



# Action By Christians Against Torture Prayer Vigil 2016

## Service of Prayer for the Tortured

**‘What are mere mortals that you are mindful of them - Human beings that you care for them?’**

Psalm 8 verse 5

**Opening Words:** When all the prisoners of the land are crushed under foot, when human rights are perverted in the presence of the Most High, when one’s case is subverted - does not the Lord see it?

Lamentations 3 v34 -36

**Hymn** *Brother, Sister, let me serve you* (by *Richard A M Gillard (1953-)*)

### **ACT OF REPENTANCE AND AFFIRMATION**

Father, you have called us to serve the cause of right; you have chosen us to bring true justice to the nations and to be messengers of your freedom to those not treated as your children,

We confess together our failure in your service and ask for your forgiveness.

For we are not worthy to be called your servants.

God is the Creator of all, and we are God’s children regardless of our unworthiness.

In the words our Lord gave us, we pray to him for forgiveness and deliverance.

May he deliver us from the selfishness which hinders our service to those in need,

so that we may help to bring justice and freedom to others.

**READING:** Psalm 8

**PRAYERS:** O Lord,

we can never fully comprehend the length, breadth, depth and height of your love:

but we pray that your love may so transform us through your suffering as to make us reach out to the despairing and the desperate and work for peace and reconciliation between all people.

Amen

**LEADER:** A blessing on the defenders of Human Rights

Blessed are you, Lord, who have called men and women to rise up and defend every human being's right to dignity and integrity of mind and body.

They do this, often putting their own lives at risk. Blessed are you, Lord, for allowing us to take part in this, your work of salvation for humankind created in your image.

Sustain us all in our struggle to defend human rights. May we be guided, in our words and actions, by intelligence, wisdom, and the life-giving force of the Holy Spirit.

As we receive the grace of your blessing, Lord, make us truly certain of your love for all humankind, and save us from the temptation of despair.

*Pierre Toulat and Michel Freychet from Hope in the darkest Night FIACAT*

**Hymn:** *All Glory, Laud and Honour*

## **PRAYERS FOR JUSTICE AND LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

**LEADER:** Lord, lead us to your kingdom,  
we pray for all who are tortured,  
whose bodies and spirits are broken,  
in order to gain information or create fear or inflict  
punishment on their families  
and friends.

**ALL:** May the light of hope shine in the darkness

*(candle is lit)*

Lord, lead us to your Kingdom

**LEADER:** We pray for people everywhere who are working for a world free from torture. We thank you for those with a vision of a time when there will be peace, freedom and justice for all and for all organisations seeking to translate dreams into reality. We pray for the church throughout the world in its witness to the values of the new kingdom that is dawning but is yet to come. We remember especially the work of ACAT in this country and the work of FIACAT.

**ALL:** May the light of hope shine in the darkness

*A candle is lit*

Lord, lead us to your Kingdom

## LIGHTING OF CANDLES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND SITUATIONS

*(See separate list of individuals)*

*As each candle is lit the response is:*

**“May the light of hope shine in the darkness”**

Hymn: *I, The Lord of Sea and Sky* Don Schutte

**LEADER:** O Lord, stretch out your wounded hands in blessing over your people to heal and restore, and to draw them to yourself and to each other in love

**ALL:** Lord Jesus, you are alive: this is our faith and our hope, at the centre of our lives and daily struggles. Risen from the dead, you appear to us today as you did to your apostles, showing the signs of your suffering: the wounds which still mark your resurrected body. We cannot see you, but we believe and turn to you!

As witnesses to human suffering, particularly the suffering people inflict on each other, we see in you a man subjected to torture.

As companions to those who fight for justice, we acknowledge you as the victor over all that leads to death.

As believers from all Churches, in the footsteps of the apostles, we believe that the world is in the grip of birth pains, and that the Spirit you promised us is at work here.

That is why in our minds and hearts we focus today on some aspects of your Passion and of the passion of men and women whose situations are known to us and trouble us. Inspire us with compassion and courage. Help those whom you have taught us to see as brothers and sisters in humanity, despite differences in the values we may have chosen. May your words of forgiveness inspire torturers to change their ways!

Holy Spirit, remind us of Jesus' words to his apostles when he sent them out to preach the Good News and warned them of the fate which awaited them at the hands of the powerful!

Holy Spirit, let your love grow within us and between us, a love which transforms our hearts and gives hope to our world!

Teach us from within how to live and understand the events which we witness today.

God our Father, teach us how to act and pray for a more just world where each person can take their rightful place. Every day we create another chapter in the history of our world: help us to do your will, Father, and work towards the reconciliation of all humanity.

**AMEN**