



**A RESOURCE FOR PRAYER, REFLECTION AND ACTION  
FROM THE 'WE WILL SPEAK OUT' COALITION**

25 November – 10 December 2014

**WE WILL  
SPEAK OUT**   
WORKING TOGETHER TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE

# INTRODUCTION

The extent and severity of sexual and gender based violence around the world is truly shocking. Sexual and gender-based violence it is a global threat to the life and dignity of women and girls, men and boys; it also poses a challenge to social and economic development. However it remains largely hidden as an issue.



Photo: A man speaking out against sexual violence in Malawi © Chris Boyd/Tearfund

**“THE CHURCH IS A SLEEPING GIANT, WE NEED TO AWAKEN HER SO THAT THESE ISSUES CAN BE ADDRESSED.”**  
**THERESA MALILA, A TEARFUND ‘INSPIRED INDIVIDUAL’, MALAWI**

One in three women worldwide will suffer from some form of violence in their life time, of these one in five will become a victim of rape or attempted rape in their lifetime. Men may also be victims of sexual violence especially during conflict.

On the basis of data collected from 24,000 women in ten countries, between 55 and 95 per cent of women who have been physically abused by their partners have never contacted NGOs, shelters or police for help. The shame and stigma of sexual violence remains.

The church has a very significant role in speaking out against sexual violence and challenging the stigma that surrounds issues of sex and gender inequality. It can help to change attitudes through biblical teaching and interpretation. The Bible teaches that all humans should be treated with love and respect and that men and women are created equal in the eyes of God.

The church can also respond to the needs of survivors; creating a safe and supportive environment where people can trust and support each other and regain their dignity.

This prayer guide can be used by individuals, home groups or church groups to follow the 16-days campaign (or at any other time of year) to pray into gender-based violence issues. Below you will find stories and ideas for each of the 16-days which illustrate how Coalition partners have impacted the lives of men, women, boys and girls around highly sensitive issues such as domestic violence, child protection, sexual violence and honour killing.



**This resource is for use by churches and individuals during the 16 Days of Activism. During this time the ‘We Will Speak Out’ Coalition aims to:**

1. Raise awareness of the work of Coalition partners, staff and churches in preventing and responding to gender-based violence
2. Motivate our staff, partners and supporters worldwide to stand up and speak out against injustice against women and girls
3. Engage with boys, youth and men to create positive images of masculinity – that respect women and treat them as equals
4. Mobilise prayer on this extremely sensitive issue globally.

## DAY ONE - 25th Nov

### *Sexual violence in conflict.*



**“TWO MEN RAPED ME IN FRONT OF MY HUSBAND. THEN I WAS TAKEN TO THE FOREST AND FOR THREE DAYS I WAS RAPED BY MANY MEN.”**  
**FEZA FROM MWANDA, BUKAVU**



Unfortunately Feza's experience is all too common in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo © CAFOD

White Ribbon Day, 25 November is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against women. It is also White Ribbon Day when all men are asked to wear a white ribbon to show their commitment to ending violence Against Women. Can you raise these issues in your church and speak out against all forms of violence against women?

CAFOD's partner organisation the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CDJP) in Bukavu, eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, works with survivors of rape in an area ravaged by conflict. Sexual violence has become a weapon of war and most cases are committed by armed men. CDJP support women who have not only been subjected to horrendous abuse but then have to watch the perpetrators move freely in their villages, untouched by legal consequences. Often women and children are abandoned by their husbands and families, who blame the women for being raped. And children born of rape are frequently ostracised by their community and denied an education.

CDJP run several 'listening centres' which provide counselling and group support to survivors of sexual violence – services which they otherwise may never receive. As well as initial support in the aftermath of an attack, CDJP provides lawyers for people who wouldn't normally be able to pay for legal support. It also offers family mediation and helps survivors to set up activities so they can earn an income. But the Church's work alone is not enough. Very few of the cases that

they refer to hospital ever reach the courts. They need the support of the political and legal authorities to make sure that survivors are protected and are able to seek justice.

Feza from Mwanda, Bukavu tells her story: "Two men raped me in front of my husband. I was taken to the forest and for three days I was raped by many men.

Take our stories and tell everyone what is happening here. The world thinks it knows—but it doesn't know. This isn't a story of the war, this is our lives now. If the world is bored with the story then they have forgotten how to be human."

Thérèse Mapenzi works for CDJP in Bukavu and discusses the harsh reality faced by survivors of sexual violence:

"For a woman to manage to say that she has been raped is a work that takes a lot of time. Many women hide themselves for fear of being stigmatised by members of the community."

The work of CDJP is healing the physical and psychological wounds of war and allowing women and children to return to their families and communities. Further international support is needed to improve accountability and to integrate sexual and gender-based violence initiatives into peace and security efforts.



### **PRAY FOR**

- Feza, and others like her, to find emotional and physical healing after rape.
- Protection and empowerment for women who find the courage to speak out openly about what they and others have experienced.
- Pray that medical services, NGOs and church leaders can provide sensitive counselling and safe spaces to enable women like Feza to regain their self-confidence.
- Pray for marriage partners trying to come to terms with the aftermath of rape.



## DAY TWO - 26th Nov

### Speak out Sunday.

During the 16 Days of Activism, the US national WWSO coalition would like to encourage churches to host a Speak Out Sunday. In the US in 2014 our focus is Sunday, November 23. However November 30 or December 7 are also appropriate. On this Sunday, churches can preach, pray, encourage discussion and speak out against sexual and gender based violence.



