

# ***16 Days of Prayer and Activism against Gender Based Violence***

**25<sup>th</sup> November – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

***Domestic Violence and abuse is about control and enslavement, but the Lord is all about deliverance, freedom and peace. Never doubt the power of prayer and God's ability to protect and heal those who are suffering as a result of violence.***



***"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."*** Martin Luther King

**Day 1: 25 November, 2020**

Also known as **White Ribbon Day**, The first day of the global 16 Days of Activism.



**Reflection:**

Individuals, groups and organisations around the world use these 16 days to raise awareness of gender-based violence, speak up against it and inspire people to do what they can to end it. Please join us in praying about this huge issue, and the people affected by it.

We pray that as you embark on this journey with us for the next 16 days, you daily come before God and light your candle of hope. An unlit candle gives no light, only when burning, is it shining bright, and if your life is empty, dull and dark, let it not stop doing things for others that need the spark. Light up someone's life and you will generate happiness not only for yourself, but everyone that catches your spark.



**Read Psalm 18.**

**Prayers:**

We pray with the: Archbishop, Bishop Margaret, Archdeacons and Clergy.

*God we pray that throughout the next 16 days, our hearts and minds will be open to better understand the reality of Gender-based violence and how we can come together to end it.*

*You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turn the darkness into light. Lord your goodness and mercy never run out. Lord we lift all people that have suffered any form of abuse. Make your face shine upon them.*

*“Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Psalm 82:2-4*

## DAY 2: 26 November, 2020

**We pray with the: Archdeaconry of Helderberg**

### **Reflection:**

We live in a world where one in every three women and girls is expected to face violence in some form in their lifetime. It is a staggering statistic but, more than that, it is heart-breaking; it breaks the heart of our God who created and loves each and every one of us, whether male or female.

We pray for God's healing touch upon all women and children, heal them from the pain and suffering caused by sexual violence. We pray for protection of vulnerable women and girls from ongoing cycles of violence and trauma. We pray that they will be empowered and strengthened to speak out against any form of gender base violence.

First as Christians, we are called to this work of giving blessings in exchange for evil and insults. That's the part of our purpose as God set-apart people on earth. This is a powerful tool for social change, since only forgiveness can break the cycle of revenge.

Lord, we lift up to you all the women and children at centres for abused and the many other organisations that provide safety, Love and compassion to victims of abuse.

### **Read Psalm 100**

### **Prayers:**

***Remember God loves you and wants to protect you, seek that small haven and be guided by prayer, to that place of protection within God's Loving care.***

***We also pray for abusers, Heavenly Father. Have your way with them, so they will not have the desire to control and manipulate their partners. Lead them to Your Word, where they will be purified and made right in your sight.***

***Surround Your Word in their hearts so that they will live in harmony and have perfect and constant peace within themselves, and in turn, with their partners. Amen.***

**Day 3: 27 November, 2020**

**We pray with all Anglican schools.**

**Reflection:**

The Lord upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry, The Lord sets prisoners free.

Lord we pray for families that have been destroyed by brutal acts of violence, where violence has destroyed relationships, that they by Jesus' forgiving spirit find healing and restoration. Lord we pray for all vulnerable children who have been affected by or witnessed these acts of violence and abuse that they will receive the support services they need to recover from these acts of trauma e.g. Female infanticide and selective abortions, female genital mutilation.

Lord open the eyes of women in abusive relationships, that they will recognise their rights and move towards the restoration of broken relationships and lives.

We pray that God will bring transformation to all survivors', healing to their painful experiences of sexual violence, and strength to all those who provide availability of services such as trauma counselling and treatment for HIV, all those who work to protect victims of abuse.

Lord today we lift up to you all the children, and teachers at the St. Michael's and St. Paul's Primary schools and the many others that provide safety, Love and compassion to children who find themselves victims of abuse.

