

# FREEDOM SUNDAY RESOURCES PRAYERS, READINGS, & MORE

From the Anglican Diocese of Niagara's  
*Human Trafficking Justice Niagara*



ANGLICAN  
DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

**CALLED to LIFE**  
**COMPELLED to LOVE**



# KEY PRAYER POINTS

## **Pray for the victims of trafficking:**

- *Pray for comfort:* trafficking tears people away from family, friends and home.
- *Pray for healing:* victims of trafficking are often abused physically and emotionally.
- *Pray for courage:* trafficked people often live in fear of their traffickers and can't speak out against them.
- *Pray for hope:* that God will shine his light into dark places.

## **Pray for the 'consumers' who fuel the trafficking trade:**

- *Pray for justice:* it can be hard for the police to gather evidence to convict traffickers.
- *Pray for true sight:* those who buy services from trafficked people often don't see themselves as part of the problem.
- *Pray for change:* that those making money from this trade will stop or be stopped.
- *Pray for freedom:* that the wealthy, western world will find fulfilment without needing to exploit the poor and vulnerable.

## **Pray for all those working to support victims of trafficking and for those seeking to prevent human trafficking around the world:**

- *Pray for protection:* traffickers see their victims as sources of income, so it can be dangerous for others to rescue them.
- *Pray for wisdom:* victims of trafficking are wounded and fearful; those who rescue them need to know how best to help them.
- *Pray for truth:* a trafficked person may have completely lost their identity; those who help them need to enable them to learn who they are in God.
- *Pray for resources:* that all organizations working to prevent human trafficking and provide support to those who become victims will have the resources required to continue their vital work.



## PRAYER BASED ON PSALM 18:1-6

Loving God, all glory and honour to you!

We worship and adore you for who you are.

We give you thanks for the many blessings we have received through your Son, Jesus Christ.

We are full of gratitude that we have the liberty to offer our worship to you.

We can never cease to sing your praise.

However, we are reminded that we have brothers and sisters who do not share in this freedom because of the injustices and oppression in our world, often inflicted by fellow human beings.

We ask you to draw close in your mercy, Lord, to all those who are prevented from expressing their faith, those whose freedom has been taken away by modern-day slavery in our country and across the world. We pray for grace and strength for all who suffer in bondage.

We intercede for freedom on behalf of all those who are trafficked and enslaved.

We pray in faith for the power of your Holy Spirit to break in and change bondage to freedom!

We offer this prayer through the name of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen**



# PRAYER

O God, we are silent before you

Silent because there is so much we would say, and we don't know where to begin.

**(silence)**

Silent because we cannot put into words what we feel about our own inadequacy.

**(silence)**

Silent because our confusion, our hesitancy, our indifference, our lack of awareness has caused us to sin. **(silence)**

Silent because our sin is a sin of silence. **(silence)**

O God, in the silence, let us hear your voice **(silence)**

O God, in the silence, we hear your voice, and you call us to come forth. You lift us from our knees with your word of forgiveness. You enable us to stand with the promise of your presence. You call us to walk forward in the company of our Lord. You give us the courage to open our mouths and break the silence.

To break the silence with words of love

To break the silence with words of compassion

To break the silence with words of hope

To break the silence with words of courage

To break the silence with words of power,

And in breaking the silence, we begin to break the chains that bind our sisters and our brothers.

With our words

With our action

With our love

May we bring the sound of justice

May we release the captive

Unbind the prisoner

And set free our sisters and brothers

May we open our hearts and welcome them in, and may we fill the earth with sound, the sound of our rejoicing. **Amen**



# A RESPONSIVE PRAYER

**Leader:** Lord of all, we claim your justice, mercy, compassion, comfort and freedom for the millions affected by human trafficking in our world today. For the men, women and children enslaved by fear, torture, dependency, entrapment and bonded labour, we ask you to intervene with righteousness and grace.

**All:** God of all that is good, give freedom to the captives and restore justice to your world.

**Leader:** Lord, for the victims who are lured, trapped and exploited. We pray for comfort for their pain, healing for their hurts, courage to speak out against their oppressors and for restorative hope for those who have been rescued and those yet to be rescued.

**All:** Holy Spirit, we ask you to heal and restore the victims with your transforming power.

**Leader:** God of Justice, we pray for those that enslave: the trafficker, the slave master and the unjust 'employer.' We ask you to stir them with your voice of justice and conscience of goodness. Speak to them in dreams, thoughts and words and with lawful intervention. Help them to understand their actions and understand your grace.

**All:** Jesus the Redeemer, we pray for the hearts and minds of the oppressors: traffickers and consumers.

**Leader:** Lord of hope, we claim your light for the darkest of situations. Guide and equip those that care and intervene for victims. Give wisdom and insight to those that pursue, prosecute and preside over cases of trafficking and the traffickers.

**All:** Living hope, we claim you for all that we need to be and do to stop human trafficking. Help us to be fervent in prayer and in action.