Photo: Rick Santos, CEO of IMA World Health (founding member of WWSO national coalition in the US) speaking out against sexual violence © IMA World Health

**“THIS MAY BE THE MOST DIFFICULT SERMON I WILL PREACH SO FAR IN MY MINISTRY – BECAUSE I MYSELF AM A SURVIVOR OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND RAPE, FINALLY BEING TREATED FOR POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER – AND I WILL BE DISCLOSING THAT TO THE CONGREGATION. IT’S TIME TO SPEAK OUT.”** REV. MARIA TAFOYA, DELHAVEN CHRISTIAN CHURCH, CALIFORNIA, USA



**WATCH OUR VIDEO AND WEBINAR FROM LAST YEAR ABOUT HOW TO PREPARE FOR AND HOST SUCH A SERVICE**

<http://vimeo.com/79899873>

Its focus is on the US context but our key learning is appropriate anywhere.

#### **We want our churches to be full of people who can be:**

- like Jesus to those in our community and church who have experienced sexual violence
- messengers of hope and love offering on-going care and support
- agents of change - creating meaningful campaigns aimed at speaking out against sexual violence
- supportive and journey alongside those affected by sexual violence as they seek to find healing and hope after trauma.



#### **PRAY FOR**

- More churches to host special 'Speak Out Sunday' services or events.
- Greater awareness on where to find resources for survivors support in your community.
- Better understanding about the do's and don'ts when working with and caring for survivors.
- Greater awareness of individual rights and our legal obligations.

*Please note: Those who have experienced sexual and gender based violence have asked to be identified as survivors of violence. Therefore we will refer to individuals throughout this resource as survivors rather than victims.*

## DAY THREE - 27th Nov

### Learning from Jesus's example.

Stigma, discrimination and silence can all worsen the pain caused by sexual violence. Talking openly about sensitive issues is often difficult within churches and communities, especially if people do not have correct information about sexual and gender-based violence and what the Bible says about it.



Two friends, Mugisa\* and Chantal\* spending time together in the Heal Africa Transit Centre. Tearfund partner HEAL Africa work in Goma, DRC to provide medical treatment and physical and emotional support to women who have experienced violence.  
© Aubrey Graham/Tearfund

The church can play a vital role in reducing stigma and discrimination and talking openly about the issue of sexual violence so that survivors no longer feel socially unacceptable, isolated, rejected and ashamed.

**Do we treat someone differently because of who they are and what they have experienced?**

This Bible study will help us learn from Jesus's example.



### BIBLE STUDY: JOHN 8:1-11

This Bible study tells of a woman caught in adultery. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees set out to test Jesus about the law of Moses with regard to such behaviour. The woman is alone and the whole village is against her. She is vulnerable and accused of a sexual offence, and the law suggests that she should be killed violently. She is being judged. Jesus' response is a challenge to the law of Moses: he treats her with dignity, compassion and love. In doing so, he restores her, healing her brokenness, and asks her to return to her community as a changed person, worthy of God's forgiveness and healing.

### Discussion

1. Who are the main characters, and what are their roles in this story?
2. What do you think the story is really about?
3. Verse 4 of this passage states that the woman 'was caught in the act of committing adultery'.

Why was it only the woman, and not the man she was with, who was accused of adultery and brought before Jesus and the crowd?

4. Why did Jesus answer in the way he did?
5. Why did the Pharisees and teachers of the law walk away?
6. What does Jesus teach us here about how to respond with survivors of sexual violence in our context?

**“FOR A WOMAN TO MANAGE TO SAY THAT SHE HAS BEEN RAPED TAKES A LOT OF TIME AND COURAGE. MANY WOMEN HIDE THEMSELVES FOR FEAR OF BEING STIGMATISED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.”**  
**THÉRÈSE MEMA MAPENZI,**  
**CDJP, BUKAVU, EASTERN DRC**



### PRAY FOR

- God's help to enable me to show love and compassion to all those affected by sexual violence.
- God to bring healing and restoration to all who are suffering.
- Unconditional love for individuals carrying the pain of sexual violence.
- Me and people in my church – that we can be Christ's hands and feet in providing care and support amid people's pain.
- Peer support groups that can fully engage with and support people in our churches, and in the community, who have experienced sexual violence.

## DAY FOUR - 28th Nov

### *Positive Masculinities.*

Coalition member Restored hears of many stories of appalling acts committed by men against women and girls. There is a risk, however, that men are seen as a dangerous problem to be controlled, or even as the enemy to women. The truth is very different.

Most men are not abusive and want to love and respect the women in their lives. Central to this is our identity as men. From a Christian perspective we stress the centrality of positive relationships and societies built on strong marriages and families. We explore masculinity, and what it means to be a successful and non-violent man in our rapidly changing societies.

Positive masculinities are essential to help our boys to grow into men. Men as leaders; men as lovers; men as courageous; men as risk takers; these are all exciting models that do not need to exclude women from demonstrating the same characteristics. This is not a zero sum game.

Sadly some of today's models of masculinity are not very inspiring. Society glamorises physical strength, good looks, political power, financial wealth and the conquest of women. In popular culture, and particularly films and television, men are often seen as violent and ruthless, with women seen as objects for their gratification. The extremes of this are seen in pornography, which is violent, abusive and increasingly influential.



