

“Prayer and reflection vigil against Trafficking”

Theme 2018: **Trafficking and migration**

Date: 8 February 2018

Commemoration of Saint Bakhita



GUIDELINES

* In countries where they cannot celebrate 8 February, 30 July, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons declared by the UN, is suggested.

* Depending on the location, this can be made with a walk with 4 stops with material alluding to the theme that represents each moment.

STRUCTURE OF THE VIGIL

1. INTRODUCTION

➤ Definition of the theme of trafficking: concept, history, statistics

“Modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labour and prostitution, organ trafficking [...] is a crime against humanity” (Signed Declaration of Religious Leaders Against Modern Slavery, 2 December 2014).

There are tens of millions of people in the world who suffer from trafficking and most of them are women. In recent years, unfortunately, the percentage of children of both sexes who are victims of this scourge has also increased significantly. It is an ever-changing phenomenon and it is therefore difficult to establish its magnitude precisely. Trafficking overlaps and merges with clandestine immigration, with the employment of foreign workers

in conditions similar to slavery, with women involved in the sex trade or subjected to marriages of convenience.

Trafficking in persons is among the three largest illegal markets and generates clandestine economies worth \$150 billion a year (source: ILO, 2015). Human life is an object, traded and exploited for profit, for forced or humiliating labour in various sectors of the economy, for sexual exploitation or domestic slavery. Many of them are forced into marriage, or to join criminal organisations; they are mutilated, so organs can be extracted, and forced to beg.

Trafficking in persons can occur within a country's territory, or at the international level, when it crosses national borders. In all countries, we can find victims of trafficking, for a specific country can be the origin, transit or destination for trafficked people. (From Talitha Kum's website).

➤ **Definition of the specific theme 2018: trafficking and migration**

The theme of the 2018 World Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Trafficking highlights the human tragedy of trafficking in migrating persons: migrants, refugees and evacuees. We are called to open our eyes to this problem of so many men and women, our brothers and sisters.

Trafficking in persons and smuggling with migrants are two distinct realities that are always linked. The violence and exploitation suffered by migrants who move without a visa for the country where they go is often interpreted as trafficking in human beings. Their vulnerable state makes them easy prey for sex and labour trafficking. Refugees and migrants are subjected to longer working shifts than usual, on a meagre wage, in order to pay off the debt they owe. Over time, traffickers increase the amount of debt owed to them, and many migrants end up receiving threats and intimidation if they fail to pay. Many of them end up disappearing, becoming deadly victims of organ trafficking.

With globalisation, the flow of migrants has increased. Political movements in some countries act against this, thus reducing the entry of migrants. This increases the vulnerability of migrants, a human group with a high risk of becoming victim of trafficking in persons, both when they move from one country to another and when they are in the country where they have settled.

The 2018 International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Trafficking invites us to accompany with prayer and our efforts the commitment of the United Nations in its Meeting on Migration (Global Migration Compact), in which the heads of state and governors of all countries belonging to the United Nations give a special importance to the issue of migration and refugees within their political agendas. This issue is considered common and present for all states, and human trafficking remains one of the main issues to be discussed.

Let us give this reality a significant centrality in our lives and in our hearts, opening ourselves to welcome, hope and encounter. Let us give light to freedom by fighting slavery.

- *Distinctive sign for the entire Vigil: At the entrance of the place and at the beginning of the prayer, each participant should be given a ribbon wristband, so that at the beginning they can tie it with others to form of a chain. This sign can be left in a fixed place or worn during the vigil (this chain will be untied at the end of the vigil).*

Reading of the Gospel of Luke – Lk 10:25-37

Parable of the Good Samaritan. *Who is my neighbour?*

And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"

He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

[...] But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.' Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise."

2. CONTENT

Situation: based on a testimony that can be read from this or any other proposal at your disposal.

Silence: motivated with common and open questions for each moment. You can adapt them.

Prayer: is an open space where spontaneous or pre-arranged prayers can be made by the team that guides the vigil.

Sign: it will be progressively building up throughout the Vigil.

Four moments:

1. Children: *Illegal adoptions, organ trade and child pornography*

Testimony

In the city, a woman was exasperated outside the state hospital, waiting for her two-year-old daughter to receive medical attention. Then an unknown woman approached and asked her about her daughter's illness. E... replied that she had a lung disease. D... promised: "I'm going to take you to a private doctor because your daughter looks very bad." On the way out of town, she offered her a job as a domestic, whereas "a very important lawyer will help you with your daughter's expenses."

E... said that she thinks that she accepted that woman's offer because of her poverty. The next day she met with the lawyer and gave her a blank signature authorising her daughter to be admitted to a hospital where she would receive medical treatment. She took her to a luxurious private clinical laboratory, where she was actually tested for DNA. "And now give us the girl, for you can't enter the hospital!"

For E... getting lab tests meant her daughter was in the hands of a real doctor. When the lawyer gave her a professional ID so she wouldn't distrust her, she let them take

her, although she was uncomfortable because she couldn't be with her daughter in the hospital.

She met several times with the lawyer, who assured her that her child was very serious and could not leave the hospital. Three months later, she learned that her daughter was in the process of adoption. When she protested, she got a dry answer: "You signed the papers, remember?"

