



St. Josephine
Bakhita
1868-1947
The Lord has loved
me so much: we must
love everyone ... we
must be
compassionate!

Feast Day: February 8 **Patron:** Sudan & Victims of Human Trafficking

Born in Olgossa in 1868, in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, Josephine was kidnapped at the age of 7, sold into slavery and given the name Bakhita, which means fortunate. She was resold several times, finally in 1883 to Callisto Legnani, Italian consul in Khartoum, Sudan.

Two years later, he took Josephine to Italy and gave her to his friend Augusto Michieli. Bakhita became babysitter to Mimmina Michieli, whom she accompanied to Venice's Institute of the Catechumens, run by the Canossian Sisters. While Mimmina was being instructed, Josephine felt drawn to the Catholic Church. She was baptized and confirmed in 1890, taking the name Josephine.

When the Michielis returned from Africa and wanted to take Mimmina and Josephine back with them, the future saint refused to go. During the ensuing court case, the Canossian Sisters and the patriarch of Venice intervened on Josephine's behalf. The judge concluded that since slavery was illegal in Italy, she had actually been free since 1885.

Bakhita remained in the catechumenate where she experienced the call to be a religious, and to give herself to the Lord in the Institute of St. Magdalene of Canossa. Josephine entered the Institute in 1893 and on December 8, 1896 Josephine Bakhita was consecrated forever to God whom she called with the sweet expression "the Master!" In 1902, she was transferred to the city of Schio (northeast of Verona), where she assisted her religious community through cooking, sewing, embroidery, and welcoming visitors at the door. She soon became well loved by the children attending the sisters' school and the local citizens. When she was on duty at the door, she would gently lay her hands on the heads of the children who daily attended the Canossian schools and caress them.



Her amiable voice, which had the inflection and rhythm of the music of her country, was pleasing to the little ones, comforting to the poor and suffering and encouraging for those who knocked at the door of the Institute.

She once said, "Be good, love the Lord, pray for those who do not know Him. What a great grace it is to know God!"

For another 50 years, this humble Daughter of Charity, a true witness of the love of God, lived in the community in Schio. Her humility, her simplicity and her constant smile won the hearts of all the citizens. Her sisters in the community esteemed her for her inalterable sweet nature, her exquisite goodness and her deep desire to make the Lord known.



As she grew older she experienced long, painful years of sickness. Mother Bakhita continued to witness to faith, goodness and Christian hope. To those who visited her and asked how she was, she would respond with a smile: "As the Master desires."

During her agony, she re-lived the terrible days of her slavery and more than once she begged the nurse who assisted her: "Please, loosen the

chains... they are heavy!"

And yet, she is also quoted as saying "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 and Religious today." It was Mary Most Holy who freed her from all pain. Her last words were: "Our Lady! Our Lady!", and her final smile testified to her encounter with the Mother of the Lord.

Mother Bakhita breathed her last on February 8, 1947 at the Canossian Convent, Schio, surrounded by the Sisters. A crowd quickly gathered at the Convent to have a last look at their «Mother Moretta» and to ask for her protection from heaven. The fame of her sanctity has spread to all the continents and many are those who receive graces through her intercession.

The first steps toward her beatification began in 1959. She was beatified in 1992 and canonized eight years later in 2000.

https://www.piercedhearts.org/theology/heart/life_saints/josephine_bakhita.html

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/saint-josephine-bakhita>

**CHAPLET IN HONOR OF
SAINT BAKHITA**

by Dr. Lawrence Goodall
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On the Medal: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

St. Josephine Bakhita, you were sold into slavery as a child and endured untold hardships and suffering. Once liberated from your physical enslavement, you found true redemption in your encounter with Christ and His Church. Oh Saint Bakita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery; intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity. Those whom man enslaves, let God set free. Provide comfort to survivors of slavery and let them look to you as an example of hope and faith. Help all survivors find healing from their wounds. We ask for your prayers and intercessions for those enslaved among us. Amen

Our Father . . . Hail Mary . . .

“By His wounds, you have been healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“He shall bring forth justice to the nations, not crying out, not shouting, not making His voice heard in the street. A bruised reed He shall not break, and a smoldering wick He shall not quench.” (Isaiah 42:2-3)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“The sufferings of this present time cannot be compared with the glory to be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all things give thanks.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“All the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.” (Isaiah 52:10)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“We carry with us in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may always be seen in our body.” (2 Corinthians 4:10)
Glory be to the Father . . .

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace . . .” (Galatians 5:22)
Glory be to the Father . . .

On the Crucifix: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the life and intercession of Saint Bakhita. Through her prayers, may we receive all the graces of healing in mind, body, and spirit that you give us through our Lord Jesus Christ. May she teach us to trust in Your provident love, and to grow in the virtues of charity, patience, and kindness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Saint Bakhita, pray for us!

https://www.piercedhearts.org/treasures/devotions/chaplets/chaplet_bakhita.html



St. Josephine Bakhita Stained Glass in Saint John Paul II Chapel in Mundelein, Illinois