Could you be the first man in your community, church, or work place who is willing to openly speak about ending domestic violence and challenging gendered stereotypes? Take up our challenge and challenge others to sign the pledge to become a 'First Man Standing'. Sign up at [www.restoredrelationships.org/firstmanstanding](http://www.restoredrelationships.org/firstmanstanding) for more information.



Men discussing issues surrounding gender social norms in their community in Rwanda © Eleanor Bental/Tearfund

#### **Our concept of masculinity has three main elements:**

1. It is based on Jesus Christ as our model. Jesus was loving, non-violent, respectful of both men and women and lived as a servant to others.
2. It respects the diversity of men. We are all different and stereotypes restrict all of us from fulfilling our unique potential.
3. It is positive and fun - encouraging men to celebrate their sexuality in a positive way within passionate and committed marriages.

#### **Restored believes that men and women need to stand together to end gender-based violence. Our 'First Man Standing' campaign calls on men:**

- to respect women
- to challenge each other regarding attitudes and behaviour
- to pledge never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women.



Watch our video <http://youtu.be/8OUjabyVJjk> and listen to men speaking out against sexual violence.



#### **PRAY FOR**

- Many more men to respond to this challenge and become a 'First Man Standing'.
- All boys and youth to have inspiring role models of positive masculinity so that they grow up with a balanced sense of worth and with respect for women.
- Christian men to stand up, particularly in those parts of the world where women struggle most to be heard, and speak out against sexual and gender-based violence.

## DAY FIVE - 29th Nov

### *Protecting our dreams.*

This is a speech given by Justine\*, a survivor of sexual violence on behalf of a group of survivors in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.



Survivors are forming networks across South Africa to speak out and change policy and practice © Christina Shange/Tearfund

**“EACH OF US HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN BREAKING THE SILENCE AND IN SUPPORTING SOLUTIONS.”**  
**JUSTINE\***

“I am a survivor and in solidarity I have spent this last week listening to survivors telling their stories of being raped by the police, the pastor, the husband the teacher, the neighbour, the father, the grandfather, the uncle, the boss, the son, the grandson.... In all these stories its hard to believe that no -one knew; someone should have helped and someone could have helped. We are survivors in a culture where perpetrators are treated more humanely than the survivors of violent sexual assaults.

“The rape culture, which often harasses and blames victims — deters victims from reporting sexual assault and encourages men and boys to rape. When a victim is raped, too often the official response is to ask what she or he could have done to prevent the crime. We must instead demand that rapists stop raping, and we must change the culture that views rape as inevitable.

“Sexual violence, especially when tolerated or even justified, threatens not only women’s lives but also those of the communities in which we live. All of us were raped and assaulted, but we have survived and shown amazing resilience - even though we continue to live with the trauma and stigma of rape. There are thousands like us out there.

“We are here today to ask for your help in ending this complicit. If you are silent - you are then part of the problem. We are here to speak about xenophobia against women who have been raped and chased away in our police stations and shelters because of their immigration status. In all these cases someone witnessed this - and was silent.

“It might not be happening to you or your loved one today, but as a church leader, a father or a mother, you have a responsibility to speak out against violence. Churches should be our sanctuary. Pastors need to speak out from the pulpit - and teachers need to speak out in classes about rape. If people have been abused - let them be free to talk without shame. Police should be our protectors not our violators - but we are scared of them. Where should we go? To whom should we turn to?

“Silence is the enemy of change. We are here to plead with you to speak out. Even if we are poor, we are still human beings. For the most part, the complicity of the churches and the leaders in sexual violence is a complicity of silence. The majority of church leaders and the rest of our communities know almost nothing about the dynamics of sexual and family violence and have little or no experience in dealing with it.

“We are here to bring attention to the real challenges facing women, especially low-income women living in poverty and the unemployed. We are seeking policy changes that will address these challenges - to encourage survivor participation, and to fight against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in our communities. Policies that protect survivors, and respect their rights; that respond to their views, needs and concerns. We need survivor-friendly investigative and judicial procedures where survivors are well protected and well supported.

“Each of us has a role to play in breaking the silence and in supporting solutions.”



### **PRAY FOR**

- All of us to respond - and to play a role in breaking the silence and in supporting solutions.
- Increased public awareness about the extent of sexual violence within our circle of trust.
- Church leaders and organisations able to empower survivors to break their silence.
- Increased awareness that sexual violence against children is preventable.
- Systems to be implemented that tackle inappropriate attitudes, corruption and xenophobia within justice systems.
- Survivors such as Justine\* to realize their dreams through programmes and interventions to enable them to complete their studies and to create sustainable livelihoods.

## DAY SIX - 30th Nov

### *Female genital mutilation and cutting.*

Female genital mutilation and cutting (FGMC) is a harmful cultural practice that is practiced in specific countries across Sub-Saharan Africa and in communities from these countries across the world. For more information look at the following organisation's websites: FORWARD, Tearfund, 28 Too Many and YWCA.

"My name is Keziah Bianca, I am 22 years old and work at the YWCA of Kenya – Kisii branch. Kisii is a place renowned for practicing female genital mutilation and as a girl who grew up here, I was not an exception. I cannot blame my family for making me go through this inhuman act, as the society dictates it. In my culture it was considered unclean for a girl not to go through the practice.



