



**NOVENA TO END HUMAN TRAFFICING
AND
CONSECRATION OF THE UNITED STATES
TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY
August 7 – 15**

ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA – PATRON SAINT OF TRAFFICING SURVIVORS

St. Josephine Bakhita was born around 1869 in the village of Olgossa (the Darfur region of Sudan). She was a member of the Daju people, and her uncle was a tribal chief.

Historians believe Josephine was kidnapped by Arab slave traders in February 1877. She was forced to walk barefoot over 600 miles to a slave market in El Obeid. She was bought and sold for 12 years. She was eventually sold to a family who had dealings in Sudan. Her mistress decided to travel to Sudan without Josephine and placed her in the custody of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. The sisters taught her about God and was discerned to follow Christ. When the mistress returned, Josephine refused to leave. The case went to court, and the court found that slavery had been outlawed in Sudan before Josephine was born, so she could not be lawfully made slave. She was declared free.

NOVENA

We begin our novena to St. Josephine Bakhita on **August 7th**. We invoke her intercession for all those involved in human trafficking and for an end to this societal ill.

Throughout these nine days, we will learn about human trafficking, share her inspiring words, and offer prayer for a particular intention, concluding with praying the Rosary. A theme will be provided for each day.

The Novena will conclude on **August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption**, in which we will consecrate the United States to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Day One – God’s Love

Human trafficking is the most lucrative form of illicit business, ranking among the top three of profitable forms (weapons, drugs, human sales).

“The Lord has loved me so much, we must love everyone...we must be compassionate.”

Intention: That God may open our eyes to the evil of modern-day slavery among us, move our hearts with compassion, and give us the voice to speak out and achieve justice for all those who are trafficked.

In the name of the Father...

St. Josephine Bakhita, you were sold into slavery as a child and endured unspeakable hardship and suffering. Once liberated from your physical enslavement, you found true redemption in your encounter with Christ and His Church.

O, St. Bakhita, assist all those who are entrapped in slavery.

Intercede on their behalf with the God of Mercy so the

chains of their captivity will be broken.

May God Himself free all those who have been threatened, wounded, and mistreated by the trade and trafficking of human beings. Bring comfort to survivors and help them see Jesus as a source of hope and faith, so that they might find healing from their wounds.

We ask you to pray for us and to intercede on behalf of us all, that we may not fall into indifference, that we may open our eyes and be able to see the misery and wounds of our many brothers and sisters deprived of their dignity and their freedom, and may we respond to their cry for help.

Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Two – Protection

Sex trafficking occurs in all 50 states; there are an estimated 4.5 million victims of sex trafficking per year in the United States, of which 20% are children; the average age of a teen entering the sex industry is 12-14.

“I was stuck in the mud but thank God, I was never

sullied. Through the mercy of God, I was preserved. Our Lady protected me, even before I could know her.”

Intention: That every means (parental supervision, online safety, service agencies, legislation, and education) may be taken to protect children and adults from exploitation in trafficking.

In the name of the Father...
God of Light,
we pray for all of the people – men, women and children hidden in the darkness of slavery.

Help us shine Your light into the homes, streets, factories, and brothels in our own neighborhoods and around the world where people are enslaved.

The darkness is as light to You, O Lord.

No person in any corner of the world is hidden from Your sight,
Help us see the light.
Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Three – God With Us

In 2018 the CT DCF Human Trafficking Team (HART) received 210 referrals for minor sex-trafficking; 27 were male and 133 were minors

living at home with a parent or guardian during their exploitation.

Love 146, an anti-trafficking agency located in New Haven, CT, provides prevention education and care for at-risk minors and underage victims and survivors.

“The Lord has always been good to me my whole life, The Lord has always watched over me. My entire life has been a gift of God. And He loves all of you. Love Him in return, and do not offend Him by sinning.”

Intention: That all bodies of authority in society (churches, legislators, law enforcement officials, medical professionals and educators) may address the symptoms of systemic trafficking and bring about its end.

In the name of the Father...
Heavenly Father,
Your Son, Jesus Christ, through His suffering and death on the cross gave Himself as a gift of love for the reconciliation and salvation of all peoples. He continues to express this love by giving us St. Josephine Bakhita. She, too, offered herself through her

suffering in slavery.
We humbly pray that
through her intercession You
may save our brothers and
sisters from slavery and
persecution.
May she obtain for the whole
world the gift of justice and
peace.
We ask this through Christ,
our Lord.
Amen.
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Four – Forbearance

Between 2016 and 2018, over 200 children were referred to Social Services in CT for human trafficking; 70% were recruited online. However, according to Polaris Project, 20% of victims use social media (such as vanishing messaging on Snapchat and Instagram) to escape their traffickers.

“With God in our heart, we can bear all things.”

Intention: That all victims and survivors burdened by despair may be filled with hope and place their trust in God and in the support of others working to free them and give them life.

