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# St. Josephine Bakhita

*Feast Day: February 8*



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**BORN: DARFUR,  
SUDAN 1869**  
**DIED: FEBRUARY 8,  
1947 IN SCHIO, ITALY**

## Catholic Social

### Teaching principles:

- **Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**
- **Preferential Option for the Poor**

February 8 is the “International Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking,” first initiated by Pope Francis in 2015. February 8 is also the memorial of Saint Josephine Bakhita, a patron saint of trafficking victims.

A native of Darfur, Sudan, she was kidnapped by slave traders at age 9 and suffered for many years as a horrifically abused slave in Sudan and Italy. Bakhita was not the name she received from her parents at birth. The fright and the terrible experiences she went through made her forget the name she was given by her parents. Bakhita, which means “fortunate”, was the name given to her by her kidnapers.

She learned from Canossian nuns that she was created in the image of God and possessed human dignity. Once she asserted herself and refused to be enslaved, Josephine became a Canossian sister and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. She died in 1947 and was declared a saint in 2000.

## Pray

Living God, you freed the people of Israel from cruel slavery in Egypt and led them to a promised land "flowing with milk and honey." We ask you to liberate today all the children, women, and men who are enslaved by the cruel yoke of human trafficking in our nation, and around the world. God of liberation, we pray for all your children who are enslaved by human trafficking. Free them from their bondage, heal them of their wounds, protect them from further harm, turn the hearts of their oppressors, and sustain them with hope for a new beginning in safety and peace. Amen.

-Catholic Charities USA "Prayer for Victims of Human Trafficking"



## Learn

### Watch:

St. Josephine Bakhita: A Saint for Victims of Human Trafficking :One-Minute Saints- just scan the QR code to the right with your smartphone's camera.



### Browse:

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis -Catholic Charities is part of the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking. Learn more about this work at [archindy.org/trafficking](http://archindy.org/trafficking)

## Act

- Raise awareness about sexual exploitation and human trafficking in your parish, school, or community by scheduling a presentation from the ArchIndy Anti-Trafficking program. Contact Theresa Chamblee at [tchamblee@archindy.org](mailto:tchamblee@archindy.org) for more information or to schedule.
- Lent is quickly approaching! Work with your parish to plan a time during Lent to pray the Stations of the Cross with St. Josephine Bakhita for victims of human trafficking. A guide can be found at <https://bit.ly/BakhitaStations>