**Read Psalm 146.**

**Prayers:**

***We pray today for peace in South Africa and other countries where Gender-based violence is rife in conflict, and praise God for the work at the above institutes and for the staff, carers for restoring the lives of victims of abuse.***

***Jesus Lord of life, transform the hearts of all elected leaders to recognize that infanticide is wrong and must not be tolerated. Open hearts and mind to recognize and defend the precious gift of every human life.***

***We pray with all our Anglican Schools and centres to ask God to open the eyes of women in abusive relationships, that they will recognize their rights and move towards the restoration of broken relationships and lives to live in peace with themselves and be restored in Jesus name. AMEN***

**Day 4: 28 November, 2020**

**We pray with the: Bernard Mzeki Ministry**

**Reflection:**

**Psalm 72: 13 – 14**

*“He has pity on the weak and poor, he saves the lives of those in need. He rescues them from oppression and violence, their lives are precious to Him.”*

Pray for God’s blessing on initiatives already in place in our dioceses and parishes in response to violence against women and girls; to gather more church’s and faith leaders together to discern what we might say and do together; and to attend to the training of clergy and pastors so that they are aware of the nature and dynamics of gendered violence and how certain attitudes and behaviours can be challenged and transformed.

We were heartened to know that there is an increasing amount of work being undertaken in the Communion as churches engage with awareness raising, advocacy, changing attitudes and behaviours that lead to violence, the care and reintegration into society of victims/survivors of violence, and work with perpetrators of violence. We thank God for these efforts and rejoice in them, and we commit to strengthening our mission and ministry in these areas.

**Read Romans 14:19**

**Prayers:**

*We pray with the Bernard Mzeki Ministry, that God will restore the weak, take compassion on those who is being violated by abusive partners. Bring wholeness to the afflicted and make them one with Him in Jesus name.*

*Heavenly Father, who loves and cares for all of your children, especially the smallest and most vulnerable, we entrust to you the lives of the many children and vulnerable adults, who have been sexually abused, and whose trust and innocence have been destroyed. Help us to hear their cries of pain and to take responsibility for so many broken lives.*

*So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building. Give us discerning hearts to know your will and give us courage to be obedient. Lord we know that without you and the Holy Spirit indwelling in each of us, we cannot do any of these things. But, with you and for your glory, grant our church’s peace and unity. AMEN*

**Day 5: 29 November, 2020**

**We pray with the: Anglican Women Fellowship**

**Reflection:**

Community support groups, a safe place where abused woman and children are able to share their stories without stigma. The support group sessions help many women to realise that they are not the only one faced with a particular type of abuse. Every session help woman grow to believe in themselves, and help them to grow stronger as survivors of sex trafficking, prostitution and other forms of gender base violence.

**Read Psalm 27**

**Prayers:**

*Please pray for women finding themselves in this situation to find support groups, which help to give them the nurturing environment they need to rebuild their lives, to give them Hope and strength. We pray for the continuation of Communion dialogues to increase support within communities, minimise stigma that survivors face and increase awareness of gender base violence.*

*Lord, no one knows suffering, oppression, and abuse like you do. Lord you were stripped naked and abused for our iniquities. You sympathize with human suffering. And in time you are committed to end it, to renew the world until there is no more death, mourning, crying or pain. Father you gave solidarity to victims, and support and defend them. We do not know what we would do if you were not a defender of the weak, a lover of justice and full of grace and compassion towards those who hurt.*

*Protect all children, youth and adults who are the target of abusers and human traffickers. Guard their lives and hold their hearts. We pray for Heaven's Nest, St. Paul's home, Fikelela Aids Children centre and the many other organisations that provide safe places in the communities.*

*Lord, strengthen our Anglican Women Fellowship as they lead the example to love your neighbor as we love ourselves. May we be that light of hope to the hopeless? Our women and children are being beaten, murdered, raped and neglected. Let us as mothers, wives, and sister's stand up to reach the lonely and broken with the same compassion you have reached out to us. Give us the voice to the voiceless, may we be the hands, feet, smile, and embrace of Jesus Christ to all your children.*

**AMEN**

**Day 6: 30 November, 2020**

**We pray with the: Young People Ministries (Brigade, Service Guild, Liturgical dancers, Sunday Schools)**

**Reflection:**

**1 Timothy 3: 3**

***“He must not be a drunkard or a violent man, but gentle and peaceful, he must not love money”.***

Help men around the world to recognise the social norms which do harm to women  
Help men in our society to be positive role models by the way they treat women in their homes and communities.

