Every year millions of people leave their homelands desperately seeking refuge, safety and economic opportunity. Not only do these migrants and refugees face imposing physical obstacles and bureaucratic barriers; they are also vulnerable to human rights violations and exploitation by human traffickers.

“Human traffickers prey on the most desperate and vulnerable,” said the former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. “To end this inhumane practice, we must do more to shield migrants and refugees - and particularly young people, women and children - from those who would exploit their yearnings for a better, safer and more dignified future. We must govern migration in a safe and rights-based way, create sufficient and accessible pathways for the entry of migrants and refugees, and ultimately tackle the root causes of the conflicts - extreme poverty, environmental degradation and other crises which force people across borders, seas and deserts.”

Today we pray for those who come to our country as immigrants in search of economic opportunity, but out of desperation take jobs that force them into situations of exploitation. In Galatians, we are reminded that “There is neither slave nor free person. … for you are all one in Christ.” In this spirit of unity, open our eyes and hearts to our sisters and brothers who seek dignified lives but instead find themselves terrorized by modern-day slavery.

**God of Wisdom, help us to be aware of those in our midst who are the most** vulnerable. For all in forced labor, including those who are trafficked overseas, many of whom are part of the process to create our favorite products; for women, children and men who are exploited for their bodies on the streets or internet. We also pray for the traffickers and those who benefit from exploitation, may they have a conversion of heart that leads them to release those they have enslaved. Guide us in ending human trafficking of all persons, with special attention to those migrants and refugees who seek lives of safety and security. In your holy name we pray. Amen.

Portions of this prayer are adapted from “A Prayer Service to End Human Trafficking,” from the Intercommunity Peace and Justice Center, found at <http://adorers.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/JPIC-HT-Prayer-2017.pdf>.