Photo of Keziah © World YWCA

The reason why I am writing this is to say to the girls who faced female genital mutilation like me, to still trust in life and a brighter future. It doesn't matter what happened, or how your past has been, you can still have a future if you stand up and let your voice be heard. Talk about how you feel and also protect other young girls who may be facing the wrath of the knife as you and I did."

These 16 Days are a time to galvanize action to end violence against women and girls around the world. We would like to invite you to join WWSO coalition member, YWCA who are inviting individuals to join a social media campaign to speak out against violence against women.

To read more of Kezia's story go to:  
<http://womenleadingchange.wordpress.com/2012/05/23/female-genital-mutilation-my-story/>



Join the noXcuses campaign by posting of yourself with your hands crossed in an X shape, or by posting a photo of yourself holding a sign showing the excuse that was used when a violent act was committed, followed by the #noXcuses. You can see examples on our Facebook and Twitter pages. The idea is to generate momentum around speaking out against violence.

**"WELL-MEANING PARENTS WHO VIEW FGM AS A WAY TO PREPARE DAUGHTERS FOR MARRIAGE SHOULD CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND RECOGNIZE THAT THE PRACTICE IS A VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF GIRLS."  
KEZIAH BIANCA**

### **CASE STUDY: ALTERNATIVE RITE OF PASSAGE**

FGM/C is seen as a rite of passage in many cultures. AFNET and other NGOs in Dodoma, Tanzania have been piloting an alternative rite of passage where girls receive life skills training for a period of 6 months. They 'graduate' with proven skills and increased confidence. Some of these girls have now been married and are happy within these marriages. Their in laws and fellow community members respect and accept them as wives and mothers even though they have not undergone FGM/C.



## DAY SEVEN - 1st Dec

### *Why were we silent?*

December 1st is World AIDS Day. Remember in your prayers all those impacted by HIV and AIDS. Especially those who have been infected with HIV as a result of sexual violence.

Survivor networks – run by women who are themselves survivors - can bring the potential of healing and the regaining of confidence that comes from spending time in the company of other women who really understand their suffering and can listen and bring healing.



Photo: © Patricia Evans

**“WE WERE SILENT  
BECAUSE IF WE  
SPEAK, WE HAVE  
NOWHERE TO GO.  
WE ARE NOT BEING  
SILENT ANY LONGER.”**

**NOMPILO,  
KWAZULU NATAL**

**This powerful poem was written by women from the South Africa survivor network that Tearfund works with.**

“We were silent because we were afraid that we would be judged.

We were silent because we have gone to our pastors and they have judged us.

We were silent because of the stigma that stays with us wherever we go.

We were silent because if we speak, we have nowhere to go.

We are not being silent any longer.

Too many people are suffering because we have been silent and you have been silent.

We ask you today to join us in breaking the silence.

We survivors are creating a platform to speak out. Share our voices, faces, and experienced wisdom.

We are asking you to join our movement. Speak out against violence.

Violence against women is against Christian values.

It Must End.

We can only break the stigma of sexual violence by speaking out - but without you and your churches, we cannot change things.

You are powerful and influential and you must help us do this work. We want to work hand in hand with you. We are more than willing to come to speak to your congregation, to be the voice and faces of rape in South Africa.

We ask you to open doors for us. We want to enter your church with our truth as the real survivors, not just marginalized women. We have been harmed, but we have the power to change the world. We are fighting for ourselves and every other woman who is still silent.

**Will you fight with us?”**



### **PRAY FOR**

- The growth of many more survivor movements like the one in South Africa. Pray that they will be supported by the Church, by the government and by NGOs in order to have all the resources they need.
- Churches around the world to open their doors for survivors enabling them to speak out and to raise awareness of the issue of sexual violence.
- All survivors of sexual violence to find others who can walk beside them through the pain and help them to find healing, justice and peace of mind.

## DAY EIGHT - 2nd Dec

### *Quiet revolutions.*

As refugees in Lebanon, Palestinians are classed as 'foreigners' and have no access to the Lebanese social security system and very little access to public health and education services.

Palestinian women face triple discrimination as Palestinians, refugees and women. Unemployment, poverty and overcrowding in the refugee camps has contributed to high levels of domestic violence. Almost a quarter of women in the camps have been beaten by their husbands.

Coalition member, CAFOD partners with Association Najdeh (AN), a Palestinian NGO that runs a number of centres in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon.

They aim to reduce levels of domestic violence through innovative initiatives including training women for leadership. The association puts on interactive theatre shows which provide a safe environment for women and men to discuss issues including women's rights, domestic violence, and the idea that women and men are equal. A young man explained: "I started thinking, what if this happened to my mother or sisters?"

Change is not easy in such conservative settings - women used to hide the fact that they were going to the centre from their husbands, but now some husbands encourage their wives to go together. Audiences are still mostly women, but over 200 men have participated in the interactive theatre shows so far.

Leila el Ali, director of AN, says to the men: "We don't want to fight you or take any authority from you - in fact we don't want to take anything that belongs to you. What we want is to have our space, play our role as women and to equally share the responsibilities of private and public life."

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) sexual and gender based violence has had a devastating impact on women, men, boys and girls. Fuelled by years of complex conflict and the related breakdown in law and order and further challenged by inadequate infrastructures. This makes the situation in most conflict-affected areas catastrophic.

