



Human Trafficking Ritual

Lead Person

Creator God, we thank you for the diversity of gifts that you have blessed us with through the centuries, today, and tomorrow. We honour those who are struggling to manifest your diversity of gifts because they are among the millions being trafficked. With the diversity of gifts we have received, we ask for courage to support these persons who are trafficked. May we be informed, wide-eyed, fearless, and generous in sharing our diverse gifts with our sisters and brothers who are trafficked. **Amen**

1st Reader

Human trafficking ought to concern every person, because it's a debasement of our common humanity. It ought to concern every community because it tears at the social fabric. It ought to concern every business, because it distorts markets. It ought to concern every nation because it endangers public health and fuels violence and organised crime. I'm talking about the injustice, the outrage, of human trafficking, which must be called by its true name – modern slavery.

- President Barack Obama, September 25th 2012

Pause for reflection

2nd Reader

The expansion of 'prevention' strategies is laudable. However, unless we address the underlying socio-economic context that gives rise to human trafficking, until we better understand the changing context of race, gender, politics, labour and migration in the rapidly globalising world, we cannot dismantle the cultural superstructure which supports the trafficking of human beings. If we hope to end human trafficking, then we must be willing to examine the power dynamics that allow some to enslave others. If we hope to end exploitation, then we must be willing to disassemble hierarchies of every sort. If we hope to establish justice and equality, then we must continually ask 'why?'

- Sisters Against Trafficking, May 1st 2019

Pause for reflection

3rd Reader

Facts: Let us consider these facts about human trafficking.

Human trafficking is considered the third most lucrative illegal activity after the illegal sale of arms and drugs.

Estimates of the number of victims of human trafficking remain in the tens of millions. Yet, worldwide, convictions of human traffickers are fewer than 10,000.

Signs of trafficking in the hotel industry include guests seeming disoriented, malnourished, wearing the same clothes day after day, multiple bruises in different stages of healing, avoidance of eye contact, inability to speak freely.

- Sharon Lockwood, Marriot Hotel Manager

“The (victim’s) wounds were inflicted on the unconscious level of their personalities and since there is no time in the unconscious, these injuries are always as fresh and traumatic as the moment they were inflicted.”

- Eugene Cullen Kennedy

Pause for reflection

4th Reader – Let us pray...

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Law enforcement officials worldwide say that incidents of human trafficking increase when a city hosts a major sporting event. This includes bringing international victims of human trafficking from other countries.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

“My family wanted no part of me after all I had put them through. An old boyfriend would take me back, and I knew what that meant....if I went back to him, I would have been dead by now.”
(Reflections from a survivor of human trafficking)

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Pope Francis led Good Friday services dedicated to human trafficking and the plight of immigrants in 2019 at the Way of the Cross service at Rome’s Colosseum. Let each of us end each day with a prayer in memory of a victim and/or a survivor.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Young men are trafficked as well as young women. Henry (name changed to protect his identity) was trafficked by his mother at age 7. She sold him to paedophiles to pay the bills. After he was removed from his mother's care, he was placed in foster homes where he was sexually abused.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

A variety of faith-based groups issued calls to governmental, NGO's, and other international organisations to intensify their efforts to address human trafficking. RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking in Persons) is one of the signatories of this call.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

I was raped by my boyfriend and a group of his friends. After that I was pimped by another man. A lawyer convinced me to testify against the trafficker so I could get my life back. I owe that lawyer my life. – identity protected.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

What was helpful to me was education about mindfulness and the effects of trauma. – Survivor of human trafficking in transition.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Always keep in mind transition back into community is difficult. We are beaten down, so even decision-making becomes stressful – Survivor of human trafficking in transition.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Let us keep survivors of human trafficking in our daily prayers as well as those who are still caught in the web of human trafficking.

Response: Spirit of Justice, increase our awareness of human trafficking

Closing

There is no doubt about it, in a society of gross imbalances somebody has to ask: ***Who will be accountable?*** The journey is not over and the Talmud reminds us that we are not free to abandon the task.

“Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief.

Do justly, now.

Love mercy, now.

You are not obliged to complete the work,

But neither are you free to abandon it.”

Useful Information

....read, watch related videos and TV programmes, check websites, attend plays related to human trafficking.

Some possible resources include;

Two Little Girls: www.twolittlegirls.org

Faces of Human Trafficking: www.ovc.ncjrs.gov/humantrafficking/publicawareness.html

RENATE Video “Called to Give Voice to the Voiceless”

Finding Freedom was just a beginning: Shari Ho with Melodie Fox

Freedom Has a Name: Shari Ho with Melodie Fox

Hidden Girl: The True Story of a Modern Day Child Slave: Shymia Hall

Mending Soul: Steven R. Tracy

Trauma and Recovery: Judith L. Herman, MD

Ricky and Julie: Shay Cullen

Stop Trafficking monthly newsletter, online at: www.stopenslavement.org

Prayer of St. Josephine Bakhita

O God, who led Saint Josephine Bakhita
from abject slavery to the dignity of being
your daughter and a bride of Christ,
grant, we pray,
that by her example we may show
constant love for the Lord Jesus crucified,
remaining steadfast in charity and prompt to show compassion.

Through Christ our Lord.

St. Josephine Bakhita: Pray for us

Adapted from a Human Trafficking Ritual created by Rose Mary Myer BVM