In the name of the Father...
All of you who are refugees.

oppressed. exhausted, and
without a roof
-you are Bakhita!
All of you who are victims of
injustice and exploitation,
victims of discrimination and
persecution,
-you are Bakhita!
Let God's love and
tenderness embrace you.

“Join with me in prayer to
the Lord
who has freed me from every
chain.
My name is *Lucky*-Bakhita.
Join with me in prayer to the
Lord.”
Bakhita, daughter of Africa,
we give thanks for your life
that shines like a bright star
and shows the way for all.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Five – Hope

Cognitive development in young people is halted or seriously slowed due to victimization during trafficking; the brain is rewired as a survival mechanism, and the victim experiences difficulties with trust and developing healthy relationships; their physical, emotional, and spiritual health is greatly impacted.

“If in this life we do not have hope, what will we ever accomplish?”

Intention: That victims and survivors of human trafficking may be filled with hope in the knowledge of God’s boundless love and abiding presence through the prayers and efforts of people committed to ending trafficking.

In the name of the Father...

O, God, Father of mercy, You have given us St. Josephine Bakhita, as a “universal sister,” an evangelical model of humble faith and ardent charity.

Grant to us the will to believe and to love in the spirit of the Gospel, and listen favorably to the prayers of those who ask for her intercession. Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Six – Intercession

In 2020 there were 63 million girls and 97 million boys involved in child labor (about 1 in 10 worldwide); one in three of those children did not attend school at all.

“If the Lord allows, I will send so many graces from

paradise for the salvation of souls...Now my mission is this: to help everyone by way of prayer.”

Intention: For our Holy Mother Church, that she may increase her awareness of and response to the reality of human trafficking, and that Christ, Savior of the world, may bless with success every effort made in His Name to end this form of slavery.

In the name of the Father...

O God, we didn't see them. But you did.

The hundreds and thousands of human beings trafficked each year to join the millions who are trapped in modern-day slavery.

You see them all, God of the poor.

You hear their cry and you answer by opening our eyes, and breaking our hearts and loosening our tongues to insist:

No mas! No more!

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Seven – Humility

Amirah Inc. provides education, outreach, and transitional rehabilitation in safe houses in Massachusetts and Connecticut. Adult survivors of sex-trafficking

receive comprehensive services as they seek to break free from exploitation and heal in community on their journey toward new life.

“When I am with Him wherever He wants me to be, I feel so good inside and out: He is the Master, and I am His poor little creature.”

Intention: That God may bless anti-trafficking service providers and their associates and bring about healing through them, as they build loving, trusting relationships with survivors and accompany them in the transformation of their lives.

In the name of the Father...
God of goodness and mercy, rewarder of the humble, you blessed St. Josephine Bakhita of Sudan with charity and patience. May her prayers help us and her example inspire us to carry our cross and to love You always.
Pour upon us the spirit of wisdom and love with which You filled St. Josephine Bakhita.
By serving you as she did, may we please you by our faith and our actions.

Grant this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, walk with us as we walk closer to Your Son, Jesus.

St. Josephine Bakhita, pray for us.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Eight - Trust

The Underground New England, a grassroots, faith-based organization, works to transform and heal the culture of sexual exploitation in Connecticut and to see a God-shift in a way that compels change through prayer, increased awareness, and training of individuals to serve in ministry to vulnerable and/or exploited children and adults.

“In God's will, there is great peace.”

Intention: That survivors of human trafficking may receive restorative, loving care as they heal, are strengthened by hope, and move towards reclaiming their God-given dignity.

In the name of the Father...

Heavenly Father,
through the intercession of
St. Bakhita, grant us a great
trust in You who are our rock
and refuge, and that in every
circumstance of life, we may
abandon ourselves to You
like little children in the arms
of the Father.

We pray through Christ, our
Lord.

Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Day Nine – Forgiveness

*In 2021, policy
recommendations by the
Connecticut Trafficking In
Persons Council (TIP) became
law (H.B. No. 6657). This new
law enables survivors of child
trafficking to seek to expunge
their records of any
convictions stemming from
acts carried out while they
were being trafficked.*

“If I were to meet the slave
traders who kidnapped me
and even those who tortured
me, I would kneel and kiss
their hands for if that did not
happen, I would not be a
Christian today.”

Intention: That God may
break the chain of sin which
holds perpetrators of

trafficking captive and
bestow on them the amazing
grace of His love and
forgiveness.

In the name of the Father...

O, God,
help us fight against all
forms of slavery. Together
with St. Bakhita, we ask You
to put an end to human
trafficking.

Touch the hearts of those
responsible for this serious
crime and support our
commitment to freedom,
Your gift for all Your sons
and daughters.

