



Service outline for 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence 2016

This service outline may be used and adapted for a variety of contexts. Please add hymns and other material as required. If you are including the Global Moment in the service it could be a part of, or instead of, the pause for reflection. If you have made the 16 Days friendship bands you may wish to highlight these in the service.

Welcome

Welcome to our service which is part of our 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. We draw near to Christ in whom we are all children of God through faith, and equally loved by him.

Opening hymn

Opening prayers and confession

Loving Lord,
who has created us all in your image,
open our eyes to see your face
in those of our sisters and brothers.

Loving Lord,
who has created us all in your image,
make us ready to value each other
as beloved children of God. Amen

**Merciful and loving God,
forgive us when we have
placed our own comfort
above the sufferings of others;
when we have stayed silent
in the face of abuse and oppression;
when we have declined to challenge
unacceptable actions and attitudes.**

**Take away our selfishness
and fill us with new resolve
to champion the cause of righteousness
in the name of Christ. Amen**

Readings

The Lord hears his people when they call to him for help.
He rescues them from all their troubles.
The Lord is close to the brokenhearted;
he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. *Psalm 34:17-18 (New Living Translation)*

Jesus declared:
The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released,
that the blind will see,
that the oppressed will be set free,
and that the time of the Lord's favour has come. *Luke 4:18-19 (New Living Translation)*

Homily

This may be based on the 16 Days theology paper or 2015 Bible reflection (available from Mothers' Union); or another aspect of the theme.

Pause for reflection

You may like to show appropriate power point images to accompany this prayer. Have a few moments of silent reflection between each section. You could use one reader or a different voice for each section.

Lord of all, help us to be silent for a moment
so we can hear the cries of girls and women,
some loud, many muffled,
enduring violence in every area
of our global community.

Help us to take the time
to reflect on the fact
that the majority of human rights violations
across your world
are acts of violence toward women.
The roots of such hatred are deep and tangled,
and justice is long overdue.

All humans, women and men,
are made in your image and likeness,
and have immeasurable dignity.
Help us, for a moment, be silent and still
so we can recognise You in the faces
of every girl and every woman.
Jane Deren
<https://educationforjustice.org/resources>

Hymn

Intercessions

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves;
ensure justice for those being crushed. *Proverbs 31:8 (NLT)*

We bring our prayers of intercession to God, in response to his Word.

**Merciful Lord,
our voices join together
to echo the pleas of the distressed,
to speak challenge to the compromised
and to intercede for the vulnerable.**

We pray for all who live in fear of violence
and despair that life will ever change.
Bring to an end their suffering;
restore their sense of worth.

We pray for those who perpetrate abuse
with no sense of guilt or shame.
Bring to justice their actions;
change their inner hearts.

We pray against regimes
that endorse violence against women.
Shatter their evil influence;
initiate a rule of decency.

**We worship our holy Lord;
we pray for his kingdom on earth.
May his justice set the captives free
and his righteousness reign forever. Amen**

Closing hymn

Final blessing

May God bless you with holy anger at injustice, oppression,
and exploitation of people, so that you may tirelessly work for
justice, freedom, and peace among all people.

May God bless you with the gift of tears to shed with those who suffer
from pain, rejection, or the loss of all that they cherish, so that you may
reach out your hand to comfort them and transform their pain into joy.

May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that
you really CAN make a difference in this world, so that you are able,
with God's grace, to do what others claim cannot be done. **Amen**
Franciscan blessing

We say The Grace together