In eastern DRC, coalition members Tearfund and the Anglican Church are working in partnership. The 'Silent no more' initiative aims to mobilise faith leaders and communities to break the silence on SGBV, empowering them to lead effective responses. The project focuses on promoting positive masculinities whilst challenging harmful masculine identities, behaviours and practices. As part of this project a baseline research study was carried out. These findings informed training interventions for men and boys within the church and community. Focusing on sexual and gender based violence prevention, response and promoting gender equality.

**The Bible teaches that all humans should be treated with love and respect and that men and women are created equal in the eyes of God.**

The training resulted in significant shifts in men's attitudes to the theology of women, gender equality, women's rights and the nature of abuse. One participant commented: "Our culture prevents women from progressing. We see in other cultures that women are doing other work, and this is helping the development of their communities. We need the same in our country."

Quiet revolutions are going on in many countries including the DRC and Lebanon.

For copies of the research reports go to: [www.tearfund.org/sexualviolence](http://www.tearfund.org/sexualviolence)



Pastor Alexis Musonera from Burundi is one of many men who are speaking out against sexual violence. © Prabu Deepan/Tearfund

**'NOTHING IN ALL  
CREATION IS HIDDEN  
FROM GOD'S SIGHT.  
EVERYTHING IS  
UNCOVERED AND LAID  
BARE BEFORE THE EYES  
OF HIM TO WHOM WE  
MUST GIVE ACCOUNT.'  
HEBREWS 4:13**



### **PRAY FOR**

- The church and NGOs to be catalysts in publically denouncing all forms of SGBV against women and girls.
- The church and NGOs to provide correct biblical teachings and to promote positive masculinities.
- The church to provide sound theologically-based education and training for lay leaders, pastors and bishops in order to set right biblical misinterpretations.
- The 'Silent no more' initiative to spread within eastern DRC and to other areas of the country.
- AN to reach more men who can effectively spread the word within their communities.

## DAY NINE - 3rd Dec

### *Dealing with judgmental attitudes.*

Our cultural and religious beliefs often shape our attitudes. They affect how we behave and how we treat other people. In some communities, churches have spoken out against sexual violence.



Survivors coming together to support one another in South Africa  
© Christina Shange/Tearfund

**“EACH OF US HAS A ROLE  
TO PLAY IN BREAKING  
THE SILENCE AND IN  
SUPPORTING SOLUTIONS.”**  
**JUSTINE\*, A SURVIVOR  
FROM SOUTH AFRICA**

However, there are many cases where the church has been responsible for encouraging judgmental attitudes and fuelling stigma.

How can the church change its judgmental attitudes and fully understand that survivors are NOT to blame for the sexual violence that they experience? Such judgmental attitudes are a huge barrier which prevents survivors of sexual violence participating in church activities and prevents people from seeking the support they need.

This bible study helps us understand better the feelings of people who have experienced sexual violence. It shows how easily incorrect attitudes can pull families apart. Unhelpful attitudes about sexual violence can pull apart the family of the church in just the same way.



### **BIBLE STUDY: JOHN 4:1-30**

Jesus deliberately chose to travel through Samaria on his way to Galilee. Other Jews would not have used this route due to the difficult relationships between Jews and Samaritans. They would choose a longer route. The meeting with the Samaritan woman was not just by accident but because of God's will. The woman comes to draw water at noon during the midday heat in order to avoid others, due to her past life. When Jesus confronts her about her past and her various husbands, she does not deny it. Her difficult past makes her spiritually thirsty and in need of salvation. All of us are in need of salvation, regardless of our past life. We all need to stand before Christ and ask for forgiveness in order to receive the living water.

#### **Discussion**

1. Why do you think the woman came alone to draw water from the well at noon when it was very hot?
2. Why was the Samaritan woman so surprised that Jesus asked her for water?
3. What does Jesus mean when he tells the women he will give her 'living water'?
4. What lesson do we learn from the passage about Jesus' contact with the Samaritan woman who the Jews considered as 'unclean'?
5. In what ways can the church make people who feel unworthy and excluded, feel personally welcomed?
6. What are some of the things that we do in the church that exclude others? How can we change these?



### **PRAY FOR**

- Ourselves; that we are challenged to really love everyone as Christ did, following biblical principles, and to be good witnesses in representing God and sharing his unconditional love with all people.
- Families and churches to do all they can to help survivors of sexual violence feel accepted and loved.
- Judgmental attitudes in the church to change, so that people who have survived sexual violence can find love and support and share their gifts within the church.

## DAY TEN - 4th Dec

### *Supporting survivors of sexual exploitation.*

León is the second largest city in Nicaragua and has high levels of poverty, unemployment and underemployment. Girls, adolescents and young women from poor families are particularly vulnerable, as many come from broken homes where domestic and sexual violence is common.



Photo: Adolescent girls at risk from sexual exploitation attend an educational workshop © Association Mary Barreda

Between 1998 and 2008 more than 14,000 cases of sexual abuse were reported, with two thirds of the victims under the age of 17. Many leave home at an early age and work in the markets where they are easily taken advantage of, and where they are at risk of commercial sexual exploitation and prostitution.

**The prevalence rate of violence against women is as high as 52% in Nicaragua.**

The association Mary Barreda, a Christian-inspired NGO based in León, works on institutional issues including child labour, prostitution, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Its overall aim is to reduce the levels of vulnerability faced by girls exposed to commercial sexual exploitation and women involved in prostitution in León.

