



LENT Fourth Week

Luke 15: 1-2

Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And (some) Pharisees and the Scribes were grumbling and saying, “ This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” (Moments of reflection)

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

Christe eleison, Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

A Prodigal People You can buy a woman for \$10,000, and you can make your money back in a week if she is pretty and she is young. (Moments of reflection)

R. *God you are near to the brokenhearted. We have sinned against heaven and before you; we are no longer worthy to be called your children.*

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

Christe eleison, Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

The profits are, in fact, unseemly. Interpol estimates that each exploited women can bring up \$75,000 to \$250,000 a year. Pimps often brag that a woman purchased for \$1500 can bring in \$100 an hour ...making back their investment every night. The trade in human beings earns up to \$12 billion euros worldwide every year. (Moments of reflection)

R. *God you are near to the brokenhearted. We have sinned against heaven and before you; we are no longer worthy to be called your children.*

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

Christe eleison, Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

The United Nations estimates that every year up to 4 million women and children are trafficked around the world as forced prostitutes and laborers in a fast growing \$7 billion industry. (Moments of reflection)

R. *God you are near to the brokenhearted. We have sinned against heaven and before you; we are no longer worthy to be called your children.*

O God, we cannot express what our minds barely comprehend and our hearts feel when we hear of women and girls deceived, transported to unknown places for purposes of sexual exploitation and abused because of human greed and profit. We can only lift our voices and cry to you, “God of Justice, God of compassion, have mercy on us. Strengthen the broken-hearted.”

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

Christe eleison, Christe eleison

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison

In the netherworld of the illegal, flesh trade, trafficked women repeatedly slam up against thick stonewalls of complacency, racism and indifference. These are tremendous obstacles for the women to overcome. But if there is one factor that virtually seals their fate, it is corruption. (Moments of reflection)

R. *God you are near to the brokenhearted. We have sinned against heaven and before you; we are no longer worthy to be called your children.
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison
Christe eleison, Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison*

Stories of systemic complicity, complacency and corruption abound on the trafficking scene worldwide. It is a wonder sometimes that any women are rescued at all. And when they are, most are treated as whores. (Moments of reflection)

R. *God you are near to the brokenhearted. We have sinned against heaven and before you; we are no longer worthy to be called your children.*

*Our hearts and spirit are saddened when the dignity and rights of those who are trafficked are violated, threatened by deception and force. We cry out against this degrading practice of trafficking and pray, “ God of Justice, God of compassion, have mercy on us. Send their exploiters away empty handed.”
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison
Christe eleison, Christe eleison
Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison*

To most trafficked women, the “enemy” includes police, border guards and immigration officers. But there is yet another formidable foe among those in uniform: military men. In war torn regions, under control of UN peacekeepers and U.S. soldiers, the words “democracy” and “peace” ring hollow for thousands of trafficked women imprisoned in bars and brothels adjacent to military bases. In these far-flung, out of sight hovels, fifteen-year-old girls are fair game ... and rape is just another word for rest and relaxation. (Moments of reflection)

Martin Luther King Jr.

The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral... Returning violence for violence multiplies violence... Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. (Moments of reflection)

Sharing: Having prayed and reflected on these readings, what are your feelings and thoughts?

Closing Prayer

Take Lord and receive all our anger and its energy.
Use it to dispel the darkness.

Give us the wisdom and courage
to learn more about this tragic reality in our world.
Help us stand in solidarity with our sisters
so that together we may reclaim our humanity.

Adapted from a prayer by G. Cassini, SSND