No one in a leadership role should have double standards. They should not behave one way at home, and try to clean up their act when they are transferred into a position of authority within the church.

Organization’s run workshops to transform masculinities, these workshops address some of the cultural and societal norms which create unequal power dynamics between men and women and can lead to gender based violence. Men can be transformed by these workshops and actively speak out against gender-based violence.

**Read Ephesians 5:25-33**

**Prayers:**

***We pray for more men to step up and be willing to change their behaviour and to reflect equal relationships.***

***Father of everlasting compassion, you see your children growing up in a confusing world. Let the young people of this country stand up against the stigma of gender based violence and lead your people through grace and mercy. Let the faith of the unbeliever be strengthen, let the faith of the confusing heart be restored through our ministry, and May their joy be in your creation through Jesus Christ our Lord.***

***We pray for more churches to host special services or events creating platforms for awareness on GBV; For a better understanding about the do’s and don’ts when working with, and caring for, survivors.; For Greater awareness of individual rights and our legal obligations. AMEN***

**Day 7: 1 December, 2020 (World Aids Day) 38<sup>th</sup> year of celebration internationally.**



**We pray with the: Archdeaconry of Mountain Bay**

**Reflection:**

Lord Jesus Christ, you travelled through towns and villages curing every disease and illness. At your command, the sick were made well.

God of Promise, today we are mindful of our sisters and brothers living with HIV and Aids. We ask your healing presence on millions of people living with the disease today, particularly the children who are infected or who have been orphaned by the disease. Make of us a safe haven for those who are abandoned, discriminated against and rejected on account of their status. Inspire us to speak out for a just distribution of health care and medical support, for the generosity in sharing our resources with those countries struggling under the weight of this pandemic.

As we begin our Advent celebration of waiting in hope for the birth of our saviour Jesus Christ, Let us remember those across the world who wait in hope for a cure and for justice.

**Read Psalm 121**

**Prayer:**

*We bring before you all organizations, Government departments, businesses who engages and facilitates awareness, love, care and support to all who are infected and affected.*

*Loving and reconciling Jesus you know what it is to be scorned. Listen to the cry of women, men, girls and boys everywhere. If we are scorned, give us confidence in your love.*

*God of Promise, today we are mindful of our sisters and brothers suffering with HIV and AIDS and suffering from Domestic Violence. We ask your healing presence on millions of people living with the disease today; particularly children who are infected or who have been orphaned by the disease.*

*Make of us a safe haven for those who are abandoned, discriminated against and rejected on account of their illness. Inspire us to speak out for a just distribution of health care and medical aid in this country and for generosity in sharing our resources with those struggling under the weight of this epidemic and who is being abused through this disease.*

*Today we pray especially for "Fikelela Aids Project", for the work that they do. Father, we pray for your blessing upon their financial well-being to enable them to continue this important ministry. AMEN*

## Day 8: 2 December, 2020

**We pray with the: Archdeaconry of Blue Downs**

**Reflection:**

**Psalm 11: 5**

***“He examines the good and the wicked alike: the lawless he hates with all his heart”.***

God of Love and compassion, be with all those that are sick and heavy laden. Lord we lift all those suffering from HIV and Aids, Cancer, Corona virus, TB, addictions, any form of abuse; we ask that cures may be found for diseases that are still a mystery. We pray that you give wisdom to our researchers, bless them with insight as they toil in search for cures and vaccines. Lord open our eyes to see the pain and suffering, fill our hearts with empathy towards those in pain and suffering, fill our minds with wisdom and knowledge to seek justice for all God's people. May God's healing hand rest gently on all of us.

Think of the many times we view circumstances around us. Whether they are personal or global and we think “How can God let this happen; where is God? So much wickedness goes on all around us, and it seems though God is nowhere to be found.

