

## WOMEN: LOVED AND RESPECTED IN THEIR BEING OF WOMAN

### INTRODUCTION:



What is central in the Good News Jesus brings and in His announcement of the Kingdom of God is the preferential option for the marginalized in society. It is significant that Jesus chose them, welcomed them, loved them, healed them, and treated them with respect and dignity. In this relationship with Jesus they discover that they are human beings loved by God. Their previous reality is reversed because in this new proposal “the last are the first” (Mc 10.31). Among these marginalized groups were women, completely left aside, without value to anyone, suffering all kinds of violence - justified by a cultural tradition – sustained by those with religious and political power.

### A LOOK TO TODAY’S REALITY IN OUR COUNTRIES AND IN OUR SOCIETY:

- What is the situation of women in your country, in society?
- What types of violence are women suffering in our society? (We can name some types of violence or we can prepare some pictures showing situations of violence which women suffer today).

### WHAT THE GOSPEL SAYS:

Some texts that can help in your reflection (or you can choose others):

Mc 15, 40-41.47: speaks of women following and serving Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem.

- Mk 1:29-31 is the story of the healing of Peter's mother-in-law. Three verbs appear in this story: approaching, taking her hands and lifting, meaning the act of lifting the human being who somehow was prostrate, dehumanized.

- Mk 5:25-34: Here we have the story of the healing of the woman with a discharge of blood. According to the prescriptions of the book of Leviticus 15:19-31, women during the period of menstruation were not only considered impure, but also polluted everything they touched. We can think for a few moments of the situation of this woman who, for 12 years, was suffering from blood flow. This woman on the margins of society had spent all her money seeking to be cured, but to no avail. Jesus realized someone touched him even though there were many people. He called aloud "daughter" and exalts her faith, returning her to the society that had marginalizing her.



### WHAT THE CONGREGATION SAYS:

-Work zealously with women and children, especially those who are **trafficked, forced to migrate and oppressed by abject poverty**. We support projects for economic justice, confront unjust systems and take a “corporate stance” when appropriate. (*Direction Statement, 29<sup>th</sup> Congregational Chapter 2009*)

-GS, locally, regionally, and internationally, seeks to increase effective advocacy and lobbying for implementation of Human Rights based legislation at national, regional and UN level. We support policies that will prevent and

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eradicate trafficking in women and girls by addressing gender discrimination, economic injustice, **and violence against women.** (*Good Shepherd Position on the Trafficking of Women and Girls, Page 4, Clare Nolan, 2011*)

-Perpetrators of violence against women are most often their intimate partners. In a survey of GS projects in relation to violence against women 100% reported provision of domestic violence services. However only 48% indicated that they provided education and awareness-raising campaigns to combat VAWG in their community includes efforts to directly target boys and men.

Given the cultural tendency in many countries to favor boys over girls, boys will grow into men genuinely believing they are more valuable and thus superior to their female counterparts. With gender inequality constantly being reinforced by social and cultural norms, reversing the trend proves to be an uphill battle. (*Ending Violence Against Girls and Women- A Survey of services provided globally by Good Shepherd Sisters in 24 countries, January 2013 (GSIJPO).*)

### TO ACT:

- What is my commitment to accompany the woman on their journey of equality, getting up, struggling against oppression and violence of which they are victims today?
- What concrete actions I am doing or could do to ensure respect for the dignity of women?

### CLOSING PRAYER:

#### PRAYER FOR THE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

(Source :

[http://mercaba.org/FICHAS/VIDA/iglesia\\_violencia\\_dom%C3%A9stica.htm](http://mercaba.org/FICHAS/VIDA/iglesia_violencia_dom%C3%A9stica.htm) )

God of love and Creator of the universe, there are homes in our world where people live with fear of violence. For these families, home is not a safe place, but a place of danger and pain.

Give them the strength and the wisdom they need to overcome the arrogance, fear and division. Give them the grace to resolve conflicts without violence and to establish relations based on the spirit of love and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

God of Mercy, many have turned their backs on the battered people. Open our hearts to the pain of those who suffer. Help us reach them with love and understanding. God of Hope, in you we trust by opening our lives to your strength, to your healing and to your love. Teach us that peace will only come to our world, through the peace in our hearts and in our homes. Amen.



**International Day for the Elimination of  
Violence against Women**  
**25 November**

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