



January – Human Trafficking Awareness Month Weekly Prayers

First Week

January is anti-trafficking month. We invite you to take time each day to light a candle for those involved in trafficking, both victims to bring them to safety and perpetrators to open their hearts to change their ways.

What is human trafficking?

Human trafficking is a modern-day form of slavery, widespread throughout the United States today. Trafficking of humans is the second largest criminal industry in the world after drug dealing, and is the fastest growing. Many victims of trafficking are made to engage in prostitution, pornography or exotic dancing. But trafficking also occurs in forms of labor exploitation, such as domestic servitude or restaurant staff, hotel staff, sweatshop factories, or migrant agricultural labor.

US Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Take a moment and read the following selection slowly. Then light your candle.

DEUTERONOMY 30: 19-20

Today I call heaven and earth to witness against you: I am offering you life or death, blessings or curse. Chose life then, so that you and your descendants may live.

Prayer:

All-loving and merciful God;
You call us to love on another
Forgive us when we allow our hearts to harden.
Show us the ways we can work together to stop the demand for trafficking in persons.
In your tender mercy be with those who are caught in the violence of trafficking.
Open our hearts to receive your call to choose and reverence all life.
Give us all courage to act in the name of Jesus,
To remove the anguish and suffering from the torn women, men and children of this world
We ask this through Jesus, our companion and friend.

Second Week

Read the following slowly and then light your candle.

ECCLESIASTICUS 4:1 Contemplate the tears of the oppressed

Demanding labor or illicit activity of others against their will through coercion and threats, demeans the dignity of human beings, especially the most vulnerable. We hold the tears of those who are bought and sold for profit as we pray to know how we are called to stop human trafficking in all its forms.

All-loving and merciful God; Make us sensitive to those whom we encounter in our daily living. Bringing them your mercy and compassion. Help us to choose produce, food, clothing that is brought to our stores and markets by those who are treated with dignity and are compensated justly for their work.



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Third Week

Read the following slowly and then light your candle.

JEREMIAH 29:11 I know the plans I have in mind for you. . . peace, not disaster.

The abuse of power, poverty the structural inequalities between women and men create disaster in our world. This not what our Creator intends for us. We pray that we may work toward a world of peace and equality. We pray to stop human trafficking in all its forms.

Archbishop Oscar Romero:

“Many say that sin is personal and not societal. Certainly the bible of today tells us the evildoer will be lost because of his guilt. But it has also mentioned the shared responsibility of the prophet who does not prophesy. Those who allow injustice to exist, especially if they could avoid it; every family prostitutes itself with selfishness and does not have a Christian sense of life; every home that is not sanctified as God wants it to be sanctified is contaminated. They have become accomplices. They have committed social sin. –Sept 10, 1978

All-loving and merciful God; We ask for assistance as we struggle to be prophets of your love and mercy, advocating for those who are caught in the web of human trafficking. May we live the words of Jeremiah, to follow your plans for peace and not disaster.

Fourth Week

Read the following slowly and light a candle

PRAYER FOR HEALING VICTIMS OF ABUSE

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just;
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus shepherd of peace,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,
soothe restless hearts with hope,
steady shaken spirits with faith;



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Show us the ways to justice and wholeness,
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform our brokenness.
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,
so that we may act with justice
and find peace in you.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.
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