

VIGIL of

International Day of Prayer and Awareness
against Human Trafficking

PRAYER



Kids they are! Not slaves!

February 8, 2017

Liturgical Memory of St. Bakhita

Wherever a hymn is indicated choose one which fits the theme and which is known to the participants.

Text to read or to show the video. If possible show the video of Pope Francis:
<https://youtu.be/N6loCll-dzo>

If it is not possible to show the video, read the following text.



INTRODUCTORY SONG OR MUSIC HYMN

Pope Francis, February 8th 2015

"Dear brothers and sisters, today, 8 February, the liturgical memorial of St. Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese Sister, who as a child had the traumatic experience of being a victim of trafficking, the International Union of Superiors General of Religious Institutes have promoted the Day of Prayer and Reflection against trafficking in persons. I encourage all those who are committed to helping men, women and children enslaved, exploited, abused as tools of pleasure and often tortured and mutilated. I hope that those who have responsibilities in government will seriously strive to eliminate the causes of this shameful scourge, a scourge unworthy of a civilized society. Let each of us be committed to being a voice for our brothers and sisters, humiliated and deprived of their dignity. Let us all pray together.

INTRODUCTION

After reading each one of these statistics,
one candle will be put out.



Lector 1:

Kids they are! Not slaves!

Lector 2: The third edition of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against trafficking in persons highlights the sufferings and the hope of trafficked children and adolescents.

According to the last official statistics of the United Nation, one in three victims of trafficking are children. The number of trafficked people who are less than 18 years old is constantly increasing, worldwide. Children and adolescents are trafficked for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced marriage, illegal adoptions, forced labour, organs removal, begging, criminal acts (like child soldiers, drug smuggling) and witchcraft.

It is urgent to listen to the cry of these little ones, to everybody, every family and every community, who experience the violence of exploitation and slavery, who is injured and humiliated.

Lector 1: We want to become a sign of hope to all trafficked children and their families. We announce:

“Kids they are! Not slaves!”

- Worldwide there are 168 million children in child labor. More than half of them, 85 million, are in hazardous work. (ILO)
- 20 million child workers are employed in factories that make garments, carpets, toys, matches and hand-rolled cigarettes. Agriculture remains by far the most important sector where child laborers' can be found (98 million, or 59%), but the problems are not negligible in services (54 million) and industry (12 million) – mostly in the informal economy. Most children work in farms that produce consumer products such as cocoa, coffee, cotton, rubber and other crops. (ILO)
- Asia and the Pacific still have the largest numbers (almost 78 million or 9.3% of child population), but Sub-Saharan Africa continues to be the region with the highest incidence of child labor (59 million, over 21% of child population). (ILO)
- There are 13 million children in child labor in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the Middle East and North Africa there are 9.2 million. (ILO)
- Every year, 22,000 children die in work-related accidents. 9% are in industry, including mining and quarrying, manufacturing and construction. (ILO)
- The number of children involved in armed conflicts has increased to about 300,000 over the past decade. 14 is the average age of a child soldier. 40 % of child soldiers are girls. (ILO)
- 2 million children are subjected to prostitution in the global commercial sex trade (UNICEF)
- Millions more children are likely exploited in prostitution or pornography each year around the world, most of the time lured or forced into these situations through false promises and limited knowledge about the risks.(UNICEF)
- About 1 in 10 girls under the age of 20 have been subjected to forced sexual intercourse or other forced sexual acts at some point of their lives. (UNICEF)

Music. Long pause for reflection..

Word of God:

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believes in me to sin: it is better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea"

(Mt 18:6; cf. Mk 9:42; Lk 17:2)

Pause for reflection. Silence

Testimonies. Share video clips or texts related to trafficking in children. It is better if each country is able to present local testimonies.

You will find some on the website: www.preghieracontrotratta.org

Silence – pause for reflection – 10/15 minutes.

Word of the Church

Message World Day of refugees 2017

How can we ignore this severe warning when we see the exploitation carried out by unscrupulous people? Such exploitation harms young girls and boys who are led into prostitution or into the mire of pornography; who are enslaved as child laborers or soldiers; who are caught up in drug trafficking and other forms of criminality; who are forced to flee from conflict and persecution, risking isolation and abandonment.

Moreover, the dividing line between migration and trafficking can at times be very subtle. There are many factors which contribute to making migrants vulnerable, especially if they are children: poverty and the lack of means to survive – to which are added unrealistic expectations generated by the media; the low level of literacy; ignorance of the law, of the culture and frequently of the language of host countries. All of this renders children physically and psychologically dependent. But the most powerful force driving the exploitation and abuse of children is demand. If more rigorous and effective action is not taken against those who profit from such abuse, we will not be able to stop the multiple forms of slavery where children are the victims.

