



**Let us Pray for Children  
by Ethel Howley, SSND**

**“Come to me, all who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest.”**

**This was the prayer of Jesus when he preached in the home towns of his disciples. It is our prayer for today’s children caught in industries that use child labor throughout our planet.**

**We ask, You Jesus to bless the very young children working in the mines – coal, diamond, and gold mines. The profits from their labor stay largely in corporate and government hands. We pray too for the corporate executives and the government leaders that their hearts will be moved to initiate new policies beneficial to families in mining villages.**

**May the Triune God be with world leaders as they create a *World Fit for Children* (UN document adopted in 2002). We plead with our leaders to provide all children with the best possible start in life, access to quality education, and ample opportunity to develop their individual capacities in a safe and supportive environment. We pray for the children working in the cotton industry to make our clothes, in agriculture to bring us fresh produce, and also those children making bricks for buildings in their own impoverished country.**

**We ask you to bring them peace and contentment,  
and education, rather than such hard labor.**

**With the Psalmist we meditate, “Children are a gift from God; they are a real blessing.” Then I remember the children who beg in the streets of developing countries, shine shoes on street corners, and collect discarded objects from garbage heaps to sell, in order to pay for food.**

**God, our Father and Mother,  
give them their daily bread.**

**As we listen to world news each evening, we see violence, war, natural disasters, and migration, which often lead to human trafficking – even trafficking of children. Jesus, you once said, “Let the children come to me and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”**

**Children gathered at the United Nations a few years ago wrote, “We are the children of the world, and despite our different backgrounds, we share a common reality. We are united by our struggle to make the world a better place for all. You call us the future, but we are also the present.”**

**We beg you Holy Spirit to fill their hearts  
with the wonder of your presence.**