**Read Psalm 23**

**Prayers:**

***Lord we lift up those suffering from any form of abuse. I pray that each one of these dear souls will find his/her worth in Christ. I pray that they will find you're healing mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually.***

***Heavenly Father, there are times that I feel overwhelmed by all that is happening on the earth as evil is growing worse and worse and all godly foundations of truth are being worn by a God-hating, Christ-rejecting world. May I read, mark, learn and inwardly digest Your Word of truth knowing that You are my foundation and the Rock upon which I stand - an eternal foundation Stone, which can never be shaken for You alone are God.***

***Fix your eyes on Jesus, your Good Shepherd. Stick close to him. Trust that he knows the way. AMEN***

**Day 9: 3 December, 2020**

**We pray with: Archdeaconry of Mitchell's Plain**

**Scripture Reading: Isaiah 60: 18**

*"The sound of violence will be heard no more. Destruction will not shatter your country again. I will protect and defend you like a wall. You will praise me because I have saved you."*

**Reflection:**

We call upon all people to use this upcoming Advent season to promote the dignity of women and children, taking deliberate initiatives to end gender-based violence that usually targets the female gender. We remember today especially the women who were raped and brutally murdered in this past year. Babies and young children who have been raped, buried and robbed of their dignity and lives. We pray for the families who are affected and have been grieved by these gruesome behaviours.

**Read Psalm 118**

**Prayer:**

*Loving God, you are the author and sustainer of our lives. You know our anguish and our sorrows, you are attentive to the prayer of the broken hearted. Hear your people who cry out to you in need. Strengthen their hope in your lasting goodness. We pray for those who have died because of violence. Draw them to yourself and let your face shine upon them. May they be greeted with the choirs of angels and experience eternal peace and joy.*

*Walk with us as we strive to end violence against women, it starts with an attitude of heart. We give thanks for all woman who serve whether it be in the Church, the home, the community, the school, the hospital or place of work. Thank you for their gifts and talent they bring to the world, they continue to shine like diamonds. Today we remember especially all groups within the Church where woman are being nurtured and developed to go out and make a difference to heal inequality and poverty in this world. Renew that spirit of learning and reaching out to others within us. Teach us to teach other's what we do.*

*Loving Saviour, touch the hearts of those who abuse others. Heal their thinking, so that they may turn to you and seek your ways. Help them to know that every human being is a treasure to you. Help them to know that you are a forgiving God and can lead them on a path to new life. In Jesus' name. AMEN*

## DAY 10: 4 December, 2020

We pray with: **Archdeaconry of Overberg**

### Reflection:

**Unfortunately there are so many types of abuse, Knowing about the forms of abuse can allow you to spot them and stop the abuse as soon as possible. No matter the age, gender, socioeconomic status, education or ethnicity, anyone can become a victim of abuse.**

- **Emotional abuse** – this type of abuse is likely the most common. Emotional abuse consists of any behaviour designed to hurt another person emotionally.
- **Psychological abuse** – this type of abuse includes yelling, threats, shaming, humiliation and shaming, among other tactics.
- **Verbal abuse** – verbal abuse is generally a form of psychological abuse. This type of abuse occurs when an abuser uses words and body language with the intent to hurt another person. Verbal abuse includes put-downs and unreasonable criticisms.
- **Physical abuse** – this form of abuse shows the most outward signs. Physical abuse is also known as domestic abuse or domestic violence. It's a physical act designed to harm the other person physically.
- **Sexual abuse** – this type of abuse is often perpetrated against women although men can be victims of sexual abuse too. Sexual abuse includes any unwanted sexual act forced on the victim. This form of abuse is also known as sexual assault or rape.
- **Financial abuse** – this type of abuse is often seen alongside other forms of abuse. Financial abuse is when one person restricts access of money to another.
- **Elder abuse** – this type of abuse happens between an elder and another person, younger such as the elder's child. Elder abuse consists of other forms of abuse perpetrated against an elder. This form of abuse often consist of financial, emotional and even physical abuse.

- **Digital abuse** - social networking to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a partner. Often this behaviour is a form of verbal or emotional abuse perpetrated online via social media.
- **Spiritual abuse** – spiritual abuse revolves around a person’s spirituality or religion. This type of abuse includes attacking another’s believe system, denying access to a house of worship or forced participation in any other belief against the persons choice.

All forms of abuse are illegal, although some are harder to prosecute than others. Many of these types of abuse are also perpetrated against children and teens.

