rights violation. Despite laws against it, the harmful practice remains widespread.

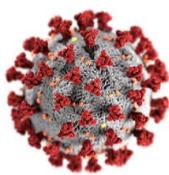
Girls who marry before 18 are less likely to remain in school and more likely to experience domestic violence.



#ChildNotBride

Young teenage girls are more likely to die due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth than women in their 20s, and their children are more likely to be stillborn or die in the first month of life. (UNICEF 2020)

Child marriage also has a major adverse affect, not only on the psyche of the child bride, but also on her overall growth and life.



#### BEFORE

#### THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

**243 million** women and girls, aged 15-49, experienced sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner in the past year.

#### SINCE THE PANDEMIC

violence against women, especially domestic violence, has increased dramatically.

#### EXACERBATING FACTORS INCLUDE

security, health and money worries, cramped living conditions, isolation with abusers, deserted public spaces, limited access to support services.

In some countries, resources and efforts have been diverted from responses to violence against women for immediate COVID-19 relief.

*(unwomen.org)*



[www.google.ie/search?q=free+images](http://www.google.ie/search?q=free+images)



*of Activism  
Against  
Gender  
Violence...*

**DAY 6...**

**30<sup>th</sup>**

**November**

**CHILD BRIDES**



2020 UNiTE Campaign Theme:

*"Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!"*