

The Catholic saint, Augustine, said this:

"Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage.
Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are."

In that spirit of hope, let us pause today to remember those who have not survived the violence inflicted on them.

Let us take a moment to name them in our hearts.

We also remember today the leaders of our movements who have passed from this earth but on whose shoulders we stand

And let us name them in our hearts.

We also remember every woman who is in hiding today to get away from violence and abuse; strengthen and sustain her.

And we remember every woman who is sitting in prison, who defended herself from sexual and domestic violence; strengthen and sustain her.

We give thanks for this day and for the opportunity to join our voices in unity of purpose
We give thanks for all who work every day to set women and children free from violence
We give thanks for every survivor who has found her way out of violence and is on a path of healing
We give thanks for young leaders emerging among us who bring fresh eyes and new energy to our work

Spirit of all that is Sacred
Whom we know by many names
You have called upon us to change the world
Send us the means to do this work

Remind us of our common purpose,
even when we struggle with each other

And strengthen our resolve: to be the voice of the voiceless — to speak truth to power

Remind us daily of our vision—of a day when violence against women is a rare occurrence.

And we ask only that the spirit that calls us to peace and justice, healing and wholeness
Be with us in the year ahead to face new challenges.

Sustain our anger and our courage, the sources of our hope.

And when our work is done, grant us peace and rest.

Amen.