Mary Barreda uses several innovative and effective ways of working. They have a clinic where sex workers receive a medical check-up every three months. They have a shelter which is used for workshops, training and prevention work in collaboration with promoters who work with schools on issues such as HIV and AIDS, gender equality and violence.

Mary Barreda also works on sensitising the police force about their roles and responsibilities. They arrange meetings between the police and different vulnerable groups, and run six training sessions per year with different levels within the police.

Their work with women and girls at risk of sexual exploitation, involves the girls' mothers, and together they try to find ways to think of alternatives to get them away from sexual exploitation. Today Mary Barreda also works directly with husbands, sons, step-fathers and men in general, because the struggle for rights and dignity "belongs to everyone".

**“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS ON ME, BECAUSE HE HAS ANOINTED ME TO PREACH GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM FREEDOM FOR THE PRISONERS AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT FOR THE BLIND, TO RELEASE THE OPPRESSED.”**

**LUKE 4:18**



#### **PRAY FOR**

- The empowering work of Mary Barreda to be well supported and to continue growing.
- The work of sensitising police forces so that all officers provide dignity, justice and safety for survivors of sexual and domestic violence.
- Many more opportunities for training, apprenticeships and small business development to be available to provide realistic alternatives to prostitution.
- The vision of Mary Barreda - that the struggle for rights and dignity "belongs to everyone" - to be widely shared.

## DAY ELEVEN - 5th Dec

*Faith leaders need to speak out.*

There is an overwhelming need for religious leaders to confront the realities of sexual violence and speak out clearly at every opportunity.



Faith leaders met to discuss the role of faith communities in ending sexual violence at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June 2014. They are photographed here with UK Government Minister Baroness Warsi.

"We must create a safe space for a woman who has been raped to feel free to talk about her experience and receive help. And we must speak prophetically to warn people of the consequences of ignoring sexual violence. Someone once described the church as a sleeping giant. Let us get up, and speak out."

**The Most Reverend Dr Onesphore Rwaje, Anglican Archbishop of Rwanda**

"It is our job as religious leaders to speak out the unspeakable. Where is God when these things happen? Rape is a spiritual attack on the dignity and integrity of a person who is made in the image of God, and we must teach responsibly in order to avoid blaming the person who has been raped."

**Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu, a congregational rabbi in London**

### **A PRAYER FROM THE BISHOP OF KIGALI, ANGLICAN CHURCH OF RWANDA**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your love and that it is your will that human kind should live together in peace and harmony, reflecting your loving nature. We humbly come before you praying for the church of Rwanda and the worldwide church, for wisdom, understanding, love and courage as we take part in the journey of eradicating SV.

We pray that the church may continue to be a safe place and shelter where victims may find refuge and experience God's love and healing in the midst of hurt and pain. We pray for the SV victims all over the world, those who were raped, mistreated and abused in various ways, especially women and children. May your healing and comforting hand be upon them always.

You are our hope, comforter, healer and redeemer and you never ignore the cry of your children. We pray for our leaders - from our President right to our local leaders, that you continue to give them wisdom and guidance, so that they continue to be your instruments of peace and justice in the work they do for our nation.

We thank you for all that you are doing and what you are going to do.

In the Name of Jesus Christ we pray.

Amen



If you would like to raise awareness on sexual and gender based violence within your congregation, download a copy of 'One in Three: A sermon guide to prevent sexual violence in our communities' from the US national coalition of We Will Speak Out - [www.wewillspeakout.us](http://www.wewillspeakout.us)



Stigma is a feeling of being socially unacceptable, resulting in isolation, rejection and shame. It comes through the disapproval, condemnation and rejection of survivors of sexual violence.

Self-stigma means that some survivors of sexual violence are often afraid to report what has happened because of their fear of being judged. They may feel unworthy or ashamed.

## DAY TWELVE - 6th Dec

*Joseph, a positive model of fatherhood.*

In many cultures, fatherhood defines what it means to be a man. This causes great stress to couples that do not have their own biological children.

In the context of HIV, it is important to acknowledge the role of social fathering: one may not be a biological father, but one may accomplish the role of a social father. The story of the birth of Jesus is well known. However, Joseph, though he is a key part of God's salvation plan, is generally ignored.



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Joseph is a righteous man who tries to break his engagement to Mary quietly after hearing of her pregnancy, to cause her less shame in their community. However, an angel also appears to Joseph and tells him to go ahead and marry Mary as she has been made pregnant by the Holy Spirit. He marries her as instructed and does not consummate their marriage until after the baby is born. This passage reveals to us that there are good men out there: principled, selfless men ready to fight and protect those they love.



**READ MATTHEW  
1: 18-25.**

The Bible study doesn't reveal what Joseph says to Mary, but we can probably fill in the gaps. He was a

young man who has kept himself pure for his wedding night and believes that his betrothed is doing the same- then bang! She tells him she is pregnant.

### Discussion

1. What do you think Joseph says to Mary?
2. What does Joseph do?
3. How many men would remain considerate and calm under such great provocation? And yet Joseph wants to break the engagement quietly so as not to cause Mary any shame.
4. What is Joseph's response to the angel's message?
5. Do you know any men in your community who, like Joseph, seek to love, honour and protect women? How are they treated in the community?
6. How can the family, churches and communities work together to produce more men like Joseph?



### PRAY FOR

- Men in our communities who are like Joseph, acting responsibly, sensitively and who are obedient to God's guidance.
- The church to uphold such men, ensuring they are respected and given roles which enable others, especially the youth, to learn from them.
- The church to teach more about positive fatherhood.

