

“Investing in Action and Advocacy - Together for Gender Justice”

The Global 16 Days Campaign focuses on raising awareness about violence against women (VAW) and gender-based violence (GbV) in general.

Call to prayer

One: Creator of humanity, every woman and man bears your image.
With your love, you teach us to love one another.
Yet, your divine love is displaced by selfishness,
the greed that sells out neighbours for gain,
the patriarchy that assumes that men can abuse women and children,
the evil that sells young women and children into prostitution and human trafficking.

**Many: Hear the cries of our suffering sisters and brothers.
May their voices rise up from their misery,
so we learn our calling,
and build together a loving and caring community.**

One: Living God, breathing into every soul,
you provide good things to sustain the
lives of everyone.
Yet, in many countries, a few find
prosperity, while many live in poverty.
Too many children are malnourished
and without a good education.

**Many: Replace social injustice with fullness and peace
as we share what you have given us,
in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen**

(Pilgrim Prayers 47:2, adapted)

Psalmody Psalm 43 <https://youtu.be/hXnH4nEgoYo?si=hSNy0XxupSsn21qU>

Scripture 2 Samuel 13 :1-22

13 Some time passed. David’s son Absalom had a beautiful sister whose name was Tamar; and David’s son Amnon fell in love with her. 2 Amnon was so tormented that he made himself ill because of his sister Tamar, for she was a virgin and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her. 3 But Amnon had a friend whose name was Jonadab, the son of David’s brother Shimeah; and Jonadab was a very crafty man. 4 He said to him, “O son of the king, why are you so haggard morning after morning? Will you not tell me?” Amnon said to him, “I love Tamar, my brother Absalom’s sister.” 5 Jonadab said to him, “Lie down on your bed, and pretend to be ill; and when your father comes to see you, say to him, ‘Let my sister Tamar come and give me something to eat, and prepare the food in my sight, so that I may see it and eat it from her hand.’ ” 6 So Amnon lay down, and pretended to be ill; and when the king came to see him, Amnon said to the king, “Please let my sister Tamar come and make a couple of cakes in my sight, so that I may eat from her hand.”

7 Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, “Go to your brother Amnon’s house, and prepare food for him.” 8 So Tamar went to her brother Amnon’s house, where he was lying down. She took dough,

kneaded it, made cakes in his sight, and baked the cakes. 9 Then she took the pan and set them out before him, but he refused to eat. Amnon said, "Send out everyone from me." So everyone went out from him. 10 Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the food into the chamber, so that I may eat from your hand." So Tamar took the cakes she had made, and brought them into the chamber to Amnon her brother. 11 But when she brought them near him to eat, he took hold of her, and said to her, "Come, lie with me, my sister." 12 She answered him, "No, my brother, do not force me; for such a thing is not done in Israel; do not do anything so vile! 13 As for me, where could I carry my shame? And as for you, you would be as one of the scoundrels in Israel. Now therefore, I beg you, speak to the king; for he will not withhold me from you." 14 But he would not listen to her; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her.

15 Then Amnon was seized with a very great loathing for her; indeed, his loathing was even greater than the lust he had felt for her. Amnon said to her, "Get out!" 16 But she said to him, "No, my brother; for this wrong in sending me away is greater than the other that you did to me." But he would not listen to her. 17 He called the young man who served him and said, "Put this woman out of my presence, and bolt the door after her." 18 (Now she was wearing a long robe with sleeves; for this is how the virgin daughters of the king were clothed in earlier times.) So his servant put her out, and bolted the door after her. 19 But Tamar put ashes on her head, and tore the long robe that she was wearing; she put her hand on her head, and went away, crying aloud as she went.

20 Her brother Absalom said to her, "Has Amnon your brother been with you? Be quiet for now, my sister; he is your brother; do not take this to heart." So Tamar remained, a desolate woman, in her brother Absalom's house. 21 When King David heard of all these things, he became very angry, but he would not punish his son Amnon, because he loved him, for he was his firstborn. 22 But Absalom spoke to Amnon neither good nor bad; for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had raped his sister Tamar.

Hymn 'Faith of our Mothers' <https://youtu.be/Y0V4MBqj1IE?si=fp946qZfxmXxy5os>

Creative Reflection from Anglican Communion

Tamar: He was my beloved. We had grown up together, played together, fought together, made up and began the whole cycle again. And now he was ill. They ask me why I went to him? Surely I had known?

