



WORLD DAY AGAINST
TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS
7.30.2023

*Reach every person affected by human trafficking...
Leave no one behind!*



Introduction

The campaign for World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2023 aims to raise awareness of disturbing developments and trends identified by [UNODC](#) and calls on governments, law enforcement, public services, and civil society to assess and enhance their efforts to strengthen prevention, identify and support victims, and end impunity.

Global crises, conflicts, and the climate emergency are escalating trafficking risks. Displacement and socio-economic inequalities are impacting millions of people worldwide, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers. Those who lack legal status, live in poverty, have limited access to education, healthcare, or decent work, face discrimination, violence, or abuse, or come from marginalized communities are often the primary targets of traffickers.

“Leave no one behind” is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the context of trafficking in persons, leaving people behind means

- Failing to end the exploitation of trafficking victims,
- Failing to end the exploitation of trafficking victims; and
- Leaving identifiable groups vulnerable to traffickers.

At the implementation mid-point of the 2030 Agenda and ahead of the SDG Summit 2023 this year, it is crucial to raise awareness and reinforce **global commitments** to eliminate trafficking in persons as specifically mentioned in [SDG 5, 8 and 16](#).

To end human trafficking, we cannot allow this crime to be met with increasing indifference and impunity. We must strengthen resilience against exploitation and the underlying socio-economic and cultural issues that are conducive to trafficking. We must sensitize everyone to the topic of human trafficking and thus push attention towards those who can make a difference in terms of changing policy and national resource management to strengthen prevention measures, improve identification of victims, increase support of survivors and end impunity.

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/endht/index.html>

Prayer Service

Opening Song: Choose an appropriate song

Leader: On the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State...shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free. *—President Abraham Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation*

Reader 1: For 160 years, the United States has promised freedom and liberty. Yet, we know that people are still trafficked within our borders.

Reader 2: Human trafficking and slavery are illegal in every country, but present in every nation on Earth.

Leader: Let us take a moment of silence in solidarity with those who suffer from the profound loss of freedom that is human trafficking.

[Moment of Silence]

Leader: Let us join together in the words of the Psalm:

All: The just cry out, and God hears them and saves them from all their troubles. God is close to the brokenhearted and rescues those whose spirits are crushed.
—Psalm 34: 17-18

Reading: Message of Pope Francis

“Certainly there is a lot of ignorance on the topic of trafficking. But sometimes there also seems to be little will to understand the scope of the issue. Why? Because it touches close to our conscience; because it is thorny; because it is shameful. Then there are those who, even knowing this, do not want to speak because they are at the end of the “supply chain”, as a user of the “services” that are offered on the street or on the Internet...Yes, it takes courage and honesty, when, in our daily lives, we meet or deal with persons who could be victims of human trafficking, or when we are tempted to select items which may well have been produced by exploiting others.

The work of raising awareness must begin at home, with ourselves, because only in this way will we be able to then make our communities aware, motivating them to commit themselves so that no human being may ever again be a victim of trafficking.”
—Pope Francis, February 2018

[Moment of Silence]

Closing Prayers

Leader: For the estimated 40 million women, men and children currently held being trafficked, may freedom be restored to those who have been bought, sold, exploited or kidnapped for the monetary benefit of others. **Response: Bring them hope and freedom.**

Leader: For those in bonded labor, in agricultural fields, mines and factories, who have been reduced to tools of production and commodities rather than human beings. **Response**

Leader: For children exploited and objectified in the commercial sex industry, that they may be free to play, learn and grow up in freedom and safety. **Response**

Leader: For consumers, that we may be aware of how we are complicit when we demand products made by people who are trafficked; and that we may speak and work for justice for all those who are trafficked. **Response**

Leader: Let us pray:

All: God of hope and freedom, inspire us to act for justice and bring an end to human trafficking. Help us to reach every victim of trafficking, to leave no one behind, and to build a world where all are free to live with dignity.

Closing song: Choose an appropriate song

Prayer service courtesy of the Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center • 206.223.1138 • ipjc@ipjc.org • www.ipjc.org

Learn More, Take Action!

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking <https://sistersagainsttrafficking.org>

United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime: International Day Against Trafficking in Persons <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-human-trafficking-day>

National Advocacy Center – Sisters of the Good Shepherd <https://www.gsadvocacy.org>

Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center www.ipjc.org

Blue Heart Campaign – Resources – UNODC <https://www.un.org/en/observances/end-human-trafficking-day>

Polaris Project <https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking/>