Silence. Pause for reflection or music Song.



Lector 1: Our Lord, and Father, said to Jeremiah "Nevertheless, I will bring health and healing to it; I will heal my people and will let them enjoy abundant peace and security". With confident heart we present before the altar our concerns and our response will be:



Word of God: *While reading this Gospel, a big candle will be brought in and placed among the others on the table.*

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Mathew 25, 40

We have to recognize that many efforts are being made to end these crimes against children. Many people are making a difference in the world:

- Several Congregations of Women Religious and Church Organizations such as Caritas offer protection and shelter for children and adolescents who are survivors of trafficking. They are rescued from any kind of exploitation and trafficking. The shelters offer psychological, health and educational care. They allow the children to build up their own future! Many of these children, after a holistic health care time, are able to return to their own original family.

Together: Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." *Mathew 25, 40)*

- In the last 10 years many organizations have been promoting prevention activities to reduce the vulnerability and consequently the risk of people to be trafficked: Educational programs, scholarships for poor children in rural areas, income generations programs (not user what income generations means), health care. Prevention has become a key word to promote a real change in the society, giving opportunities and alternatives to children and their family.

Together: Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." *Mathew 25, 40)*

- Worldwide non-profitable organizations, faith based and grassroots organizations, governments, social movements and businesses strengthen collaboration and networking at local, regional and international level in order to eradicate trafficking in persons.

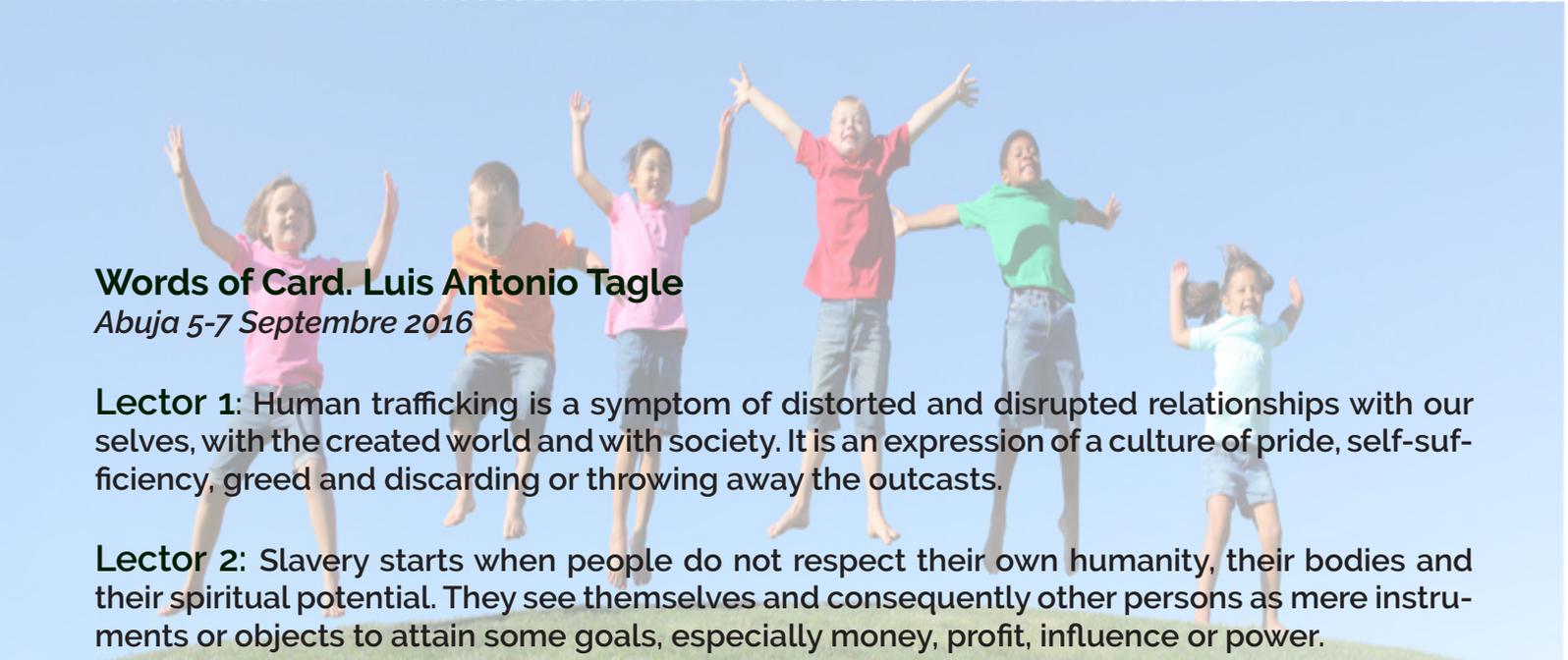
Together: Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." *Mathew 25, 40)*

- The integrated commitment of many organizations and the social polices of many governments help to reduce the number of child labor. The Global number of children in child labor has declined by one third since 2000. The change is possible!