**Read John 14:16**

**Prayer:**

***Gracious God, You created us in your image and breathed life into us, a life you want us to live abundantly. We ask you to free those living with abuse physically, mentally or spiritually, from their oppression, so that they may walk in peace and enjoy a life full of your blessings.***

***Open our ears to the cries of women who have been denied their rights and dignity. Empower us to be instruments of justice for all, for in the wholeness of Christ, all mothers are our own mothers, and we are one.***

***Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,  
heal your people’s wounds  
and transform brokenness into wholeness.  
Grant us the courage and wisdom,  
humility and grace, to act with justice.  
Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors.  
Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace in justice.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord.***

**Amen**

**Day 11: 5 December, 2020**

**We pray with: Archdeaconry of Breede Valley**

**Reflection:**

**Reading: Matthew 26: 52 – 54**

*“Put your sword back in its place, Jesus said to him. All who take the sword will die by the sword. Don’t you know that I could call on my Father for help, and at once he would send me more than twelve armies of angels. But in that case, how could the scripture come true which say that this is what must happen.”*

Grant us, gracious Lord, a vision of your world as your love would have it, a world where the weak are protected, and no one goes hungry, help us eliminate poverty, prejudice, and oppression. That peace may prevail with righteousness, and justice. A world where peace is built with justice, and justice is guided by love.

We lift up all our communities of faith, that we become as compassionate and sensitive towards victims of abuse as Jesus would. Lord may your perfect love drive out fear and anxiety, give grace, sensitivity and wisdom to all those who will minister to the victims and survivors of abuse, may they feel neither guilt nor shame but have the courage to seek help in order to free themselves from abuse. For all our churches that we not judge victims of abuse but offer them the support they need to free themselves from abuse. Strengthen organisations that work to bring unity and Love to a broken and wounded world.

**Read Psalm 8**

**Prayer:** *“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective”*

*We humbly plead these things in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ who died and rose and now sits at your right hand in glory.*

*Almighty God, you are the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. We pray for those who have been abused within our churches and the wider communities across our nation*

*Loving God, be with all men and women who are in doubt about their intimate relationships. Give them clarity of mind and peaceful hearts so that they can make good choices guided by your love.*

*Let those who are guilty of inflicting harm on others, seek your help, so they can learn to abhor their own behavior and come to true repentance. Keep us all safe in our relationships. In Jesus’ name. AMEN*

## DAY 12: 6 December, 2020

### We pray with: Mothers Union

#### Reflection:

We know that Jesus was delivered into the hands of the wicked, yet He prayed for His persecutors and overcame hatred with the blood of the cross. It's important that we stand against violence and pray, not only for peace of mind but also a renewed faith in God's protection and care

Father of everlasting compassion you see your children growing up in an uncertain and confusing world; show them the path of life, enable them to triumph over failure and frustration to hold fast their faith in you.

For our youth, may they experience healthy relationships, free from abuse and controlling behaviours, look with compassion upon those who through any form of addiction have lost their health and freedom, remove the fears that bind them, strengthen them in their recovery, and assure them of your unfailing love. Surround them with friends and family to support and uplift them.

For our children who may be living in homes where domestic violence occur, may they be protected. Let your holy angels watch and protect them. For children who has been traumatized by violence, may God protect them from the violence, free them from the abuse and heal their wounds.

#### Read Psalm 127: 3-5

#### Prayer:

*Lord, may your protective love enfold all children who suffer or witness violence in their own homes and bring them through these dark days and nights. May your light outshine any doubt, despair, or hurt experienced by victims of domestic abuse. And bring these dear ones through their trials to the kindness and goodness they justly deserve. Lord you demand justice for those who have been wronged. Give strength to those who investigate and prosecute traffickers. Encourage them when they are weary. Give courage to survivors when they are asked to testify against their former captors.*

*O Lord, help us to be strong stewards of all you have entrusted to us. Give us courage and strength to stand against violence inflicted upon your precious people. In Jesus' name. Lord by your great mercy protect us all from the snares of danger and violence keep us safe from the weapons of hate, and to restore to us with calmness and peace. AMEN.*

**DAY 13: 7 December, 2020**

**We pray with the: St. Raphael's Retreat Centre**

**Scripture Reading: Proverbs 3: 31 – 32**

*“Don't be jealous of violent people or decide to act as they do. Because the Lord hates people who do evil, but he takes righteous people into his confidence”*

**Reflection:**

For perpetrators of domestic violence that they may stop their abuse and seek professional help. We pray to the Lord that they may understand that violence is never an expression of love, is never acceptable and must never be imitated.

