



## LENT Third Week

**Song:** "I Feel Like a Motherless Child"

Sometimes I feel like a motherless child, (3)  
A long way from home. (2)

Sometimes I feel like  
I'm all alone, (3)  
A long way from home (2)

**Exodus 3:13-14** Translation by Everett Fox, The Five Books of Moses

*Moshe said to God: Here, I will come to the Children of Israel and I will say to them: The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they will say to me: What is God's name? - What shall I say to them?*

*God said to Moshe: Ehyeh asher ehyeh / I will be-there howsoever I will be-there. And God said: Thus shall you say to the Children of Israel: Ehyeh/ I-Will-Be-There sends me to you. (Silent Reflection)*

The trade in *human* persons constitutes a shocking offence against human dignity and a grave violation of fundamental human rights. *John Paul II, May 2002*

### SOPHIA

- Sophia recoiled with sheer panic when asked about her abduction.  
(Moments of silence)

Imagine Sophia and pray quietly in your heart:  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*

- Two men with knives forced me into the car. I thought they would rape me and then kill me. I prayed that my life would be spared. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- I was driven to a river crossing where they sold me to a Serbian man and was taken to an apartment in a town in the mountains. There were so many girls there from Moldova, Romania, Ukraine and Bulgaria. Some were crying others looked terrified. We weren't allowed to speak to each other. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- All the time, mean and ugly men came in and dragged girls into rooms. Sometimes they would rape the girls in front of us. They yelled at them, ordering them to move in a certain way, ... to pretend excitement, to moan...it was sickening. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*

- Those who resisted were beaten, burned with cigarettes, hit with fists, and kicked all over. Then they were locked in cellars with rats and had no water or food for three days. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- One girl refused to submit to anal sex, and that night the owner brought in five men. They held her down and every man had anal sex with her. She screamed and screamed and we all cried. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- The next day the girl tried to hang herself. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- I was terrified of the night I would be trained and broken in. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- It happened on my third night in captivity. I knew I didn't have the strength to endure what would surely follow if I resisted. That night I just wanted to die. I was so humiliated. To these men, I was just a piece of meat. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- From that moment on, I have felt like filth. I cannot wash that feeling from my body or my mind no matter how hard I try. (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*
- *"I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come to deliver them from the Egyptians. Exodus 3:7-8* (Moments of silence)  
*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*

**In solidarity**, all stand and join hands for a moment of silence.

*I will be-there, howsoever I will be-there.*

**Let us pray:** O God, we cannot express what our minds barely comprehend and our hearts feel when we hear of women and girls deceived, transported to unknown places for purposes of sexual exploitation and abused because of human greed and profit. We can only lift our voices and cry to you, "Strengthen the broken-hearted."

Our hearts and spirits are saddened when the dignity and rights of those who are trafficked are violated, threatened by deception and force. We cry out against this degrading practice of trafficking and pray, "Heal the broken-hearted."

Give us the wisdom and courage to learn more about this tragic reality in our world. Help us stand in solidarity with our sisters so that together we may find ways to nurture that freedom which you give us all.

**We will be-there, howsoever we will be-there.**

*Adapted from a prayer by G. Cassini, SSND*

The story of Sophia is taken from The Natashas by Victor Malarek