## DAY THIRTEEN - 7th Dec

### *Mary's story from Burundi.*

Mary\* is a young girl of 14 years who was sent to visit her married sister in the nearby village. During the visit, the sister's husband forced her to have sex with her in the bush when she was sent to buy something by her sister.

When her sister found that Mary had sex with her husband, she took the matter to their parents. They concluded that Mary had been at fault. This false accusation has cursed Mary all her life. Mary became confused - believing she had betrayed her sister. She found herself rejected by everybody in the family. Her father told her that for the curse to be removed from her, he needed to have sex with Mary - his own daughter. After the first sexual encounter, the father went on telling Mary that more sexual encounters meant perfect healing from the curse.

Mary's father stopped her from attending school and made her work with him in the fields where it was easy for him to have sex with her (her mother was sick and always remained in the house). Mary became pregnant and her father became impatient with her sexually, and beat her badly. Her mother discovered what was happening but told her daughter to keep quiet.

Mary suffered a lot of beatings during her pregnancy and finally her unborn baby died. Mary's life was saved at the local hospital where she was helped by a church member. Though Mary did not talk about what was going on, community members were suspicious of their relationship and Mary was not allowed to

attend even church on Sunday. When she was found to be pregnant, the father was questioned and taken into police custody but he bribed the police, and was released. He then threatened Mary of having informed community members about their relationship.

During a mapping exercise in Burundi, the Tearfund researchers met many women who shared their unbelievable experiences as a result of sexual violence perpetrated against them. Mary joined in a focus group and requested a 'One-on-one interview' where she told her story to the researcher in the hope of being rescued from her father. Following the completion of the research, Mary's case was referred to an NGO who was then able to ensure her future wellbeing and safety.



© Sarah Reilly/Tearfund

**DO NOT ASSUME THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE WHOLE STORY WITHOUT LISTENING FIRST TO THOSE WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE.**



#### **PRAY FOR**

- Government structures, such as the police and clinics, to work effectively for the benefit of ordinary citizens and resist bribery and corruption.
- More international NGO's which are able to support isolated communities with information, resources and support structures.
- More church leaders to benefit from appropriate training so they can identify potential sexual and domestic abuse and know how to respond appropriately.

## DAY FOURTEEN - 8th Dec

*Advocacy during difficult times.*

This Bible study from Nehemiah helps us to learn more about how to cope with difficulties and discouragements. It shows how he helped the people of Jerusalem to respond to difficulties by working to support each other. They design a system that means they can respond quickly if one group suddenly needs help.



### READ NEHEMIAH 4:1–20, 6:15–16

This study reminds us how much we need God's direction to provide both good leadership and to identify issues that we may need to advocate for. The church is well placed to challenge local government and organisations to take more action to prevent and respond to sexual violence.

Each of us has a responsibility in accompanying, supporting and standing in the gap for those who need us.

We all need commitment, discernment and empowerment to provide effective leadership and advocacy about sexual violence in our communities.

#### Discussion

1. How does Nehemiah deal with discouragement both spiritual and physical?
2. How does he cope with the size of the task?
3. How does he deal with opposition and threats?
4. How do the people of Jerusalem support each other effectively? What can we learn from this?
5. Are we continually seeking God's guidance, encouragement and wisdom?
6. What was the outcome of this working together (6:15-16)?

**“THE SPIRIT OF THE  
LORD IS ON ME, BECAUSE  
HE HAS ANOINTED  
ME TO PREACH GOOD  
NEWS TO THE POOR.  
HE HAS SENT ME TO  
PROCLAIM FREEDOM  
FOR THE PRISONERS AND  
RECOVERY OF SIGHT FOR  
THE BLIND, TO RELEASE  
THE OPPRESSED.”**

**LUKE 4:18**



#### PRAY FOR

- Guidance to show us how we can rely on God's strength, understanding and grace to repair every situation where leadership is lacking or weak and where we face 'damaged walls'.
- All those who are vulnerable to sexual violence because of poverty.
- Those who care for children who have lost parents, or whose parents are sick, and who are likely to be left without protectors and providers.
- Ourselves and all Christians when we are called to speak up for those in need. Pray for guidance on how we can all follow Nehemiah's example and take the lead in meeting needs in our communities.

## DAY FIFTEEN - 9th Dec

### A church charter.

Is your church equipped to support survivors of domestic violence? Will they know how to respond? Restored can provide guidance to ensure the church is a safe haven for victims of domestic abuse and that it is able to support women who seek help.



Photo: Examples of actions participants will be taking to end violence against women, after a training day by Restored in Cardiff Baptist College. © Restored

#### A charter for churches

The pack encourages church members and leadership to debate the issue of domestic abuse and to develop our understanding of its impact on the lives of victims and their families. One of the contents of the pack is a charter for churches. By adopting this Charter, the local church will be committing itself to undertake positive steps to provide information, support and pastoral care for those experiencing domestic violence.