God of justice, reveal to us those who are perpetrators of domestic violence, those who crave power and control, yet profess to love their victims. Help us to hold them accountable for their actions, and to show them a better way to live, the way of surrender to you, the one who alone holds power, and the one who is love.

Enlighten all victims, provide them with wisdom to see when things are not right within their relationships. Where frustration and confusion exist, and even when they feel powerless or fearful, Lord, grant them with your mighty and victorious right hand. In the name of Jesus

**Read Luke 6:27-32**

**Prayer:**

***O God, the Lord of all, your son commanded us to love our enemies and to pray for them. Lead us from prejudice to truth; deliver us from hatred, cruelty, and the spirit of revenge; and enable us to stand before you reconciled through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.***

***Almighty God, we pray for all victims of abuse. We ask you to surround them with your care and protect them by your loving might and allow them to enjoy health and healing, wholeness and strength, calmness and peace and love. Most of all, we pray that they feel your presence and be confident in you. AMEN.***

**Day 14:**

**8 December, 2020**

**We pray with the: Anglican Homes**

**Reflection:**

*Psalm 27:10* says, **“For my father and my mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me in.”** Call on Jesus to help these children feel loved and cared for, in a real way. Also pray that these children will not look for love in all the wrong places, in a fruitless attempt to fill a God-sized void.

Your Scriptures tell stories of violence against women. Let the presence of these stories in your holy Word give us the courage to tell our stories, so that we might help another in the midst of their secret terror and fear.

We thank you Lord for resources, liturgy, awareness programs, help us to gain more wisdom and knowledge so to plant seeds in the hearts and minds of adults and children we reach through our workshops and training.

Thank you Lord that we are mindful of broken societies, that we can use our programs to help make a difference.

**Prayer:**

*Teaching God, we pray that you open our ears, our eyes, and our hearts to be more aware, outreaching, and supportive to people in abusive situations, so that they won't feel alone and know that someone cares. Let us love them as you have loved us Lord God, we pray that you would stay near to all children living in poverty. Prayer for all young children who witness violence and abuse in their homes*

*Please provide bonds of friendship with others who would encourage and influence them to seek you and to make good decisions. Let them be drawn to an uplifting community where they can flourish and contribute. God I pray that you will help each child learn how to be a good friend too. May they discover the joy that comes from supporting and loving another through the good and bad times.*

*Compassionate God, protect the innocent children who suffer or witness violence and abuse at the hands of the ones they love. Bring them to a safe place where they can begin to heal. Restore their minds to trust and their hearts to love and their spirits to be free. Surround them with your angels.*

*Father almighty*

*we offer ourselves to you as a living sacrifice*

*in Jesus Christ the Lord.*

*Send us out into the world*

*in the power of the Holy Spirit*

*to live and work*

*to your praise and glory. AMEN*

**Day 15: 9 December, 2020**

**We pray with the: Church Men Society**

**Reading: Hosea 4: 2**

*“They make promises and break them, they lie, murder, steal, and commit adultery. They break all restraints, Crimes increase, and there is one murder after another”*

**Reflection**

God of eternity, be with the families of those who are sick, hospitalized, and those that have died due to gender-based violence. As the families grieve for their loved ones who are no longer with them, keep their memories alive, that together we might be empowered to spend our lives working for an end to gender-based violence.

Our God is a God of love, who is ever caring, ever strong, always present and always just. He gave His only Son to save us by the blood of his cross.

As a Shepherd of Peace, He has the power to heal those who have been hurt in body, mind, and spirit by those who betrayed the trust placed in them. Many of us wrestle over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.