Surely I had guessed? I ask you – what would you have done? You would have taken him the food – you know you would have. I would have given anything for him. Except for the one thing he took without my permission.

He grabbed me. For a split moment, I thought he was playing with me, as in days of old. My mistake soon became clear. I begged him to leave me be. To consider my reputation, my honour, my faith. But he would not.

These things were meaningless to him. The face of my beloved had become monstrous to me. And monstrous were the deeds he committed. I thought he loved me. But he turned such venom on me that I fled. I reminded him of what he had done, and he banished me from his sight.

Where could I go? I ran to Absalom. He had always been such a comfort in the rough and tumble of our youth. He had always been the one to support me, to tell me that I was special, that I was valuable, that I was cherished, even in a household of boys.

And Absalom, my protector told me to be silent. To hide his sin and my shame. But the voices in my head could not be quieted.

Heavenly Father, You tell me that you love me, But I have known the pain of rejection, Of being used, exploited and ignored. You call me your child, But I have known what it is to not be protected by those meant to love me most. You say I am special, But I have known what it means to feel worthless. I have not got the words, nor yet the trust, to ask for much. So this I ask. Be close. Amen Lizzi

And now, young friend, now I shout. I shout across the millenia. I shout for you and for every other person who has been violated and abused. I shout for the silenced ones and for those who weep but are not heard.

Do you hear me, my friend? Do you hear me? I will call until you listen. I will call you with words of truth and justice and mercy. I will call you by your name – cherished, beloved, worthy. I will call until you can no longer hear the lies.

I will call until the mantle of shame falls from you. I will call to you who are betrayed, you who deserve so much more.

And I will call to you, who abuse God's children. To you who turn on those who trust you. To you who silence the tears of the abandoned. To you who are more concerned with reputation than truth.

I will call until you can no longer block my voice from your head, from your thoughts. Until you can hear the voice of the One who calls you – yes, even you – to turn and repent. I am Tamar. Once raped and silenced. But now. Now I shout! (The Anglican communion 16Days Working Group – Lizzi)

Video <https://we.tl/t-VXzEFWO4fD>

Reflection Questions

1. Is the church complicit in covering up cases of sexual and gender-based violence?
2. How might we contribute to changing the status quo in our contexts?

Intercessory Prayer

Loving God, giver of all good gifts, Give us the gift of anger, that we may rage against injustice and harm. Give us the gift of discontent with all systems that exploit your children. Give us the gift of courage, that we may fearlessly confront abuse.

Creator God, you created all people in your image and likeness. Your people in this spot of the world are bleeding and suffering. Women are killed, their bodies are torn, other women are witnessing the killing of their dear ones, their children, infants, foetus in their wombs, their brothers' fathers and relatives. Oh, Merciful God, how do you allow this to happen to our people. Please watch over your people.

Glorious God, you created us to praise you, to live in dignity, justice, peace and respect. But through this war against civilians, we see no justice, no dignity for human beings.

Gracious God, we pray for all persons suffering from war. May they be held in your loving care and protection and given the strength to endure great suffering and hardship. Transform the hearts and

minds of all those who perpetuate violence and oppression. Listening God, please listen to the cry that rises from every corner of this spot of the world.

Just God, we need you to lead decision makers the grace of conversion to the path of peaceful dialogue and constructive collaboration to bring justice to suffering women and provide them with shelter, food and strength. Holy God, grant world leaders the wisdom, especially those who believe in Jesus Christ to stand for truth and justice.

Eternal God, Give us the gift of hope, that we may offer to those who are abused a place to dare to dream again. Give us the gift of truth, that all may see themselves as your beloved. Giving God, giver of all good gifts, Help us to love your children well.

Help frightened children and rest the souls of those who lost their lives as victims of human cruelty. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, your son, our Saviour and our Lord and in the name of humanity.

(The Anglican communion 16Days Working Group – Hana)

Lord's Prayer

Blessing

May God disturb us all

with horror in the face of injustice
with passion and compassion for the oppressed and abused
with anger to seek redress for the disenfranchised and
with courage to overcome

May God's comfort be

with the broken and disconsolate
with those who seek justice
with people on the margins of spaces of power
with us in our work toward healing and wholeness.