



# GRACE

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## Governor's Response Against Child Exploitation



**Saturday, January 16:** *Pray for an end to demand and societal factors that lead to exploitation.*

### Helpful Context:

- Sex trafficking would simply not be profitable without demand. Sex buyers drive the market for the illegal sex trade. From May 2019 – June 2020, CEASE Texas identified over 1 million unique online advertisements for commercial sex across 6 Texas cities. We should consider the roles of technology, pornography, sexually oriented businesses, and a hypersexualized culture in facilitating an environment that normalizes exploitation and facilitates demand.
- Labor trafficking is also impacted by demand. The demand for cheap goods and cheap labor can result in worker exploitation and slavery in supply chains. In 2020, the U.S. Department of Labor identified 155 goods from 77 countries produced by child or forced labor.

### Sample Prayers:

- Baptist  
Dear God, your love and grace is immeasurable. We have broken your beautiful intention for intimacy and made it flawed and evil lust. Help those who speak prophetically about the danger of silence regarding pornography and its easy accessibility. Pour out your light in the darkness of an industry that promises a lie and exploits human beings for profit of any kind. Cease our lust for bargain products and base pleasure. Open the eyes of our leaders and our land who lead us away from a care for others and the fair value of labor.  
Under the redemptive love of your Son, who paid the price of salvation, I pray. Amen.  
Read Jonah 3 (A leader hears God's word and leads repentant change)
- Catholic  
Intercessory prayer: For courage to initiate change in our hypersexualized and consumer-driven culture, to end exploitation of others, we pray to the Lord.  
  
For reflection: "If there are so many young women victims of trafficking who end up on the streets of our cities, it is because many men here – young, middle-aged, elderly – demand these services and are willing to pay for their pleasure. I wonder then, is the principal cause of trafficking really the traffickers? I believe the principal cause is the unscrupulous selfishness of the many hypocrites in our world. Of course, arresting traffickers is an obligation of justice. But the true solution is the conversion of hearts, cutting off demand in order to dry the market."  
Pope Francis, Video Message to the Participants in the International Forum on Modern Slavery, 7 May 2018
- Episcopalian  
Oh, gracious and merciful Father,  
We humbly acknowledge that you are the creator and still master of all that is and all that ever



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was or will be.

We also acknowledge that we are broken, each of us, though often in very different ways. We know that you know this, and that you weep when we, your children, push away from you and allow our brokenness to bring pain to others.

We confess our sinfulness in this, and ask for your forgiveness in the name of Jesus.

Lord, we know that we have either succumbed to or for too long ignored the deception of the enemy and allowed the dark forces of lust and greed to draw us and others into pornography and both the virtual and physical exploitation of helpless, enslaved children. Yes, children, Lord; we confess it and we cry out now for them.

We call on you in the name of Jesus, and by the power of your Holy Spirit, to help each of us to discern these deceptions that are so numerous, rampant and persuasive; to confront them fearlessly for ourselves and with our family and friends; and to have the power to refuse to submit ever again to the yoke of slavery, which is all that pornography and these dark forces offer.

In the precious name of Jesus, our savior and advocate, we pray,  
Amen

- Jewish

El Elyon -- God of the Most High

You know us. Help us to choose life at all times. May we see ourselves as part of the grand scheme of your creation knowing that we have the power to improve systems, anointed with choicest oil. May we see the Divine in others and appreciate the blessings that exist in community. May we privilege the development of our children and help them grow and flourish in our care, like the palm tree, fresh and fragrant.

*Ani v'atah nishneh et ha'olam. Ani v'atah az yavo'u k'var kulam.*

You and I will change the world. Then everyone will join us.

- Muslim

We ask you Most Holy to forgive us our sins and weaknesses and that we do not manifest our inner sickness as abuse to any woman, man, or child. We ask that we grow strong moral families in Texas that love and fear you.

*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*