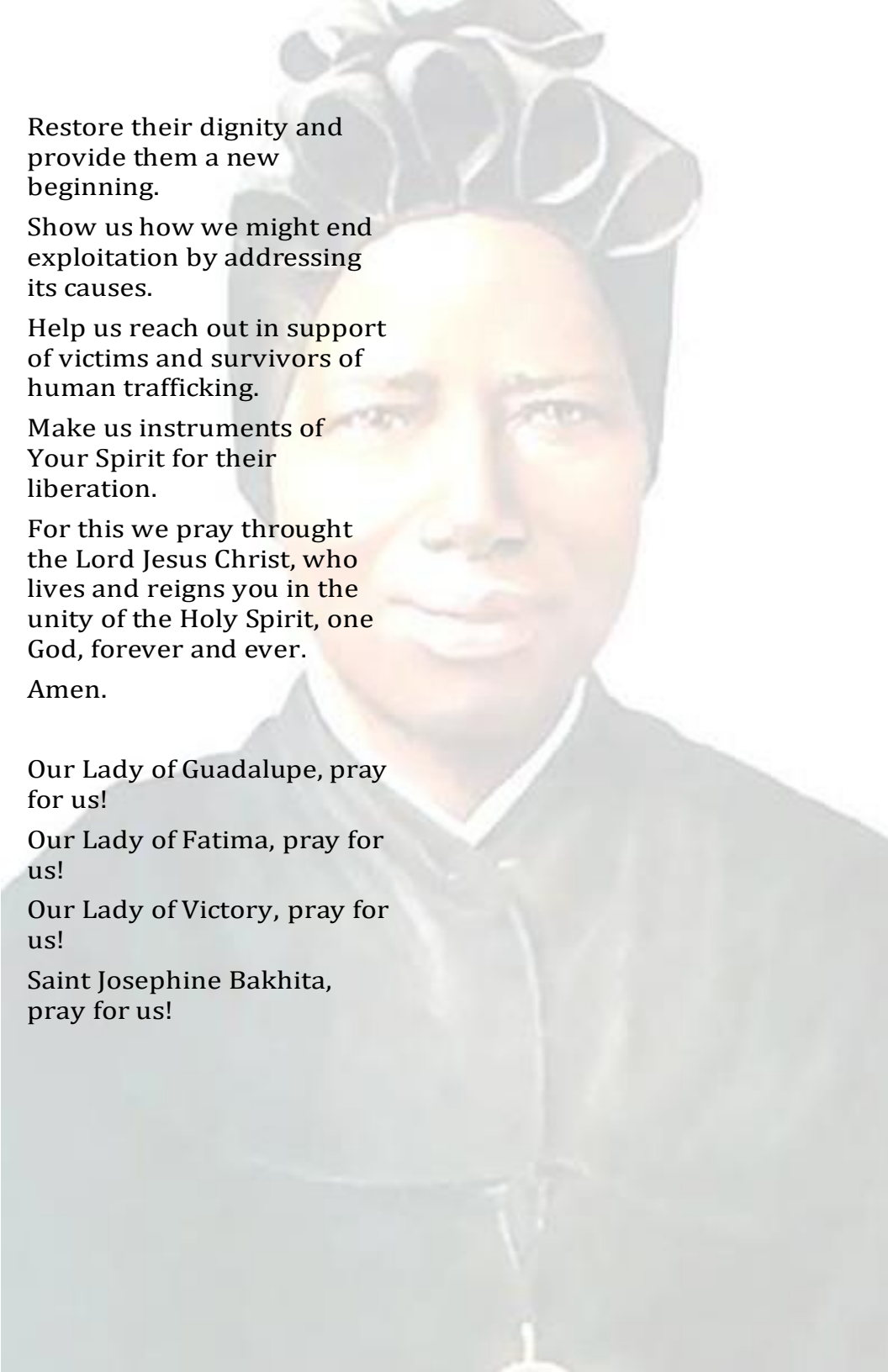
Give us the grace to live the
words Jesus gave us as He
died on the cross, “Father,
forgive them; for they know
not what they do.” (Lk 23:34)
Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...

Concluding Prayer:

Loving Father,
We seek Your Divine
protection for all who are
exploited and enslaved. For
those forced into labor,
trafficked into sexual
slavery, and denied
freedom.

We beseech You to release
them from their chains.
Grant them protection,
safety and empowerment.



Restore their dignity and
provide them a new
beginning.

Show us how we might end
exploitation by addressing
its causes.

Help us reach out in support
of victims and survivors of
human trafficking.

Make us instruments of
Your Spirit for their
liberation.

For this we pray through
the Lord Jesus Christ, who
lives and reigns you in the
unity of the Holy Spirit, one
God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray
for us!

Our Lady of Fatima, pray for
us!

Our Lady of Victory, pray for
us!

Saint Josephine Bakhita,
pray for us!

Thank you for praying with us. To learn more ways to participate in the mission to end human trafficking, visit the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry resource page at <http://www.catholicsocialjustice.org/human-trafficking.html> or call 860-242-5573