

## **The Fifth Station: Jesus is judged by Pilate**

“Pilate then called together the chief priests, the leaders, and the people, and said to them, ‘You brought me this man as one who was perverting the people; and here I have examined him in your presence and have not found this man guilty of any of your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us. Indeed, he has done nothing to deserve death. I will therefore have him flogged and release him.’ Then they all shouted out together, ‘Away with this fellow! Release Barabbas for us!’ (This was a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.) Pilate, wanting to release Jesus, addressed them again; but they kept shouting, ‘Crucify, crucify him!’ A third time he said to them, ‘Why, what evil has he done? I have found in him no ground for the sentence of death; I will therefore have him flogged and then release him.’ But they kept urgently demanding with loud shouts that he should be crucified; and their voices prevailed. So Pilate gave his verdict that their demand should be granted. He released the man they asked for, the one who had been put in prison for insurrection and murder, and he handed Jesus over as they wished.”

Luke 23:13-25

Every day innocent people are denied their freedom and inherent human dignity through the evil that is human trafficking. Children become slaves. Women, children and men become sexual commodities. Forced labour satisfies our demand for cheap coffee, tea, sugar, garments and many other items we use daily. Exploiters make billions in profit. Children exposed to pornography grow to become the next generation of purchasers of sex. This happens in our country and right here in our city, on these very streets.

**Let us pray,** Lord, open our eyes to the selfish desires that fuel the demand for the services of our fellow humans. Restore dignity to the victims of human trafficking. Give us the courage to speak out against this evil, the courage to create an economy without human trafficking. **Amen**