

- For those who have no Identity Documents to secure basic grants...
- For those who feel alone and afraid because of their HIV status
- For those without strength to raise their own children...
- For grandmothers and children raising orphans...
- For people hiding in rich homes; for invisible squatters living in squalid camps...
- For doctors and nurses serving at free clinics under stressful conditions...
- For volunteers who face overwhelming problems every day without means to help...
- For ourselves who can make a difference by support and advocacy...

Loving God, send your Spirit of love and hope, your Spirit of advocacy and service, to strengthen us to do what we can to make this world a place of human dignity. Amen.

#### **Turning to Mary:**

When Mary saw a need (her cousin, Elizabeth; the bridal couple without sufficient wine; her Son on the cross), she responded with action. Let us pray that she will be a mentor to us as we join her song of liberation, the MAGNIFICAT.

**Ritual Song:** *Magnificat*

#210 or #656

#### **Blessing:**

May God who feeds his flock with nourishing food, who carries each one of us as a favoured child, who gathers us with others for support and hope, and who leads each of us to our eternal home bless us with the power to advocate for our sisters and brothers suffering the scourge of HIV/AIDS.



Sisters, Servants of the  
Immaculate Heart of Mary  
[www.ihmsisters.org](http://www.ihmsisters.org)



**IHM Prayer Service**  
**For and with all who suffer**  
**with HIV/AIDS**

**December 1, 2009**





*During his life on earth,  
Jesus offered up prayer and entreaty,  
aloud and in silent tears...*

*Hebrews 5:7*

**Let us pray:**

Loving God, you feel the secret fear and painful suffering of your people all over the world who are infected/affected by HIV/AIDS. Deliver us from ignorance and complacency about their plight. Awaken our compassion and move us to advocacy for our sisters and brothers. We pray in Jesus' name for the gift of the Holy Spirit to advocate for change. Amen.

**Introduction:**

Today in South Africa millions of people are slowly dying of AIDS-related illnesses. Many HIV carriers and people with full-blown AIDS live in poor townships and horrible squatter camps. Countless children are *infected* by the virus; while most, if not all children, are *affected* by the loss of family members, income, security and hope for a productive future.

Although basic grants are available from the South African government, statistics show that most sub-Saharan children are not registered at birth – and are therefore not eligible for grants without advocacy by adults. Access to anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) also came little and late to South Africa and not without years of advocacy by local pressure groups.

Such advocacy for human rights is the theme of this year's World AIDS DAY. Our prayer and action is needed for the poor and abandoned sick adults and children who are deeply precious in God's sight.

**Hymn:**

*I Will Never Forget You, My People, Carey Landry*

I will never forget you, My people  
I have carved you on the palm of My hand  
I will never forget you  
I will not leave you orphaned  
I will never forget My own

Does a mother forget her baby?  
Or a woman the child within her womb?  
Yet even if these forget,  
Yes, even if these forget,  
I will never forget my own

I will never forget you, My people  
I have carved you on the palm of My hand  
I will never forget you  
I will not leave you orphaned  
I will never forget My own

Let us open our minds, lips and hearts to the challenging Word of God.

**Scripture:**

Luke 11:5-8

**Quiet Reflection:**

Do I allow myself to be disturbed by the effects of the AIDS pandemic on our sisters and brothers at home and abroad?

How can I be an advocate for those infected/affected by the virus?

**Petitions:**

Spirit of God, give us hearts to respond.

- For those who have no food to keep their immune systems functioning...
- For those who are afraid to be tested lest they have the dreaded virus...
- For those who have no access to clinics, to anti-retroviral drugs...
- For those who have no money to buy seeds, school uniforms, transport...