



8 FEBRUARY 2018

BAKHITA DAY

Feast Day of St Josephine Bakhita

: resources

For dioceses, parishes, schools,
small groups and individuals



ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA DAY

8 February 2018

Thursday 8 February is the Feast Day of St Josephine Bakhita - the patron saint of victims of modern slavery and human trafficking. On this day Catholics are encouraged to pray for all those affected by the crimes of modern slavery and human trafficking, and the people that volunteer and work to eradicate this crime.

The Santa Marta Group is an initiative of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Its mission is to bring together the global Church and law enforcement to combat and eradicate modern slavery.

: MODERN SLAVERY BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

There are an estimated 40 million victims of modern slavery worldwide. Modern slavery now ranks as the second most profitable worldwide criminal enterprise. It is a serious crime that exploits people for little or no pay. This exploitation can take many forms including; forced labour, sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, forced criminality and organ harvesting.

It is believed that modern slavery affects every country in the world and here in the UK there are an estimated 13,000 victims hidden in plain sight.

The eradication of modern slavery and the pastoral care of victims is a priority for the Catholic Church. Pope Francis continually draws the attention of the Church and the wider world to the moral and human crisis evident in this widespread exploitation.

"I have stated several times that these new forms of slavery - human trafficking, forced labour, prostitution, organ trade - are very serious crimes, a wound on the body of contemporary humanity. The whole of society is called to grow in this awareness, especially with regard to national and international legislation, in order to prosecute the traffickers and redirect their unjust gains to the rehabilitation of victims."

*Pope Francis to Participants in the Plenary Session, Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences
Saturday, 18 April 2015*



Santa Marta Group
CHURCH AND LAW ENFORCEMENT COMBATting MODERN SLAVERY



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: PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

You may want to use these bidding prayers in addition to your usual intentions.

For Pope Francis, that God may grant him wisdom as he calls all people to unite against the scourge of modern slavery.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

For Church leaders across the world, that they continue to be at the forefront in the fight against modern slavery.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

For all Catholics, that God inspires them to take action to support and care for survivors of modern slavery in their communities.

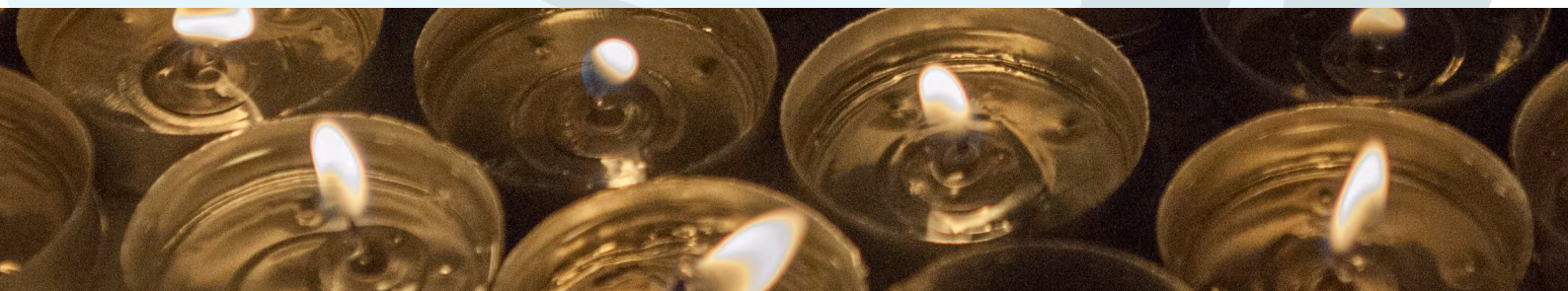
Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

For those trapped in slavery, that their perpetrators be brought to justice and that their dignity as human beings is respected.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

For survivors of modern slavery, that they might find the support and care they need to start a new life.

Lord in your mercy, Hear our prayer.



