

Trafficking Ritual 2017

Instrumental Music

Background

January is National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. January 11 is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. February 7 is Super Bowl 51, to be hosted in Houston, TX. February 8 is the feast day of Saint Josephine Bakhita, patron saint of victims of trafficking. July 30 is World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. Any date is appropriate for reflecting about human trafficking since human trafficking is happening every day, all year long, locally and globally.

Opening Prayer

Merciful and loving Creator, we have gathered together to hold in prayer those whom you cherish but who are bound by the trauma of labor and/or sex trafficking. These children, women and men are hidden in plain sight among us, are clothed in fear-filled silence, are victims of trauma unable to break free. May we open our eyes and our hearts to these persons who are trafficked in our midst.

Reading

Those caught in the horror of trafficking are missing persons. Some have been missing for years. Some have been discovered in graves. Some have bodies that are diseased, mutilated, tortured. Some have spirits that are damaged psychologically. Many of these women and men are missing in multiple ways but are in our midst.

Source: Not a Choice, Not a Job, Janice G. Raymond. Adapted

Shared Silence

Reading

Nikola, a young woman who is trafficked, feels she is of no value. She feels she is in exile, away from all she knew growing up—family, home, friends, school, music, country of origin.

Shared Silence

Reading

Samantha, a person who is trafficked, feels like a caged bird, caged in a room where she feels she is imprisoned by mistake, with no understanding of why this happened to her or how she is going to escape. She is desperate.

Shared Silence

Reading

Othello feels trapped in the horror of labor trafficking. He has no idea where he is or how to find his way back home in London. He is brought to the restaurant everyday around five in the morning where he washes dishes, stacks and unstacks chairs, scrubs floors, peels vegetables and cuts fruit. He eats what's left on the plates of those who come to the restaurant to sit down and enjoy one another and the food. When the work is finished after the last customers leave around 10 or 11 PM, he is taken to a house where other men who are trafficked live. Each is locked from the outside in a small room with a mattress. In a few hours all are awakened and driven back to the restaurant.

Shared Silence

Reading

Karena met Dusty at a club. He bought her drinks and offered to take her home. She was naïve in believing that he was concerned about her. Home that night became a house where three other trafficked women already lived. Dusty raped her the first night she was there. She's still recovering from all the unspeakable violence that she experienced from being trafficked, but she is deeply grateful for whoever reported what that person believed was happening in this house owned by the trafficker. The house was raided by law enforcement. She is now stitching her life together, slowly healing her physical and psychological wounds that will take a long time and many caring, loving, compassionate, understanding support people. She knows she will be supported by these people on her life journey.

Shared Silence

Reading

We realize that children and adults are forced or deceived and moved to unfamiliar places for forced labor, for sexual exploitation. Their humanness is degraded. We feel sad. We feel angry. We feel fear at times. We feel helpless at times. We don't always contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline

1 888 373-7888

when we might have witnessed a trafficking situation. May we strengthen each other in our commitment to open our eyes to the reality of trafficking and make calls, give only Fair Trade items as gifts, drink only Fair Trade coffee, tea, cocoa; feed our chocolate cravings with only Fair Trade chocolate, and help end this global and local slave trade in any way we can. May we mirror in our actions the mercy and love of our Creator of all beings.

Concluding Prayer

Response

*Creator of all beings,
may we model your mercy, love, and compassion
for our sisters and brothers who are trafficked.*

We remember those caught in the web of local and global trafficking who are being moved from one unknown place to another.

Response

We remember those who are forced to live unspeakably horrible lives as humans who are labor and/or sex trafficked.

Response

We remember those who suffer unimaginable loneliness, nostalgia, physical and psychological pain.

Response

We remember our sisters and brothers who are trapped in the horrors of trafficking and still hold on to hope for freedom.

Response

All

May we all act with blessing rather than condemnation
toward our sisters and brothers
who are trafficked
and help to create
a tomorrow of freedom and justice.
May these persons who are trafficked
feel included rather than excluded
in societies worldwide.
May they experience renewing opportunities,
hear a strong voice for justice
and witness courageous actions against trafficking.
May they be abundantly blessed
with mercy and love from all of us,
inspired by our Creator of mercy and love.
Amen. Amen. Amen.

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