

HUMAN TRAFFICKING & MODERN SLAVERY

Resources for Prayer,
Preaching, and Reflection



ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF NIAGARA



HUMAN TRAFFICKING JUSTICE

DIOCESE OF NIAGARA

Freedom Sunday is a day of prayer for people involved in human trafficking and modern slavery. It is marked by faith groups around the world, usually in February each year. In the Anglican Church of Canada, and in our Diocese of Niagara, Freedom Sunday is generally marked on the third Sunday of February. However, it is possible to mark it on a day more suitable for your parish community.

Resources for this day can be found at anglican.ca/issues/human-trafficking/freedom-sunday. We have compiled this resource using various sites for your preparation in advance of February. We are especially grateful to the Church of England, Diocese of Derby.



Suggested Biblical Texts

These may be used in place of the Lectionary Readings

Old Testament

Genesis 1. 26-31

The creation of human beings and dignity of all people;
written by slaves in exile in Babylon

Genesis 37:12-30

Joseph is sold into slavery

Exodus 3.1-12

God calls Moses to set Israel free from slavery

Exodus 3:7-10

Rescuing the slaves

Jeremiah 34:8-1

Freedom for Slaves

The Psalms

Psalms 130:1-3

The Lord hears our cries

Psalms 142:2-8

You are my refuge my portion in the land of the living

Psalms 126

When the LORD restored the fortunes

The Gospels

Luke 4.16-21

Freedom for slaves is a promise of God's kingdom

Luke 15:11-32

Parable for the lost son

Matthew 22: 15-22

Paying to Caesar

The Epistles

Acts 16:25-34

Prayer

Timothy 6:18-19

Call to take action

James 2:14-17

Call to take action

2nd Cor 3.17-18

The Spirit of the Lord is present in freedom

Galatians 5.1, 13-15

God's people are called into freedom trafficked



Prayer to end human trafficking

*Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth
Convent Station, N.J.*

God of freedom, beauty and truth we believe that your deepest desire, your most powerful energy, is that all creation might know abundant life.

We raise our voices in anguished prayer for our sisters and brothers, women and girls, men and boys, who are modern day slaves; They are your beloved daughters and sons, exploited sexually or forced to work because of human violence and greed.

Fill us with your holy anger and your sacred passion that those who are trafficked might know healing and justice; that traffickers will come to repentance and conversion; that all of us might live in such a way that others are not made to pay the price for our comfort and convenience.

Hasten the coming of the day when all people and our precious Earth itself will be treated, not as a commodity, but as radiant images

of your freedom, beauty and truth. Amen. May it be so.

Prayer for action

Dear Lord, just as You helped Moses and Aaron as they spoke boldly to Pharaoh on behalf of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt, help us speak up for modern-day slaves around the world.

Prayer for prevention

Dear Lord, most of us will never experience the kind of extreme poverty that millions of people live with every day. Help us to be understanding and compassionate toward their needs. Help us to love them in the way that You love them. Give us the will to make things better.

Prayer for protection

Dear Lord, You are a strong tower and a mighty fortress. Help Your rescued children feel safe and begin to heal. Protect them from those who seek to harm them.

Prayer for restoration

Dear Lord, Your Word shows that You bring new joy and hope where previously there was only shame and fear. We ask this for our brothers and sisters, who desperately need to accept that they can be made new.

Prayer for Justice

World Vision

Dear Lord, You demand justice for those who have been wronged. Give strength to those who investigate and prosecute traffickers. Encourage them when they are weary. Give courage to survivors when they are asked to testify against their former captors.

Prayer for use with children

Dear God, you get people out of their locked places. You smile at them when they are lonely. You let them laugh again. You give love without wanting anything back. You love us more than your life. Help us to be like you, please. Amen.

COLLECTS ON THE TOPIC OF MODERN DAY SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Liberating God,

Who gathers the outcast, heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds; Bring liberty and freedom to all whose lives are entangled in slavery and trafficking in our world today.

Lift up the downtrodden and tread wickedness into the dust: We make our prayer through Christ our Lord, Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit in perfect freedom,
One God, now and forever.

Amen

(Based on Psalm 147)

God of our salvation,

God of Justice, who created all things out of love for your children,
Help us, who love you, to defend the rights of the orphan, the widow, and the oppressed of every generation; Hear the cries of our hearts for those enslaved in our world today.

In your compassion, bring comfort and healing, restore liberty and dignity, and lead each of your children from bondage to sin, to the glory of your name.

We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Amen

(Based on Isaiah 1:17)

God of our pilgrimage,
Who led the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land,

Go with the enslaved and trafficked today;

Be their protecting presence,
Provide what they need for each day,
Take away their sorrow and wipe away every tear from their eyes, Thunder love and justice from the mountains and lead them, we pray, to opportunities to cross over into places of peace and plenty which they can call home.

We make our prayer through Christ our Lord.

Amen

(Derby Diocese Worship Advisory Group)



INTERCESSIONS FOR MODERN DAY SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Reader: We pray for people who are trafficked; May they find freedom from fear and harm and courage to live in hope.
Let us pray to the Lord.

Silence is kept

Lord have mercy
All: Christ have mercy

Reader: We pray for people who traffic others; May they find freedom from greed and violence and courage to live with justice.
Let us pray to the Lord.

Silence is kept

Lord have mercy
All: Christ have mercy

Reader: We pray for people who work to prevent trafficking; May they find freedom from threats and webs of untruths And courage to live in peace.
Let us pray to the Lord.

Silence is kept

Lord have mercy
All: Christ have mercy

Reader: God of compassion and mercy, who heard the cry of your people and sent your servant Moses to lead them out of slavery to freedom in the promised land: free us from the tyranny of sin and death and, by the leading of your Spirit, bring us to our promised land; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
All: Amen.

Derby Diocese Working Advisory Group

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

Opening 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 prom-
ise 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 broth-
ers.

May we open our hearts and wel-
come 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, com-
fort, and freedom for the millions
affected by human trafficking
in our world today. For the men,
women, and children enslaved by
fear, torture, dependency, entrap-
ment and bonded labour, we ask
you to intervene with righteous-
ness 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

*This prayer may be used
to close the 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.**





SOME NOTES TOWARDS A SERMON

Some things to include:

Your own voice – why is this important for you?

The voices of slaves and those trafficked – use stories told by those who have escaped

The variety of ways people are trafficked today – many of them are hidden, this concerns more than the sex trade

The voice of the Bible – the foundation of our faith is in the escape from slavery

A practical end – what can your hearers do?

Some things to beware:

Traumatising the congregation – be careful with powerful stories!

What might this raise for your hearers? – some may have suffered abuse or domestic violence or have been trafficked or be living in a situation of slavery at the moment

De-humanising the victims/survivors/perpetrators – tell other people's stories with care and don't treat them as an arguing point