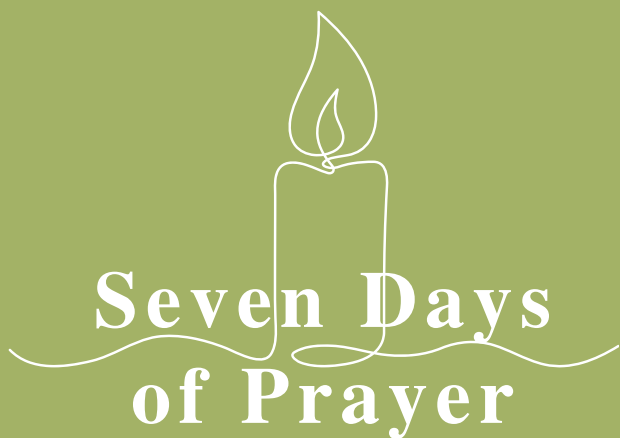




RELIGIOUS IN EUROPE NETWORKING
AGAINST TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION



Towards EU Anti-Trafficking Day

11th TO 18th OCTOBER 2026

Ending trafficking begins with us
www.renate-europe.net

WELCOME

Pray with us

Sunday 18 October is EU Anti-Trafficking Day.¹ For the seven days before it, RENATE invites you to pray with us.

Each day gives you a word of Scripture, a few lines to think about, a prayer, a question and one small thing to do. Use it alone, with your community, or share it with your parish.

THE WEEK

Sunday 11 October	<i>See</i>
Monday 12 October	<i>Name</i>
Tuesday 13 October	<i>Listen</i>
Wednesday 14 October	<i>Labour</i>
Thursday 15 October	<i>Welcome</i>
Friday 16 October	<i>Protect</i>
Saturday 17 October	<i>Loosen the Bonds</i>
Sunday 18 October	<i>Freedom</i>

See

A Samaritan traveller came near the wounded man, saw him, and was moved with pity.

LUKE 10:33

Two people passed the wounded man before the Samaritan stopped. They saw him too. Trafficking survives on that kind of seeing: the car wash that never closes, the worker who sleeps where he works, the young woman who is never allowed to answer for herself.

PRAYER

God who sees every hidden thing, open our eyes. Where we have learned to look past people, slow us down. Give us the courage to cross the road. Amen.

SIT WITH

Where might I be looking past someone?

DO

Notice the people whose work keeps your day running.

Name

I have called you by name; you are mine.

ISAIAH 43:1

Josephine Bakhita was kidnapped as a child in Darfur and sold many times over. The trauma was so deep that she forgot her own name. Her captors called her Bakhita, which means fortunate.² Trafficking turns people into debts and numbers. God never forgets a name.

“Those whom man enslaves, let God set free.”

Prayer to Saint Josephine Bakhita, © United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

PRAYER

Loving God, you know each of us by name. We hold before you those whose names have been taken, hidden or forgotten. Restore to them their dignity and their story. Saint Josephine Bakhita, pray for us. Amen.

SIT WITH

Do I speak of statistics, or of people with names?

DO

Read Bakhita's story and share it with one person.

Listen

I have seen the misery of my people. I have heard their cry. I know their suffering.

EXODUS 3:7

God's first answer to slavery in Egypt was to hear. Survivors often say that the hardest part is not being believed. Listening is where justice begins, and it asks us to drop our assumptions about how a survivor should sound.

"A scourge unworthy of society."

Pope Francis on trafficking, Angelus, 8 February 2015, © Libreria Editrice Vaticana

PRAYER

God who hears the cry of the poor, teach us to listen as you listen. Give survivors people who believe them. Where our systems are slow or suspicious, change them, and change us. Amen.

SIT WITH

Whose voice is missing from the rooms I am in?

DO

Listen to a survivor's testimony before you speak about trafficking.

Labour

The wages you held back from those who harvested your fields cry out, and their cries have reached the Lord.

JAMES 5:4

On any given day in 2021, an estimated 27.6 million people were in forced labour.⁴ It reaches farms, fishing boats, building sites, factories and private homes across Europe. Some of what we eat and wear today passed through hands that were not free.

PRAYER

God of the harvest, bless all who labour. We pray for those working without pay, without papers, without rest. Make us people who ask questions, pay fairly and choose with care. Amen.

