



National Religious Campaign
Against Torture

www.nrcat.org

PRAYER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Leader: God of justice and mercy, help us remember this day that you have created each and every person with dignity and worth.

People: In all that we do, help us treat one another with the respect and honor due to each person.

Leader: This day we remember and give thanks for the 64th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

People: We honor the courage of those who came before us, who sought to declare that regardless of any differences among peoples that we all share basic human rights.

Leader: We also remember this day the adoption of the Convention Against Torture by the UN General Assembly.

People: We pray that every generation may learn that there is no excuse for torture, that torture is always wrong.

Leader: We pray for every life that has been touched by torture, both those tortured and the torturers. We pray for restoration and peace.

People: We pray for fortitude in the face of fear and that we might do what is right and just.

Leader: We pray for governments and persons who seek to prevent torture and who support survivors of torture.

People: We pray for strength and steadfastness in the work of repairing the world. In all things may we honor you, O God, and honor the dignity of each person.

All: Amen.



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SHINING A LIGHT ON TORTURE

Torture happens throughout the world and most countries want it to stop. It is illegal, but that doesn't prevent it from occurring.

Because jails, prisons, mental health facilities, immigration detention centers, youth detention facilities, police stations and other places of detention are often not overseen by independent monitors, torture and abuse can occur.

The United States has the same challenge. A Chicago Police Commander tortured people for decades; torture and abuse occurs in solitary confinement in Pelican Bay supermax prison in California and similar prisons in other states; and rape, sexual and other abuse occur in U.S. immigration detention centers.

Sixty-three nations have ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), including Great Britain, Sweden and Tunisia, in order to help solve this problem. OPCAT sets up oversight bodies and other national mechanisms that **prevent** torture and abuse in any place of confinement.

It is time for the U.S. to make use of this treaty to shine a light on places of detention and thereby help to prevent torture.

You can help. Go to www.nrcat.org/opcat to sign NRCAT's statement calling on the President to sign OPCAT and learn about other ways you can help the U.S. play a leadership role in the efforts to prevent torture.

People of faith are called to speak for those who have no voice, including the imprisoned.



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