**Leader:** Lord of all, we want to see your kingdom come, and your will be done. We know that trafficking is against your very nature, and we pray for a real end to this horrific slavery.

**All:** God of all that is good, help us to be people of prayer, of action and a people who speak your truth and justice into the world around us. Help us to use our time, our resources and our energy to overcome, by your power, the evil that is human trafficking and to claim the victory that is already ours.

We passionately say **AMEN**.



# A PRAYER OF INTERCESSION

**Leader:** Lord Jesus Christ, you saw human beings, not property, when you said: Let the children come to me, do not stop them. You took the children in your arms and blessed them. Wherever children are made to work, forced to fight, or bought and sold as economic assets, challenge the adults who use and abuse them. Change the patterns of poverty and the greed for money and power that put children at risk of being treated as possessions to be traded. Set the children free to receive your blessing again today.

**Leader:** Lord, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus Christ, you saw a student, not a servant, when you said that the part that Mary had chosen would not be taken away from her. You gave women the right to learn and to teach your truth. Wherever women are excluded from education, forced to labour, pressed into prostitution, invisible by law or custom, challenge the powers that diminish and demean them. Lift up the lowly and cast down the proud until all women's work, paid and unpaid, is freely chosen, held in honour, and carried out in safety.

**Leader:** Lord, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

**Leader:** Lord Jesus Christ, you had compassion for the crowds when you told your disciples to give them something to eat. Your blessing gave plenty of food for everyone. Wherever hunger makes people vulnerable, challenge the exploiters who prey on their despair. Silence the traders who make false promises and shine with the light of your truth to reveal injustice and deceit. Bless the gifts of the generous, distribute the resources of those who have plenty, preserve the dignity of the poor, and let no one's body or integrity be sold for daily bread.

**Leader:** Lord, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**



# FREEDOM PRAYER

*We are inviting churches to join together in praying this Freedom Prayer.*

*We encourage you to use this prayer to close your service.*

**Voice 1:** On this holy ground of worship  
In this sacred place of prayer  
We have heard the voice of freedom  
Crying, "Let my people go."

**All:** Father of freedom,  
Who leads us into life,  
Deliver us from every evil:  
And make of us  
Deliverers of others.

**Voice 2:** Where chains restrain God's chosen children  
Where humans trade in kin and skin  
May our words pass on your promise  
Of a land where liberty is sweet.

**All:** Father of freedom,  
Who leads us into life,  
Deliver us from every evil:  
And make of us  
Deliverers of others.

**Voice 3:** Give us faith to face the Pharaohs  
Who line their pockets from this plague  
Send us as salvation's sponsors  
Willing servants, slaves to love.

**All:** Father of freedom,  
Who leads us into life,  
Deliver us from every evil:  
And make of us  
Deliverers of others. Amen.



# OTHER SUGGESTED READINGS & PRAYERS

## Readings

Genesis 37:12-30

Exodus 3:7-10

Jeremiah 34:8-1

Psalm 130:1-3

Psalm 142:2-8

Psalm 126

Luke 15:11-32

Matthew 22: 15-22

Acts 16:25-34

Timothy 6:18-19 (to take action)

James 2:14-17 (to take action)





# RESPONSORIAL PSALM

## ***Psalm 142:2-8***

**R: I cry out to you, Lord, for you are my refuge.**

With my own voice, I cry to the LORD;  
with my own voice, I beseech the LORD.  
Before him, I pour out my complaint,  
tell of my distress in front of him. **R.**

When my spirit is faint within me,  
you know my path.  
As I go along this path,  
they have hidden a trap for me. **R.**

I look to my right hand to see  
that there is no one willing to acknowledge me.  
My escape has perished;  
no one cares for me. **R.**

I cry out to you, LORD,  
I say, You are my refuge,  
my portion in the land of the living.  
Listen to my cry for help,  
for I am brought very low. **R.**

Rescue me from my pursuers,  
for they are too strong for me.  
Lead my soul from prison,  
that I may give thanks to your name.  
Then the righteous shall gather around me  
because you have been good to me. **R**

*catholiccharitiesusa.org*



## COLLECT

**Leader:** Living God, you freed the people of Israel from cruel slavery in Egypt and led them to a promised land “flowing with milk and honey.” We ask you to liberate today all the children, women, and men who are enslaved by the cruel yoke of human trafficking in our nation and around the world.

**All:** Amen.

[www.catholiccharitiesusa.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org)

## OPENING REFLECTION AND PRAYER

God of Justice,  
Christ of Peace,  
You are light for the world,  
The darkness is as light to you, O Lord.

Today we pray for the men, women, and children hidden in the darkness of slavery.  
No person in any corner of the world is hidden from your sight.  
The darkness is as light to you, O Lord.

Help us shine your light into the places where your children are enslaved,  
Help us shine your light into homes, streets, factories, brothels,  
Into our own neighbourhoods and across the world.  
The darkness is as light to you, O Lord.  
Help us shine your light

*Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking*  
*chausa.org*



# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## Prayer One

**Leader:** Trusting in God's love and care for the oppressed, let us lift up our prayers for victims of human trafficking, saying: "Hear us, God of freedom."

