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## 'Barbaric crime that destroys lives', says Justin Welby as PM backs modern slavery campaign' - *Ed Cumming*

The Prime Minister, Theresa May, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, today backed a major new anti-slavery project by the Church of England.



Working across all 42 English dioceses, over the next three years The Clewer Initiative, launched at Lambeth Palace today, will encourage parishes to support victims and spot the signs of modern slavery in their communities, as well as partnering with other local organisations.

“Modern slavery is a barbaric crime which destroys the lives of some of the most vulnerable in our society,” said Mrs May. “Tackling modern slavery is one of my priorities as Prime Minister.

 **WESEEYOU.**  
THE CLEWER INITIATIVE

“However, the Government cannot tackle this problem alone and this is why the efforts of organisations and groups such as the Clewer Initiative are so important.”

Archbishop Welby said: “Those who purposefully constrain, confine and traffick and enslave people will face the judgment of God for their terrible sins.

“But we can change it so easily, and so quickly. We can set people free, set our society and nation free from the scourge of slavery simply by removing our blindfolds.”

The Church of England is the latest organisation to announce a crackdown on modern slavery since the Evening Standard launched its special investigation

into the issue last month. Dr Alastair Redfern, the Bishop of Derby, who chairs the anti-slavery advisory panel for the IASC, said modern slavery would continue to flourish without public awareness. “We can act as ‘eyes and ears’ in our communities to help identify victims,” he said.

Training sessions are already under way to help identify victims in the construction industry and at car washes. Last week the Evening Standard revealed how car washes were hotbeds of exploitation.

The Church of England initiative is being funded by the Clewer Sisters, an Anglican order founded in the 19th century to help vulnerable women drawn into the sex industry.

Sarah Newton, MP for Truro and Falmouth, and minister for crime, safeguarding and vulnerability, said: “Victims of modern slavery live in communities across the UK — but the despicable crimes against them are too often hidden.

“This is why it takes the local knowledge, awareness and commitment of communities to identify victims and pursue offenders. Victim-focused projects like the Clewer Initiative play a vital role.”

For the Clewer Initiative video linked to this article visit:

**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I6OddIYjQ-E>**

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**Anti-Slavery Day**

**18 October each year**