By displaying this Charter on its premises, the local church will be making a public statement about its condemnation of domestic violence and its availability to offer information, care and support to those who are victims

#### This Church

1. Understands domestic abuse to be the abuse of a person physically, sexually, psychologically, spiritually, emotionally, socially or financially within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behavior. This can include forced marriage and so-called 'honor crimes'.
2. Holds that domestic abuse in all its forms is unacceptable and irreconcilable with the Christian faith and a Christian way of living.
3. Accepts that domestic abuse is a serious problem which occurs in church families as well as in wider society.
4. Undertakes to listen, support and care for those affected by domestic abuse.
5. Will always place the safety of women and children as the highest priority.
6. Will work with domestic abuse support agencies, will learn from them and support them in appropriate ways, and will publicise their work.
7. Will play its part in teaching that domestic abuse is a sin.
8. Believes in a God of love, justice, mercy, and forgiveness.
9. Will teach what it means to be male and female, equally made in God's image.
10. Will seek to appoint advisors to encourage the use of good practice guidelines and keep the church informed about the implementation and development of these guidelines.



#### PRAY FOR

- More church leaders to take seriously the issue of gender based violence.
- Many more churches to adopt the Charter from Restored - after discussion and action.
- More churches to become places of acceptance, safety and restoration.

## **DAY SIXTEEN - 10th Dec**

### *The Power of Prayer.*

The power of prayer can do miraculous things, and so today is the day to pray for the end of sexual and gender based violence. All these women, men, boys and girls need the support of prayer and the strength to continue in struggle.

**'BUT THE FRUIT OF  
THE SPIRIT IS LOVE,  
JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE,  
KINDNESS, GOODNESS,  
FAITHFULNESS,  
GENTLENESS AND SELF-  
CONTROL.'  
GALATIANS 5:22-23**



### **A PRAYER FOR THOSE WORKING TO END SEXUAL AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.**

God bless you  
with insight to recognise violence in all its forms,  
and courage to name it,  
speaking out for justice.

The Lord Jesus bless you  
with compassion for the vulnerable,  
and grace to stand with them,  
sharing his strength.

The Holy Spirit bless you  
with a prayerful heart,  
and power to breathe peace,  
transforming the world.

The blessing of the holy and glorious Trinity, eternal  
Wisdom, living Word,  
abiding Spirit, be among you and remain with you  
always.

**Amen.**

*With thanks to the Anglican Church of Australia  
for this prayer*



**If you would like further Bible studies on this  
topic we can suggest these passages:**

- Judges 19:1–30. *A Levite and his concubine*
- Mark 5:24–34. *The woman who bled*
- 2 Samuel 11:1–26. *David and Bathsheba*
- Psalm 139:13–16. *Each of us is precious and valued by God*
- 1 John 4:7–12. *God's love and our love for each other*

## LEAVING - BY CATHERINE BURTON

He's hurting me.  
He's holding my wrists in his hands and he's hurting me.  
My fists are clenched tight.  
His fingers are white.  
He towers over me and ties me up with words.  
I cower before him and fight to find freedom.  
In the struggle I kick

and curse  
and crumble.

My knees hit the floor, hands raised, head lowered.  
Limp limbs held fast in his fists.  
He throws my hands from his,  
telling me I could leave,  
but I'd never be able to live without him.  
He's right, I could leave.  
But I can't move.  
My body is bound, a heap on the ground.  
I find shelter between the wall and the door.  
I just don't know what to do anymore.

My voice cries out to the God above,  
"How long, O Lord, must I call for help,  
before you will listen?  
before you will save?"

Why do you wait and watch  
while strife unfolds and injustice abounds?  
Why are you so far from saving me?  
Where are you?  
(Habakkuk 1:2-4, Psalm 22:1)

"Wake up," you whisper, "open your eyes."  
The nightmare is over.  
You're right there, right here.  
You're healing me.  
You're holding my hands in yours and you're healing me.  
My palms are marred.  
Your palms are scarred.  
You come to us and cover the corruption between us,  
I wait before you and find rest in your freedom.  
In your peace I breathe

and live  
and belong.

My knees are no longer next to my chest  
as my body unfolds  
and my spirit is told,  
you will never leave me nor forsake me.  
You're right, you won't leave.  
With you, I live.  
Now I can move.  
I know just what to do.



### A PRAYER

Just and Merciful God,  
Amidst the struggle  
between men and women for power and control,  
will you come to lower our fists and our frantic voices,  
stilling our troubled souls by the power of your Spirit.  
In the name of Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One.

**Amen.**

## CONFIDENTIAL HELPLINES

If you have been affected by any of the information above and would like to speak to someone confidentially, contact your church leader or please call

**National Domestic Violence Helpline (UK) 0808 2000 247**

**National Domestic Violence Hotline (USA): 800-799-7233**

If you are based outside of the US and UK, please go to [www.hotpeachpages.net](http://www.hotpeachpages.net) to find a helpline.

## WE WILL SPEAK OUT COALITION

We Will Speak Out (WWSO) is an international coalition of Christian-based NGOs, churches and organizations, supported by an alliance of technical partners and individuals who together commit themselves to see the end of sexual violence across communities around the world.

The WWSO coalition is committed to empowering women and girls, to transforming relationships between women and men, and to ensuring that the voices of survivors of sexual violence – women, girls, men and boys – are central to their work.

**The following members have been involved in the publication of this resource:**

Isobel Owen (Anglican Alliance), Sonia Pritchard (CAFOD), Emily Esworthy (IMA World Health/US WWSO), Sarah Reilly (Tearfund) and Joanna Hipp (World Communion of Reformed Churches).

Please join us in making a **PERSONAL COMMITMENT**  
to speak out against sexual violence at:

<http://www.wewillspkout.org/pledge/>

