

PRAYER FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING



ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

Feast Day 8th February

O God, who led
Saint Josephine Bakhita
from abject slavery
to the dignity
of being your daughter
and a bride of Christ,
grant, we pray,
that by her example
we may show constant love
for the Lord Jesus crucified,
remaining steadfast
in charity and prompt
to show compassion.
Through Christ our Lord.

St Josephine Bakhita: *Pray for us*

The Bishops of England and Wales
designate the Feast of
St Josephine Bakhita – 8th February
- as a Day of Prayer for Victims of
Trafficking and those who
work to combat it.

If you need help or know of
somebody who does - you can call
the 24 hour Metropolitan Police

Freephone: 0800 783 2589

www.catholicnews.org.uk

ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA



Born: 1869 Darfur, Sudan
Died: 8 February 1947 Italy

Josephine Bakhita, who was born in 1869 in Darfur, Sudan. When she was seven, she was kidnapped by Arab slave traders and over the next eight years was re-sold five times. She was so traumatised by the brutality of her captors, she could not remember her birth name. Her kidnappers gave her the name "Bakhita" - which means 'Fortunate'.

Her final owner, the Italian Consul brought her to Italy to be a nanny for his daughter. When the family had to go away on business, they left Bakhita and the child in the care of the Canossian Sisters of the institute of Catechumens in Venice. It was there she came to know and experience God's love.

In 1890 Bakhita asked to be baptised and received the name Josephine. When the family returned to reclaim their daughter and Bakhita, Josephine resisted and her case went to court which upheld her freedom, since slavery was not recognised in Italian law.

In 1896 she took her vows as a Canossian Sister and for the next fifty years she led a life of simplicity, prayer and service (especially as the doorkeeper in the convent) always showing kindness to everyone especially the children in the street.

In her final years she suffered from sickness and the haunting memories of the flogging and beatings she received whilst in slavery. Josephine Bakhita died in 1947 and in 2000 she was canonised - the first Sudanese ever to be proclaimed a saint.

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