

Prayer Service

for an End to Human Trafficking

January 11, 2019

Human Trafficking Awareness Day

Setting: Put on the ritual table a cloth and six candles. As each Truth is read, light a candle as a sign of hope for those who are trafficked and enslaved.

Opening Song: Select a song, such as *We Shall Overcome* or *Amazing Grace*

Leader: On the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State...shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free.

—*Abraham Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation*

Reader 1: For 155 years, the United States has promised freedom and liberty. Yet, we know that people are still enslaved within our borders.

Reader 2: Human trafficking and slavery are illegal in every country, but present in every nation on Earth.

Leader: Let us take a moment of silence in solidarity with those who suffer from trafficking and modern day slavery.

[Moment of Silence]

Leader: Let us join together in the words of the psalm:

All: The just cry out, and God hears them and saves them from all their troubles. God is close to the brokenhearted and rescues those whose spirits are crushed.

—*Psalm 34: 17-18*

Reading: *OUT OF THE SHADOWS—Exposing the Myths of Human Trafficking*

Leader: There are many myths about human trafficking—what it is, who can be trafficked, what happens to trafficked people. Let us learn the truth about some common myths.



All: MYTH: Human Trafficking is only sex trafficking.

Reader 1: TRUTH: Of the 40.3 million in modern slavery globally, the International Labour Organization estimates

- 81% are trapped in forced labor
- 25% are children
- 75% are women and girls

All: MYTH: Human Trafficking victims will self-identify.

Reader 2: TRUTH: 50% of victims had contact with a health care professional, NONE were identified as a victim.

All: MYTH: Human Trafficking is not in my community.

Reader 1: TRUTH: cases of potential human trafficking are reported in all 50 states, DC & US territories.

All: MYTH: Human Trafficking only affects the victim.

Reader 2: TRUTH: the crime of human trafficking is a symptom of a societal problem.

- Human Trafficking is a crime and you can make a difference
- Know where your goods & services come from
- Offer opportunities for at-risk individuals
- **Report It** National Human Trafficking Hotline—

Call 888.373.7888 or Text 233 733

Since 2007, the National Human Trafficking Hotline has received over 195,215 calls and identified over 45,308 potential cases of human trafficking.

All: MYTH: Human Trafficking only happens to children.

Reader 1: TRUTH: Since 2012, National Hotline cases reported: 62% adults

All: MYTH: Human Trafficking only happens to women

Reader 2: TRUTH: since 2012, National Hotline cases reported: 18% men

—*Office on Trafficking in Persons, adapted*



Reading: Message of Pope Francis

"Certainly there is a lot of ignorance on the topic of trafficking. But sometimes there also seems to be little will to understand the scope of the issue. Why? Because it touches close to our conscience; because it is thorny; because it is shameful. Then there are those who, even knowing this, do not want to speak because they are at the end of the "supply chain", as a user of the "services" that are offered on the street or on the Internet... Yes, it takes courage and honesty, when, in our daily lives, we meet or deal with persons who could be victims of human trafficking, or when we are tempted to select items which may well have been produced by exploiting others.

The work of raising awareness must begin at home, with ourselves, because only in this way will we be able to then make our communities aware, motivating them to commit themselves so that no human being may ever again be a victim of trafficking." -*Pope Francis, February 2018*

Leader: Let's take a few moments of quiet to consider: what one action can I take to stop the demand for human trafficking and create a world that values the dignity of human life?

[Moment of Silence]

Leader: I invite those who wish to briefly share one action s/he will take to stop the demand for human trafficking. Our response to each person's sharing will be:
You bring hope and freedom

Closing Prayers

Leader: For the estimated 40 million women, men and children currently held in slavery-like conditions, may freedom be restored to those who have been bought, sold or kidnapped for the monetary benefit of others.

Response: Bring them hope and freedom

Leader: For those in bonded labor, in agricultural fields, mines and factories, who have been reduced to tools of production and commodities rather than human beings.

Response

Leader: For children exploited and objectified in the commercial sex industry, that they may be free to play, learn and grow up in freedom and safety.

Response

Leader: For consumers, that we may be aware of how we are complicit in human trafficking when we demand products made by people who are enslaved; and that we may speak and work for justice for all those who are trafficked.

Response

Leader: Let us pray

All: God of hope and freedom, inspire us to act for justice and bring an end to human trafficking. Help us to build a world where all are free to live with dignity.



Take Action

- Learn about the local and global reality of human trafficking.
- Pray for an end to human trafficking. Join or start a monthly vigil on the 1st Sunday of the month
- Demand slave-free products. Buy fair trade when possible.
- Advocate for state and federal legislation that protects victims and prevents human trafficking.

Education & Action Resources

- [Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center](#)
- [US Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking](#)
- [Global Estimates of Modern Slavery: Forced Labour and Forced Marriage](#)
- [Polaris Project](#)
- [CNN "The CNN Freedom Project"](#)
- [National Human Trafficking Hotline Statistics](#)
- [Office on Trafficking in Persons](#)

