



In Thanksgiving for 20 Years of Service

by

Mercy International Association

in

Addressing Issues of Justice

INTRODUCTION

We provide material for your electronics

We pick cocoa beans for your chocolate

We dye fabric for your clothes

We make your garments in factories in squalid conditions

We catch fish which arrives in your supermarkets

We work in your nail parlours

Leader: 27 million people across the globe are trafficked. Human trafficking is a major global injustice this century. The eradication of so great an evil is possible. The freedom of enslaved children, women and men is an imperative binding us all. The leadership of Pope Francis: *'I ask my brothers and sisters in faith and all men and women of good will for decisive choice to combat trafficking in persons'* continues to be significant.

PROCESSION OF LIGHTS

Music: soft classical music while candles representing each continent of the world are carried forward.

CALL TO PRAYER

Leader: God of the suffering and afflicted, let us hold these hopes in our hearts as we gather one in heart and spirit

The sacred story of Mercy, ours to share and re-vision.

The tender, gentle acceptance of another.

The privilege and responsibility of our call to prayerful and compassionate service of the most fragile and vulnerable.

All: *May our meeting in Mercy teach us to love tenderly, act justly and walk humbly.*

STORIES OF SURVIVORS

Let us listen to the voices of survivors of human trafficking as they tell their stories:

I come from Bangladesh and was married at thirteen to my much older husband who brought me here to Kolkata and sold me to a brothel owner. In my first week I was raped many times and then had to service up to ten clients a day.

I come from Serbia and worked fourteen hours a day in a restaurant in London and lived in a basement. I did not speak English very well. It was difficult for me to escape because my boss was always watching. I had no money and did not know where to go.

I was a child taken from my family when I was eight and forced to work endless hours on a fishing boat on Lake Volta in Ghana. I did not know how to swim. I was one of the four thousand children working on the lake.

I come from a middle class family. I was trafficked from a shopping mall in Chicago and taken to Atlantic City and forced to work as a prostitute.

I am a Dalit girl. I worked in a garment factory in Tamil Nadu. I became sick after working long hours in crowded conditions without any breaks. Breathing in cotton dust affected my lungs. Because I did not work for the full three years I received little pay.

I come from Aleppo in Syria. Last year my family fled to Beirut. In order to help my family survive I sold one of my kidneys. I was told that the kidney would grow back and there would not be any after-effects. My kidney was cut out from my front. I was not given pain killers.

I came with some of my friends from Fiji to Sydney six months ago on a special visa to work in the construction industry. We are only paid for two weeks out of four and work very long hours. We are accommodated in shipping containers.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Lamentations: 5:1, 11, 13, 15

O God, remember what has happened to us;
consider and see our degradation.

The young women in Zion have been raped,
the young girls in the town of Judah.

Youths have been put to the mill,
boys stagger under loads of wood.

Joy has vanished from our hearts;
our dancing has turned to mourning.

Zephaniah 3:17

I your God take delight in you
and in my love give you new life!

Leader: Our foundress, Catherine McAuley, was very much concerned with the plight of women in her own times –in her life she witnessed the exploitation of women, including one young woman who was a victim of attempted rape. This woman fell through the cracks of the system and Catherine was haunted by never having seen her again after attempting to aid her. Refusing to be defeated, Catherine embraced the challenge to provide a sanctuary for the most vulnerable women of Dublin.

Touched by God's mercy and compassion and fired by the inspiration of the Gospel and Catherine McAuley, Sisters of Mercy collaborate with others who strive for justice to oppose all forms of human trafficking and exploitation. (MIA quote: Touched by God's Mercy).

ANTHEM

Women of Mercy

Women of Mercy, Women of Hope

Women united in merciful love

Standing together

One with the poor

Revealing to our world

God's transforming love

Music composed 2004 Monica Brown

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Reader: Like Jesus and all who empower and encourage those trafficked and enslaved may we '*draw persons to God by our words, by our example, and by works of Mercy*' (Catherine McAuley) and so we pray.....

For the liberation and healing of millions of girls and women trapped in sexual slavery:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For child labourers, child soldiers and children exploited in pornography:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For all men, women and children, enslaved, betrayed and abandoned that they may not lose hope:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For greater awareness of the need to make ethical choices about what we buy:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For an end to conflict and corruption that fuels trafficking in places such as Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda, Burma, Somalia and Syria:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For the destruction of criminal networks that traffic humans:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For those who work with victims of trafficking:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: For all committed to working towards the eradication of human trafficking:

All: *We place ourselves at the service of those who cry out for mercy and justice.*

Reader: Liberating God, we make these prayers through Jesus, your life and gift among us.

All: *Amen.*

RECESSIONAL

Send Down the Fire of Your Justice

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***Ref: Send down the fire of your justice,
Send down the rains of your love;
Come, send down the Spirit,
breathe life in your people,
And we shall be people of God.***

Call us to be your compassion,
Teach us the song of your love;
Give us hearts that sing,
Give us deeds that ring,
Make us ring with the song of your love. ***Ref.***

Call us to learn of your mercy,
Teach us the way of your peace;
Give us hearts that feel,
Give us hands that heal,
Make us walk in the way of your peace. ***Ref.***

Call us to answer oppression,
Teach us the fire of your truth;
Give us righteous souls,
'Til your justice rolls,
Make us burn with the fire of your truth. ***Ref.***

Call us to witness your Kingdom,
Give us the presence of Christ;
May your holy light
Keep us shining bright,
Ever shine with the presence of Christ. ***Ref.***



*Ritual prepared by
Sisters of Mercy in Australia and Papua New Guinea*

Acknowledgements

*'Women of Mercy' composed by Monica Brown for the
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*'Send Down the Fire of Your Justice' composed by Marty Haugen © 1989
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Image of Catherine McAuley by Anne Henderson RSM

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