**Read Psalm 34**

**Prayer:**

***God breathe wisdom into our prayers, calm restless hearts with hope and steady shaken spirits with faith.***

***Lord Jesus, You know what it is like to feel that God has abandoned you. You know pain and loss better than anyone else. Come to us now and let us feel your presence. We know that you are close to the broken hearted and comfort those who mourn (Psalm 34:18). Help us to let you into our grief, to give you our anger and doubt. Jesus, pull us out of the void.***

***Lord Jesus, your word warns us that we will face many terrifying events throughout this life, but may we never forget that the ultimate victory belongs to you. Through your sacrifice, death has been defeated. As we continue to walk in your truth, help us to set our eyes on Heavenly things.***

***Merciful God, we give you thanks for your gift of strength and life and especially for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ, through whom we have health and salvation. Help us by Your Holy Spirit to witness your power in our lives and to know your eternal love. In Jesus' name. AMEN.***

**DAY 16: 10 December, 2020**

**We pray with the: Social Development Department**

**Reading: 1 John 3: 1-3**

**Reflection:**

*'The message you heard from the very beginning is this: we must love one another. Over the past 16 days we have brought awareness of gender-based violence, and about the work that is being done to end violence against women and children. But we cannot do this if we forget to love one another: in our words, actions and attitudes. Jesus calls us to love one another in this way, and by doing this we honour one another and God's image of creation he intended for all of us.*

Lord as I look at my candle that has been burning every day I thank you for this journey. Thank you for creating in me the mindfulness of a broken society and for allowing me the space and place to know that I can and will make a difference.

Your gift to us of family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, thank you Lord that despite the brokenness our faith in You gives us hope.

**Prayer:**

*Today we pray especially for our Social Development Department for the work that they do. Father, we pray for your blessing upon each and every programme and their financial well-being to enable them to continue this important ministry.*

*We pray for partners: Justice Desk, Sonke Gender Justice, Social work connect, Mosaic, A21 and many other organisations that run workshops for men and woman on gender-based violence.*

*For "victims" and survivors: God give them strength when they are weak, love them when they feel forsaken, courage when they are afraid, wisdom when they feel foolish, comfort when they are alone, hope when they are in turmoil.*

*O God, unite us with your grace and wisdom,  
Shower your blessings upon us as we look forward to the age of peace,  
When violence is banished, both women and men are able to love and to be loved,  
And the work and wealth of our world is justly shared.  
We look forward to the future with faith and hope in our hearts.*

*The Holy Spirit has the power to comfort and deliver us from all evil.*

**AMEN.**



## DIOCESE OF FALSE BAY



### **A Voice against Gender Based Violence**

***In our pledge to take, a public stand against violence in general, domestic, and spousal violence in particular:***

- ✚ We acknowledge that all people irrespective of race, gender, culture and creed have the divine grace to dignity, respect and equality;
- ✚ We acknowledge that in spite of this, violence of any kind is an indisputable unchecked lived-reality in society;
- ✚ We acknowledge that domestic and spousal violence have for too long gone unaddressed;
- ✚ We acknowledge that we remained silent for shame, while women, men and children suffered the psychological, spiritual and physical wounds and scars of violence;
- ✚ We acknowledge that our silence, our disbelief and inaction empowered the perpetrator, while the spirits and bodies of the victims bled unnoticed.

**Through our pledge we therefore:**

- ✚ Repent of our silence against this sin of inhumanity;
- ✚ Repent of our inertia and fear;
- ✚ Repent of our unwillingness to support the victim.

**We now make this pledge that:**

- ✚ We will listen and trust when victims share their story of victimization;
- ✚ We will give them compassionate and responsive support;
- ✚ We will act with immediacy without respect of persons;
- ✚ We will ensure that boys in particular will receive education in life skills pertaining to attitudes to women;
- ✚ We will ensure that victims especially women in vulnerable situations will be emboldened to articulate their pain and oppression;
- ✚ We will create safe spaces where victims can find refuge and comfort and an opportunity to heal and to speak out;
- ✚ We will ensure that perpetrators will be brought to account, to admission, to repentance and rehabilitation and to do reparation;
- ✚ We will continue to create public awareness of the ills of violence and especially domestic and spousal violence.