

## A PRAYER OF SOLIDARITY

*Leader:* God of Justice and Compassion,  
who creates each and every person with dignity and worth,  
help us to be mindful of our interconnectedness and  
sacredness in your eyes.

**People:** We stand in the midst of a broken world, O God.

*Leader:* We stand with those who are sold for bounty.  
We stand with those for whom a profit is made from their  
imprisonment.  
We stand with those unjustly held due to racist and xenophobic  
policies.  
We stand with those unjustly held because being poor has  
become criminalized.

**People:** We stand in the midst of a broken world, O God.

*Leader:* We stand with those who are tortured.  
We stand with those in Guantanamo.  
We stand with those who are imprisoned without trial.  
We stand with those in solitary confinement for months, years,  
even decades.

**People:** We stand in the midst of a broken world, O God.

*Leader:* God of Truth and Reconciliation, receive our prayers  
and open us to compassion for all of your people, and spur  
us to faithful action.

**All:** Amen.

*~ By T.C. Morrow, staff member of the National Religious Campaign Against  
Torture*

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## Orange - a Color of Oppression

Torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment are not aberrations, but are institutionalized practices rooted in under-acknowledged histories of bigotry, slavery, genocide, and oppression in the United States and globally.

Almost 15 years ago, the U.S. government opened a prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to hold suspected terrorists outside the limited protections of U.S. law. Iconically clad in orange jumpsuits, detainees were sold to the U.S. by their enemies in return for bounty and then sent to Guantanamo. Some were tortured by the CIA or the military. Many were ultimately shown to be innocent of any connection to terrorism. Nearly 15 years later, around 80 people remain imprisoned at Guantanamo without ever having faced charge or trial.

After four decades of the cradle to prison pipeline, mandatory sentencing, lack of mental health treatment, and racial and religious profiling which have institutionalized "the new Jim Crow," the U.S. accounts for 5% of the world's population and 25% of the world's incarcerated. On any given day in U.S. prisons, between 80,000 and 100,000 adults and youth – disproportionately people of color – are held in solitary confinement. The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture and the United Nations General Assembly have affirmed that solitary confinement is a torture that should be prohibited by any nation which respects human rights.

Weaving together these abuses and torture is a common thread of bigotry against Muslims, racism, and de-humanization that are used to justify heinous actions against those perceived to be different. Ending torture means also confronting our own fear of the "other." As people of faith, we must join hands with our neighbors – whether from down the street or halfway around the world - to build a world in which human rights are a reality for all people.

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

During June, Torture Awareness Month, we invite you to take a day and wear orange in solidarity with those who are imprisoned, those who are tortured, and those who face bigotry.

**To learn more and to encourage our political leaders to stand against torture and bigotry, go to: [www.nrnat.org/orange](http://www.nrnat.org/orange)**



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