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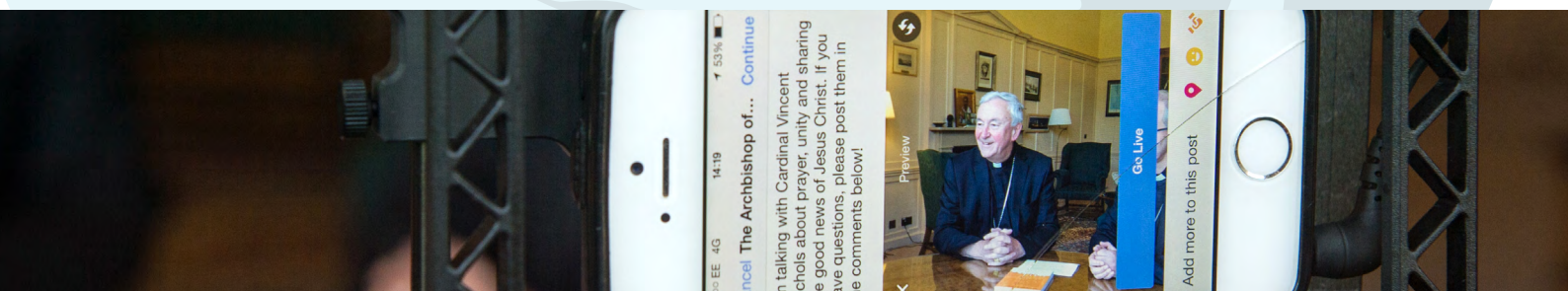
: SOCIAL MEDIA RESOURCES

Leading up to the Feast Day

- Latest figures reveal more than 40 million people are living in #modernslavery #BakhitaDay
- We should all be aware of the hidden crimes of #modernslavery #BakhitaDay
- How can you help a victim of #modernslavery? First #spotthesigns #BakhitaDay
- Pope Francis described #modernslavery as 'an open wound on the body of Christ' #BakhitaDay
- The Church is committed to fighting #modernslavery on a global level, learn more here www.santamartagroup.com

On the Feast Day

- On #BakhitaDay we pray for survivors of #humantrafficking and #modernslavery
- Today is the feast day of St Josephine Bakhita, a survivor of kidnapping and slavery #Bakhita Day
- At least 13,000 people are living in #modernslavery in the UK today #BakhitaDay
- On #BakhitaDay we thank all those that work to eradicate #modernslavery
- Today is the feast of St Josephine Bakhita, learn more here www.santamartagroup.com/santa-marta



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: ABOUT ST JOSEPHINE

St Josephine Bakhita, also known as 'Mother Moretta' (our Black Mother) bore 144 physical scars throughout her life which were received after she was kidnapped at the age of nine and sold into slavery. Such was the trauma experienced that she forgot her birth name and her kidnappers gave her the name Bakhita meaning 'fortunate'. She experienced the moral and physical humiliations associated with slavery.

In 1882 her suffering was alleviated after she was bought for the Italian Consul. In this family and subsequently in a second Italian home, she received from her masters, kindness, respect, peace and joy.

A change in her owner's circumstances meant that she was entrusted to the Canossian Sisters of the Institute of the Catechumens in Venice. It was there that Bakhita came to know about God whom, 'she had experienced in her heart without knowing who He was' since she was a child. She was received into the Catholic Church in 1890, joining the sisters and making final profession in 1896.

The next fifty years of her life were spent witnessing to God's love through cooking, sewing, embroidery and attending to the door. When she was on door duty, she would gently lay her hands on the heads of the children who attended the nearby school and caress them. Her voice was pleasing to the little ones, comforting to the poor and suffering. She was a source of encouragement to many and her constant smile won people's hearts. Surrounded by the sisters, she died on 8 February 1947.

For more visit: www.santamartagroup.com/santa-marta



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: HELPING TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING

If you suspect that someone is in danger, please call **999** - it's best to keep it simple.

If you need advice about reporting something that may help a victim of modern slavery, please call the modern slavery helpline on: **0800 0121 700**.

For more information on human trafficking visit www.santamartagroup.com.

To learn more about the work of the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, visit: www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk.

: SPOTTING THE SIGNS

- Fearful of police/authorities
- Fearful of the trafficker, believing their life or the lives of family members are at risk if they escape
- Show signs of physical and psychological trauma e.g. anxiety, lack of memory of recent events, bruising, untreated conditions
- Anxious about telling others of their situation
- Be unaware they have been trafficked and believe they are simply in a bad job
- Have limited freedom of movement
- Look malnourished or unkempt
- Be unpaid or paid very little
- Have limited access to medical care
- Seem to be in debt to someone
- Have no passport or mention that someone else is holding their passport



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