

THREADS OF HOPE



Remembering Workers at Rana Plaza, Bangladesh

Opening Prayer: On April 24, 2013 the eight-storey Rana Plaza building in Bangladesh collapsed killing 1,134 garment workers and injuring more than 2,500 others. In the rubble of the building rescuers found labels for brands of clothing destined for Australia and other countries all around the world. At the time Pope Francis denounced as “slave labor” the conditions of the workers caught in this deadly collapse.

Loving God, as we remember the anniversary of this event, we are mindful of these workers and the millions of workers who continue to work in toxic or dangerous conditions today to provide cheap clothing and other goods for us and other consumers. **Response: God of Justice, we remember.**

We remember:

- Factory workers laboring in sweatshop conditions & with little pay **(R)**
- Miners working in difficult and dangerous conditions **(R)**
- Seasonal workers working outdoors during the COVID-19 pandemic, without social and economic supports available to other workers **(R)**
- Hospitality workers toiling in cramped and hot kitchens **(R)**
- Agricultural workers laboring in all seasons to meet deadlines and orders **(R)**
- Seafarers employed to work away from family and in harsh environments for long periods of time **(R)**
- Young children deprived of schooling and forced to work in plantations, mines, dance bars and illegal brothels **(R)**

A Reading from Pope Francis' Easter Message 2020:

Jesus Christ is risen! – He is truly risen. Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night. This is a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is “the contagion of hope”. This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not “bypass” suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God... This is not the time for indifference, self-centredness, division or forgetfulness.

Response:

1. **God of love** transforms our hearts as we hear Your Good News and work to bring the good news of justice to exploited workers
2. **God of compassion** keep us from indifference and forgetfulness and make us mindful of our sisters and brothers who labour to meet our demands for cheap goods and services
3. **God of justice** give us courage to raise our voices in advocacy so that the evil of injustice for so many workers will be transformed into respect for the dignity of each and all
4. **God of hope** enable us to stay hopeful whenever we face the suffering and death of others who are exploited and abused.
5. **Other.....**

Closing Prayer: All

Creator God, each day you weave together the many threads of creation where we live and work in safety and peace. Your hope of this for all, calls us to wrestle with the injustices that continue to deprive many of these gifts. As we remember the workers at Rana Plaza and become ever more aware of complicities of injustice in many global supply chains, give us courage to speak out and take action that all may truly know the gifts of Easter joy and hope. Amen.