⇒ **Questions for reflection and silence**

- *Put yourself in the shoes of the people of this testimony.*
 - *If I were to see a similar situation, what would I do? What would be my reaction?*
 - *Does this testimony represent a reality of my country/city?*
 - *What is my prayer to God?*
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- ♦ *Prayer: open to the creativity of each place ...*
 - ♦ *Sign: each participant receives a local seed. He/she must take care of it until the next moment. A candle is lighted.*

2. Teenagers: Unaccompanied migrant children.

Testimony

V1, V3, V5 and V7, four underage teenagers, travelled alone from Honduras to the United States. In Mexico, they were kidnapped by a criminal gang that forced them to travel "with their backpacks", that is, carrying drugs to the border with the United States. Two of them, in Mexico City, were killed by the same gang, which passed the backpack to other teenagers. One of the two remaining kids was killed on the U. S. border, so only one arrived in U.S. territory with the backpack. He gave up the drug and turned himself over to migration to be deported, as he was psychologically, emotionally and physically very much affected and all he wanted to do was going back to his family. He returned to Honduras and, even though more than two years have passed since this tragic experience, V7 has not been able to reintegrate socially and spends much of his time in his room and practically speaks only to family members.

⇒ **Silence with reflection questions and questions for reflection**

- *Put yourself in the shoes of the people of this testimony.*
 - *If I were to see a similar situation, what would I do? What would be my reaction?*
 - *Does this testimony represent a reality of my country/city?*
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- ♦ *Prayer: open to the creativity of each place ...*
 - ♦ *Sign: each participant puts his/her seed in a common container with soil in it. Candles accompany this moment.*

3. Working-age adults

Testimony A testimony by an adult which left his/her country looking for a better future (e.g. a victim of forced labour).

Testimony of a Rumanian women, who left her country looking for a better future and now is exploited in Italy, on the street.

"They arrive once a week, and they stopped by me already three times. They are two seemingly very nice girls. They try very hard to explain to me all the ways in which they can help me. The doctor, the work, and that there are so many possibilities in Italy for a girl like me. They think that I am so naive as to believe them. As if my uncle's promises hadn't been enough, when he proposed me to leave Romania with Constantin but instead violated me. Or Constantin's promises to get me a job in Italy, but then sold me to Adrian for a few euros. No, I'm not so naïve; if I'm lucky they're cops and send me home, if I'm unlucky I'll be working as a prostitute who knows where.

At least now Adrian allows me to send some money to my mother in Romania. She still believes that everything went all right. It's clear that I hate this job today as much as I did the first day.

I think that one day I will climb a car and I will never get off again."

⇒ Questions for reflection and silence

- Put yourself in the shoes of the people of this testimony
- If I were to see a similar situation, what would I do? What would be my reaction?
- Does this testimony represent a reality of my country/city
- What is my prayer to God?
 - ♦ Prayer: open to the creativity of each place ...
 - ♦ Sign: the container with the planted seeds is watered.

4. Iderly: waiting of the elders

Testimony: a testimony telling the sorrow and the hope of those who wait for their relatives to come back.

Letter from a mother

"Knowing what happened to my daughter, I felt my heart empty and my body freezing. But I prayed to God looking at my two grandchildren; that gave me strength to continue. It was not easy to stop crying. Every Thursday and Sunday I would light a candle asking God especially for my daughter's sake.

Being away from my daughter, people would ask me about her; that affected me a lot. I lied saying that she was in poor health and therefore couldn't talk to me ... Even though I was dying inside!

After all this time of sorrow I knew that you gave refuge to her. I felt relieved because she is well and in a safe place. Now my wish is to see her again and be able to talk to her. I keep praying that she's okay".

⇒ Questions for reflection and silence

- Put yourself in the shoes of the people of this testimony
- If I were to see a similar situation, what would I do? What would be my reaction?
- Does this testimony represent a reality of my country/city?

- *What is my prayer to God?*
 - ♦ Prayer: open to the creativity of each place ...
 - ♦ Sign: containers with planted and watered seeds are left in a place which is meaningful for the community and growth-friendly, waiting for life to sprout again.

3. CLOSING

- ✓ **Commitment prayer** (*) read among the participants, divided by age group where possible, and ending all together. Part of the prayer will be for the perpetrators and murderers.
- ✓ **Sign:** the chain is untied and each participant wears a bracelet (link) in memory of this Prayer and Reflection Vigil against trafficking, and as a commitment to the realities of trafficking and migration.

(*) In the present day of our history, when migratory flows are increasing, we confirm our faith in the God of life, telling Him our concerns through prayer:

When we hear about boys, girls, men and women being deceived and taken to unknown places for sexual exploitation, forced labour and organ trade, our hearts feel indignation and our spirits suffer, because their dignity and rights are violated by threats, deceit and violence.

Oh God, help us fight against all forms of slavery. Together with Santa Bakhita we ask you to put an end to human trafficking.

Give us the wisdom and strength to be close to those who have been wounded in their body, heart and spirit, so that together we may reach the promise of life and tender and infinite love that you offer to our exploited brothers and sisters.

Touch the hearts of those responsible for this serious crime and support our commitment to freedom, your gift for all your sons and daughters. Amen.