**Leader:** For an end to the coercion and exploitation of vulnerable persons at factories, farms, and brothels, we pray: "Hear us, God of freedom."

**Leader:** For the eradication of the poverty and lack of opportunity that breeds human trafficking, we pray: "Hear us, God of freedom."

**Leader:** For a greater awareness of the reality and signs of human trafficking in our midst, we pray: "Hear us, God of freedom."

**Leader:** For cooperation between governments and social service agencies to neutralize traffickers and their networks, we pray: "Hear us, God of freedom."

*catholiccharitiesusa.org*



# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## Prayer Two

**Leader:** For the estimated 27 million women, men and children currently held in slavery-like conditions.

**Response:** Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!

**Leader:** For those exploited and objectified in the commercial sex industry. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

**Leader:** For those forced to become soldiers, especially children who are made into tools for violence. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

**Leader:** For those exploited for their labour in agricultural fields, factories, restaurants, private homes, or anywhere in the shadows where they are out of sight. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

**Leader:** For conversion of heart for the perpetrators and organizers of human trafficking. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

**Leader:** For governments, corporations, and consumers, that we will address the systems that make human trafficking possible. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

**Leader:** For the success of efforts to stop the demand for human trafficking. **Loosen the chains, O Lord; loosen the heavy chains!**

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# PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

## Prayer Three

**Leader:** God of hope and peace, you bless us with compassion for others. May our prayers comfort and strengthen the women, men, and children searching for freedom. We ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we pray.

**The response:** God of hope, set us free.

**Leader:** For children objectified in the commercial sex industry and young adults who run away from foster care and are coerced into trafficking. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

**Leader:** For women trafficked by their spouses, romantic partners, parents, or family members. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

**Leader:** For migrant workers who live and work in isolated conditions and are forbidden to leave their place of employment. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

**Leader:** For adults and children coerced and forced into providing images and videos for the pornography industry. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

**Leader:** For those committed to combatting trafficking, may they increase their awareness about this scourge, and may God give them the strength to accompany survivors on their path to healing and wholeness. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

**Leader:** For perpetrators of human trafficking that they repent of their evil ways and turn to God for forgiveness. We pray to the Lord, **God of hope, set us free.**

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*chausa.org*



*Please choose some of the following to be included among intercessions in your parish.*

**Response: We Pray to the Lord or God of Hope, Set us Free.**

For everyone who is trapped in a situation of slavery, that God will help to liberate them from their chains, we pray to the Lord.

For an end to human trafficking, that the dignity of all of God's children will be protected, we pray to the Lord.

For those caught up in a situation of human trafficking, that their perpetrators be brought to justice and that they might find a path to healing, we pray to the Lord.

For survivors of traffic, that God guides them to a path down which they might find wholeness and peace, we pray to the Lord.

For survivors of human trafficking, that they might find the support they need to start a new life, we pray to the Lord.

For law enforcement, that God grants them the wisdom to recognize situations of forced labour and sexual slavery while working to protect its victims and punish its perpetrators; we pray to the Lord.

For men and women who serve those exploited by human trafficking, that God will grant them the strength and commitment to accompany survivors on their path to healing and wholeness, we pray to the Lord.

For perpetrators of slavery, that they repent of their evil ways and turn to God for forgiveness, we pray to the Lord.

For all people of God and of goodwill, may we increase our courage to publicly address the systemic causes of human trafficking; we pray to the Lord.

For our neighbours, coworkers, friends, and all people, that they may increase in their awareness of the problem of human trafficking and become a voice in the public square calling for its abolition, we pray to the Lord.

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*[justiceforimmigrants.org](http://justiceforimmigrants.org)*



## CLOSING PRAYERS

**Leader:** God of liberation, we pray for all your children who are enslaved by human trafficking. Free them from their bondage, heal them of their wounds, protect them from further harm, turn the hearts of their oppressors, and sustain them with hope for a new beginning in safety and peace.

**All: Amen.**

*catholiccharitiesusa.org*

**Leader:** God of hope and freedom, inspire and strengthen us in our work to loosen the chains of human trafficking in our world, so we may stand firm in our resolve to create a slave-free world. Through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

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**Leader:** God of all peoples, Awaken our hearts and deepen our commitment to work for a world where all are free and able to live lives full of hope and joy. Please help us grow in awareness that you are present in each person and that we are intimately connected to all involved in human trafficking. God of hope and freedom inspire us in our work to end human trafficking, starting within our own communities.

**All: Amen.**

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**The YWCA Niagara Region  
Prevention Guide**  
*ywcaniagararegion.ca*



**Liturgical Resources from  
the Anglican Communion**  
*anglicancommunion.org*



**Liturgical Resources from the  
Anglican Church of Canada**  
*anglican.ca*

