



January 31 - Feb 8
St Josephine Bakhita
Feast Day: February 8th

*“Be good, love the Lord, pray for those who do not know Him.
What a great grace it is to know God!”* St. Josephine Bakhita

FIRST DAY:

Dear St Josephine, you were taken from your family at an early age and lost your entire identity. We pray for all those children who have been abducted and for their parents and families who suffer not knowing what has become of them. May they be comforted, and may they one day be reunited. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

SECOND DAY:

Dear St Josephine, you knew what it was to be a slave, to have no rights, to have lost even your name. We pray for the victims of people traffickers and all those in any kind of slavery. May this evil be wiped out from our world. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

THIRD DAY:

Dear St Josephine, one of your ‘owners’ had your whole body scarred. You knew this terrible pain. We pray for all victims of torture. Help them to heal in body, mind and spirit. May all governments abandon this practice. We pray especially for (add your intention). Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

FOURTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, even in the terrible suffering of your life, you saw beauty in the world and believed there must be God because of that beauty. May we too have something of your love for beauty and the natural world. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

FIFTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, when the family which had rescued you wanted you to leave the Canossians, you had the courage to refuse, even though you were truly grateful to them. Help us to put God’s will above all things, even above our natural affections. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

SIXTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, you were so grateful to know God and to be part of his Church that you often kissed the baptismal font. May we never take for granted the faith we have been offered and give us something of your humility and gratitude for all God does. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

SEVENTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, your sufferings gave you a great compassion for others and you were constantly smiling and always open to those who came to you, no matter how inconvenient it was. St Josephine, may we have something of your sweetness and openness, something of your joy. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

EIGHTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, in your last painful illness you relived your slavery, begging the nurse to loosen your chains. We pray for all those who are weighed down by pain, and we ask that we too may enter the sufferings of our lives in faith and knowledge that God has not abandoned us. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

NINTH DAY:

Dear St Josephine, your last words were “Our Lady, Our Lady”. May we too know the comfort of the Mother of God, now and at the hour of our death. We pray especially for (add your intention).

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.

International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking and St. Josephine Bakhita

St. Josephine Bakhita was born in southern Sudan in 1869. As a young girl, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. Captors sold and resold her in the markets of El Obeid and Karthoum, and treated her brutally. She did not remember her name given by her parents. Bakhita was the name given to her by her kidnappers. It means means “fortunate one.”

In 1883, Bakhita was bought by an Italian diplomat. He sent her to Italy to work as a maid to a friend’s daughter who was studying with the Canossian Daughters of Charity. There, Bakhita came to know about God whom “she had experienced in her heart without knowing” who God was. When she was baptized in 1890 she received the name Josephine.

Later, the Italian family came to take their “property” back to Africa. When the family insisted she go, Josephine remained firm in expressing her desire to stay. She later wrote: “I am sure the Lord gave me strength at that moment.” With the support of the superior of the Canossian Sisters and the Cardinal of Venice, she won her freedom and later entered the novitiate. For the next 50 years she lived a life of prayer and service as a Canossian Sister. She died in 1947.

The Vatican has designated **February 8, her feast day, as International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking**. On this day, Catholics all over the world pray to create greater awareness about human trafficking and its victims.

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

(USCSAHT) share these stories from survivors of human trafficking. They should inspire all of us to pray for strength for enslaved people, as we work to abolish human trafficking around the world.