Together: Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." *Mathew 25, 40)*

Each one can add their own good practices and sign of hope and light.

Silence. Long pause.



Words of Card. Luis Antonio Tagle

Abuja 5-7 Septiembre 2016

Lector 1: Human trafficking is a symptom of distorted and disrupted relationships with our selves, with the created world and with society. It is an expression of a culture of pride, self-sufficiency, greed and discarding or throwing away the outcasts.

Lector 2: Slavery starts when people do not respect their own humanity, their bodies and their spiritual potential. They see themselves and consequently other persons as mere instruments or objects to attain some goals, especially money, profit, influence or power.

Lector 1: So we reiterate that the lack of authentic human ecology that cares for and defends human nature and its real basic needs as well as the social and political environment that must promote the flourishing of human beings creates conditions ripe for trafficking and slavery of vulnerable humans like indigenous people, the poor, migrants, refugees, minorities, women and children.

Lector 2: If social, cultural, political and economic systems are not built on moral or ethical foundations, they would not promote the flourishing of human beings and the common good.

Lector 1 and 2: What can we do?

Lector 3: First, as Church and faith-based communities we should have compassion for the victims of human trafficking.
(a short silence)

Lector 4: Secondly, we need to educate and form our consciences about the true value of the human person, of human nature, of the human body and of human work.
(a short silence)

Lector 5: Thirdly, we should be the conscience of society. By actively engaging in the transformation of the social, cultural, political and economic structures we could redirect them to the inviolable dignity of the human person and the common good. Exposing and correcting corruption, eradicating destitution and poverty, providing access to education and social services and building strong social protection systems are some of the actions we can take.

Lector 1 and 2: What can each one of us do?

Lector 1: What can I do? How is it possible?

If each one of us asks, in an endless process of prayer and reflection, someone, somewhere will find answers, activities, projects to improve the situation. We will learn together, sharing new ideas, good practices and hope.

Personal commitment. Each person is invited to express his/her commitment while lighting one of the candles in front of the altar.

FINAL PRAYER

O God, when we hear of children and adults being deceived and taken to unknown places for purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labor, and organ 'harvesting', our hearts are saddened and our spirits angry that their dignity and rights are ignored through threats, lies, and force. We cry out against the evil practice of this modern slavery, and pray with St. Bakhita for it to end. Give us wisdom and courage to reach out and stand with those whose bodies, hearts and spirits have been so wounded, so that together we may make real your promises to fill these sisters and brothers with a love that is tender and good. Send the exploiters away empty-handed to be converted from this wickedness, and help us all to claim the freedom that is your gift to your children. Amen



Final song

Statistics Sources:

<http://www.theworldcounts.com/stories/Child-Labor-Facts-and-Statistics>

Marking progress against child labour - Global estimates and trends 2000-2012 (ILO-IPEC, 2013).

<http://www.humanrights.gov/the-facts-on-child-soldiers-and-the-cspa.html> (USA)

<http://borgenproject.org/10-child-labor-facts/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_labour

http://www.answers.com/Q/What_are_facts_about_child_labor#slide=1

Source: National Crime Agency (2014) UK

Ideas for the prayer of the faithful. Kids they are! Not Slaves!

Dear Lord, Your Word calls us to hunger and thirst for righteousness, that leads to compassion and renewal of ourselves. Lead us to a faith that works to make a better world for all Your children.

Dear Lord, help us to speak out against crimes against children. Prod us to act whenever we suspect that a child is in danger. Don't stop nagging us until we do the right thing.

Dear Lord, You see the children who work long hours with little to eat. You know that they are tired and more likely to get hurt. Please keep them from harm and move us to do something to protect them

Dear Lord, we pray for governments to enforce laws regarding child labor—and freedom for children put to work against their will. Governments that commit to the Millennium Development Goals, so that progress would be made towards reaching them in the time set.

Dear Lord, we pray that all children, regardless of their financial situations, can experience a holistic education where their spiritual, physical, emotional and academic needs are met.

Dear Lord, help us to empower families, so they can walk into the fullness of life You intend for them