



2020 Prayer Service for World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

Created by U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

Opening Song – [We Are Many Parts](#)

Opening Prayer

Dear God,
birther of all life,
you know us by name
and call us your beloved.

Through the Christ,
you incarnated into this world,
uniting us more closely than ever
to you and your great Love.

At times we forget
that we are one body,
that we precious and beloved,
and we cause harm to ourselves and others
in this forgetting.

But you are a God who doesn't forget.
You see and hear the cries of your people,
you feel the suffering and rejoicing.

Help us to reconnect
and re-member this larger body of Christ
in which we are but a part,
of equal importance to all the other parts.

Awaken us to the reality of human
trafficking
that plagues our collective body.
Help us to be agents of healing and
transformation
so that all might have life and have it
abundantly.

We ask this in your holy name,
trusting you hear and will answer our
prayers
in accordance with your wisdom.

Amen

Reader 1:

Millions of people around the world are suffering right now in the shadows as victims of human trafficking. There are men, women, and children in our own community who are being treated like slaves, tortured and dehumanized for the profit or pleasure of another. Let us not turn away from this harsh reality. Let us open our hearts, our eyes, and our ears to see how the body of Christ, our body, is suffering in the world today. Through a deeper seeing, may we repent of our own complicity and be moved to transform the reality that allows this abuse and suffering to continue.



Reader 2:

We hear now the cries of the prophet Habakkuk, who echoes the cries of today of those who are trapped in slavery...

“How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted. (Habakkuk 1:2-4)

The Word of God
Thanks Be to God

Communal Lament

We join with the prophets of past and present who raise up their voices in lament:

[One] We lament the millions who cry out, “How Long!?” as they suffer from torture and abuse at the hands of their traffickers

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament our failure hear the cries of our brothers and sisters trapped in modern day slavery

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament all those members of our body who continue to abuse and exploit our fellow siblings

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament the biases we hold that make it hard to see the suffering of those around us

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament our complicity in a culture of consumerism that pushes the demand for cheap goods and trafficked labor

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament our complicity in upholding systems of oppression that continue to dehumanize and exploit members of the body of Christ

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament the little and big ways we fail to honor the dignity and beauty of each individual person



[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] We lament the fear and doubt that prevents us from taking action

[All] God of compassion, have mercy on us

[One] For what else do we lament? [hold space for anyone to offer additional prayers of lament]

(Take a Minute of Silence to take in the laments of a world wrapped up in human trafficking)

Reader 1:

A reading from 1 Corinthians chapter 12: “Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ... Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part rejoices, every part rejoices with it (1 Cor 12:12,26-27).

Reader 2:

We suffer together as one body and we rejoice together as one body. Our faith tells us that suffering and death do not have the last word. We are a people of resurrection hope, and new life is always possible. There are just as many stories of survivors who through their own courage, determination, and perseverance as well as with the loving support of others, now give thanks and rejoice for the freedom they experience and the dreams they have for their future. There are also stories of transformation for those who were previously traffickers or buyers and have changed their ways. Let us join together in collective praise for the God who makes a way out of no way and raise up new life even from the most desolate and hopeless of situations.

Communal Praise

[One] We rejoice with all survivors who have been freed from the bonds of human trafficking

[All] Praise God, who’s Love endures forever (Ps 118)

[One] We rejoice with all those who suffer from addiction and are now living sober

[All] Praise God, who’s Love endures forever

[One] We rejoice with all who have reached out in love and formed healthy, lasting relationships

[All] Praise God, who’s Love endures forever

[One] We rejoice with all those who have experienced a conversion of heart and have changed their harmful behaviors and beliefs

[All] Praise God, who’s Love endures forever



[One] We rejoice with all who have experienced healing and forgiveness

[All] Praise God, who's Love endures forever

[One] We rejoice with all who desire to share their story and with all who carry it in their heart

[All] Praise God, who's Love endures forever

[One] We rejoice in the promise of hope and new life

[All] Praise God, who's Love endures forever

[One] For what else do we rejoice? [hold space for anyone to offer additional prayers of praise]

Song of Praise – [One Thing Remains \(Your Love Never Fails\)](#)

Questions for reflection and discussion:

We are one body, with many different parts and different gifts. Each of us has an important part to play to ensure the health and well-being of the whole, which means that we each have an important part to play in ending human trafficking and offering support to those already impacted.

1. What part might you be called to play in the work to end modern-day slavery?
2. Are there things you are already doing or new ideas you have?
3. What do you want to learn more about?
4. Who is already doing work in your community that you can connect with?

Closing Prayer

God of power and possibility,
God of light and love,
God of hope and resurrection,
God of presence and grace,
we entrust our prayers,
our questions,
our commitments,
our longings,
and all that remains left unsaid
into your Heart,
the one heart
of our collective body.

Unite us,
empower us,
sustain us,
and liberate us
to do the work
you call us to do in the world.

We give you thanks and praise for this day
and the possibility of tomorrow.

Amen

Closing Song – [Go Make A Difference](#)

