



A Reflection for National Human Trafficking Awareness Day on January 11

Call to Prayer

As we begin our prayer, let us call to mind and bear in our hearts the estimated 30 million children, women and men who are trafficked today and every day. Pray with me in hope for their freedom and justice in the words of the Psalmist:

Group Reading

Psalm 10: 1-2, 12-13, 14, 17, 18 NRSVCE

Side One: Why, O Lord, do you stand far off?
Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?
In arrogance, the wicked persecute the poor—
let them be caught in the schemes they have devised!

Side Two: Rise up, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand; do not forget the oppressed.
Why do the wicked renounce God,
and say in their hearts, "You will not call us to account"?

Side One: But you do see! Indeed you note trouble and grief,
that you may take it into your hands;
the helpless commit themselves to you;
you have been the helper of the orphan.

Side Two: O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek;
you will strengthen their heart, you will incline your ear
to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed,
so that those from earth may strike terror no more.

Reflection from Pope Francis

Declaration on International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, Dec. 2, 2014

Every human being, man, woman, boy and girl, is made in God's image. God is the love and freedom that is given in interpersonal relationships, and every human being is a free person destined to live for the good of others in equality and fraternity.

Any discriminatory relationship that does not respect the fundamental conviction that others are equal is a crime, and frequently an aberrant crime.

Therefore, we declare on each and every one of our creeds that modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labor and prostitution, and organ trafficking, is a crime against humanity. Its victims are from all walks of life, but are most frequently among the poorest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters.

(cont.)



On behalf of all of them, our communities of faith are called to reject, without exception, any systematic deprivation of individual freedom for the purposes of personal or commercial exploitation; in their name, we make this declaration.”

Intercessions

For those exploited and objectified by the commercial sex industry,
Rise up, O Lord, set them free.

For those forced to become soldiers, for the children made into the tools of violence,
Rise up, O Lord, set them free.

For those forced to labor out of sight in factories, mines, farm fields and private homes across the world,
Rise up, O Lord, set them free.

For the traffickers, pimps and slaveholders who perpetuate the system of indignity and degradation,
Change their hearts, move them to justice.

For governments, corporations and consumers that turn a blind eye to human trafficking,
Change their hearts, move them to justice.

For us, that we may examine how we perpetuate human slavery and what we can do to end it,
Change our hearts, move us to justice.

Communal Prayer

God of freedom, you create each of us as a temple of your Spirit, a beloved child made in your image, clothed in dignity and value. You came among us to bring good news to the poor, restore sight to the blind, justice to the oppressed and freedom to the captive.

**Send us as you sent Moses to bring liberty to the slaves.
Send us as you sent Isaiah to speak justice to the evildoer.
Send us as you came Yourself to be light for dark places.
Send us as your disciples to build the kingdom of God here and now.**

Be with the children, women and men who are abused and exploited by human trafficking. Strengthen us to work on their behalf, to care for those who are victims and to help them rebuild lives of dignity and justice. Amen.