February is Human Trafficking Month

How Your Parish Respect Life Ministry Can Raise Awareness of this Heinous Crime

- **Host or attend a prayer service** on February 8th or other date in February — Catholics across the world are encouraged to attend prayer services this month. February 8 is the Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhita who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery. Once freed, she became a nun and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery.

- **Recognize February 8th** in your parish bulletin and with flyers in your church — The International Day of Prayer and Awareness of Human Trafficking. Distribute prayer cards of St. Josephine Bakhita, Patron Saint of victims of human trafficking, to your parishioners.

- **Join others February 9-17 across the Archdiocese in praying a Novena to end human trafficking.** — Visit https://nolacatholic.org/novena-to-end-human-trafficking. “Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of those who have suffered through this affront to human dignity, but also comfort, strengthen, and help empower survivors.”

- **Perform Corporal Works of Mercy** — Help Baptist Friendship House and other community centers by hosting a donation drive of needed items for victims of human trafficking and homeless. Call BFH for the specific items wanted 504-949-4469.

- **Educate your parish on how to help stop human trafficking. Become a SHEPHERD** — Stop Human Trafficking and Exploitation. Protect, Help, Empower, and Restore Dignity which serves to educate lay and religious leaders about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective, equipping them with knowledge and skills to combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation at the local level. Visit brycs.org/become-a-shepherd/

- **Don’t Post—Pray! Go silent on social media!** — Choose a day in February when the social media accounts of your parish, school, ministry, and church members will go silent for viewing and posting to be “in solidarity with those who are silenced”. Human traffickers use social media to exploit and sell people, while buyers use social media to purchase victims. So as a sacrifice, let’s fast for a 24-hour period from 12 midnight to 11:59pm the next day from all social media.