SIT WITH

Do I know who made what I bought this week?

DO

Check one company's policy on forced labour in its supply chain.

Welcome

I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

MATTHEW 25:35

People who migrate without safe routes are badly exposed. Debt, fear of deportation and lack of legal status hand exploiters enormous power. When someone cannot go to the police without risking removal, those who control them know it.

“Taken seriously by humanity as a whole.”

Pope Francis on trafficking, Fratelli Tutti, 24, © Libreria Editrice Vaticana

PRAYER

Jesus, who fled as a refugee child, protect all who are on the move. Give courage to those who welcome, and wisdom to those who make our laws, so that no one's search for safety becomes a trap. Amen.

SIT WITH

What do I believe about people who arrive without papers?

DO

Find out what support exists near you for migrants and refugees.

Protect

Let the children come to me. Do not stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

MARK 10:14

Almost one in every four victims registered in the EU is a child.⁵ Young people are drawn in by false promises of love, work, money or belonging, often online and often by someone they trust. Traffickers look for those who feel unseen.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, friend of children, protect every young person from those who would deceive and exploit them. Heal those who have been hurt. Give parents and teachers watchful eyes and open doors. Amen.

SIT WITH

Does every young person in my life know they can come to me?

DO

Learn the signs of exploitation and pass them on to a parent or teacher.

Loosen the Bonds

The fast that pleases me is this: break unjust chains, lift the heavy yoke, set the oppressed free.

ISAIAH 58:6

Today is also the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.⁶ Poverty alone does not cause trafficking, but it opens the door: a family in debt, a young person with no work, a mother who will take any job at all. Prayer has to reach these roots.

“Please, loosen the chains ... they are heavy!”

Saint Josephine Bakhita in her last illness, quoted in Prayer Service for an End to Human Trafficking, © USCCB 2014

PRAYER

God of justice, we pray for all who live in poverty and for everyone pushed toward danger because they have run out of choices. Break the chains of debt and exclusion. Make our faith a fast that sets people free. Amen.

SIT WITH

Which root of exploitation could my community actually touch?

DO

Support an organisation working with people at risk.

SUNDAY 18 OCTOBER

Freedom

EU Anti-Trafficking Day

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, sent to proclaim release to captives and freedom for the oppressed.

LUKE 4:18

Jesus began his ministry by announcing freedom. Today Europe marks the day it set aside in 2007 for the victims of trafficking,¹ and RENATE joins its prayer to that work across 31 countries.⁷ The week ends where it began: with us.

“Peace begins with dignity.”

Theme chosen by Pope Leo XIV for the World Day of Prayer and Reflection Against Human Trafficking, 8 February 2026

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

For all who are trafficked and exploited in Europe and throughout the world, that they may find freedom, safety and healing, and for all of us, that we may have the courage to see and to act.

Lord, hear us.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of freedom, for seven days we have looked, listened and prayed. Now send us out, until every person is free. Saint Josephine Bakhita, pray for us. Amen.

Scripture: Luke 4:18 (paraphrase) · Sources: notes 1, 7, p.11 · Prayers: original text © RENATE Europe 2026

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NOTES

- 1 European Commission, 'EU Anti-Trafficking Day': the Commission established 18 October as EU Anti-Trafficking Day in 2007. home-affairs.ec.europa.eu
- 2 Vatican News, 'St Josephine Bakhita, Virgin': kidnapped as a child in Darfur, she forgot her own name; her captors called her Bakhita, Arabic for fortunate one. vaticannews.va
- 3 Pope Francis, Angelus, 8 February 2015, on the first International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking. vatican.va
- 4 ILO, Walk Free and IOM, Global Estimates of Modern Slavery (Geneva, 2022): on any given day in 2021, 27.6 million people were in forced labour, within 49.6 million living in modern slavery.
- 5 European Commission, 'EU Anti-Trafficking Day' (2023): almost every fourth victim of trafficking in the EU is a child. home-affairs.ec.europa.eu
- 6 United Nations, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October, declared by General Assembly resolution 47/196 of 22 December 1992. un.org
- 7 RENATE, 'About Us': RENATE operates across 31 countries in Europe, uniting 139 anti-trafficking networks. renate-europe.net/about-us

Web sources accessed 6 October 2026.



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