



GRACE

Governor's Response Against Child Exploitation



Tuesday, January 12: *Pray for prevention efforts and those who are vulnerable.*

Helpful Context:

- Traffickers are master manipulators and prey upon vulnerabilities. Examples of risk factors for human trafficking include: homelessness; economic insecurity; runaway youth; prior histories of abuse; forced displacement; and irregular migration.
- Research suggests that a healthy, trust-based relationships can prevent youth from entering a cycle of exploitation and that those same relationships are pivotal in helping exploited youth to successfully exit their exploitation. Research has also found the presence of a caring adult to be related to numerous positive outcomes in the lives of vulnerable teens and young adults.
- In Texas, schools are required to provide access to age-appropriate, research-based education to help protect children from sexual abuse and trafficking. Many organizations are doing great work to provide students, teachers, and caregivers with access to quality prevention education. Others are focused on addressing root causes of exploitation such as poverty, homelessness, and childhood trauma. These efforts are essential for moving upstream and stopping trafficking before it occurs.

Sample Prayers:

- Baptist
Dear God of Creation, we know you call us to be responsible for our fellow human beings. You have blessed us with all the necessary resources to work together to stop Human Trafficking. Make us bold and brave as we get in the way of those who would manipulate and abuse the vulnerable into this unimaginable evil.
Break my heart as Christ's was broken for me. Amen.
Read Matthew 25:31-40 (God praises ministry to the vulnerable)
- Catholic
Intercessory prayer: For the innocents who suffer under the sinful abuse of slavery and for conversion of the utterly lost souls who hold them captive and exploit them, we pray to the Lord.

For reflection: Human trafficking happens in every community. That means each of us can do something to stop it. As Pope Francis has stated: "Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ."

• Episcopalian
For Young Persons: (Book of Common Prayer)
God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better



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than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

- Jewish

Av Harahamim -- Master of Comfort

May strength come from our awareness:

so we can support each other and recognize the beauty inherent in each of Your human creations. Let us champion the vulnerable.

May compassion come from our noticing:

so we take care to uplift every living soul and provide those in need with our gentle attention.

Let us rescue the needy.

May wisdom come from our action:

so we can unite across communities to look after each other, joining in common cause to protect those vulnerable and at risk, renewing life and connection. Let us encourage the just.

Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'asei shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael v'al kol yoshvei teivel

May the One who creates peace on high bring peace to us and to all Israel, and to all who dwell on earth.

- Muslim

We especially ask you Dear God to be the Protector of each and every child in our state and make us a means of comfort and guidance for those who have none to look after them.

The sample prayers above were graciously provided by the following GRACE members:

- *Pastor Jay Abernathy of First Baptist Church Woodville*
- *Jennifer Allmon and the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops*
- *Lisa Francisco and the Human Trafficking Prayer Team at St. Martin's Episcopal*
- *Rabbi Neil Blumofe of Congregation Agudas Achim*
- *Imam Islam Mossaad of North Austin Muslim Community Center*