

Prayer Service for the International Day of the Girl Child

Adapted from a prayer service prepared by Good Shepherd Sisters in India and Nepal.



A lamp or candle is lit. All pause for a minute of silence

Leader: Light represents the presence of God who guides us with divine wisdom. As we take part in this prayer service on the International Day of the 'Girl Child', let us welcome the Divine Presence in our hearts, in our lives, in our midst and into our work for justice.

Reader 1: "On December 19, 2011, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 66/170 to declare 11 October as the International Day of the 'Girl Child', to recognize the rights of the 'girl child' and the unique challenges the 'girl child' faces in society. We focus our attention on the 'girl child', as part of a massive and relentless drive towards a world of equality: a Planet 50-50 by 2030." The Sustainable Development Goals precisely include key targets for gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls and offers an occasion for a global commitment to break intergenerational transmission of poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination and realizing our vision of a life of dignity for all" (Ban Kimoon).

Reader 2. 'Any child that is brought in the world is a blessing. Woman as architect of the society deserve equal right and respect. Girls are the spirit of our nation; save them from exploitation. Girls have the potential to play key role in achieving a sustainable and equitable world, both as the empowered girls of today and as tomorrow's mothers, mentors, workers and political leaders. Any investment in empowering the 'girl child' to uphold her rights today for a thriving future ensures gender justice; since woman is an equal partner in solving the problems of economic growth, disease prevention and global sustainability.

Reader 3: Girl child has fundamental rights of equality in the society like boys. The Government of India has started a "Save the Girl Child" campaign with the slogan "A happy girl is the future of our country" The Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi launched a campaign 'Beti Bachao: Beti Padhao' to spread awareness towards educating the 'girl child' in our homes and society. Life possibility for humanity on the earth without daughters is grim for without women everything in this world is incomplete. Can we be the catalyst by championing the value and precious worth of our all children?

Prayer of Intercession:

1: Let us join in praying 'That our daughters may be as columns of the temple.' (Ps. 144:12). We pray that women and girls everywhere may live life abundantly as God intended for them.

Response: Lord of life, hear our prayer.

2. God of love and life, we pray for a change in the mindset of people to accept and respect your image in every person without bias. May everyone be valued equally as precious and loved.

R: Lord of life hear our prayer.

3. We bring before you every 'girl child': daughter, sister, wife and mother in their different roles. Help us to uphold the dignity and empower the 'girl child' to play the rightful role in society.

R: Lord of life hear our prayer.

4. We pray for all victims of abuse, discrimination and violence who feel unloved and rejected. Heal their wounds and strengthen them to attain their potential to live fuller life.

R: Lord of life hear our prayer

5. We pray for the safety of girls in vulnerable situations, trafficked for sex trade, those who are exploited, oppressed and in distress.

R: Lord of life hear our prayer

6. We pray for those in authority: governments, organizations, Churches, Society: that they be sensitive to issues affecting the girl child /women, and adopt measures to promote their growth.

R: Lord of life hear our prayer

All: May the God who dances in creation, who embraces us with love, enable us to always act justly and bless our work to create a better world for all. Amen