

Concluding Prayer:

Let us pray:

We thank You, God for the gift of St. Josephine Bakhita, for her witness of forgiveness, humility, and love.

We ask her intercession for all the women, men and children held in trafficking situations, that their freedom be restored. May the grace that transformed her life be present in our world today so that those who have been objectified may be seen and loved as human persons with God-given dignity.

With gratitude, we ask her intercession for all those who have participated in this novena that hearts may be open to Your Spirit's inspiration and courage.

May we all act for justice and grow in our concern for others that we may live in communion as brothers and sisters.

Amen.

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>

The National Human Trafficking Hotline **(888-373-7888)** is confidential and serves victims, survivors and the anti-trafficking community **24/7**. Call to report tips, seek services, ask help, or receive information and statistics related to human trafficking.

Novena to St. Josephine Bakhita to end Human Trafficking



*Human Trafficking Task Force
Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry
Archdiocese of Hartford*

We begin our novena to St. Josephine Bakhita whose feast day is February 8. She is the patroness of survivors of human trafficking and 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 an *Our Father*, *Hail Mary*, and a *Glory Be*. A theme will be provided for each day.

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.”

– St. Bakhita

Intention: That God may open our eyes to the evil of human trafficking among us, move our hearts with compassion, and give us courage to be the voice for our sisters and brothers exploited in trafficking.

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...

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

Human traffickers’ use of cybertechnology increasingly poses a threat to vulnerable youth unaware of the global dissemination of any personal information posted about themselves.

“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.”

– St. Bakhita

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...

and comprehensive transitional rehabilitation in safe houses for survivors of sex-trafficking.

“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.”
– St. Bakhita

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 grass roots, faith-based organization, aims to bring about a God-shift in the culture of sexual exploitation through church communities and anti-trafficking groups committed to raising awareness of human trafficking and assisting victims and survivors.

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

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.

Day Two – Protection

An estimated 4.5 million people per year worldwide are victims of sex-trafficking, of which 20% are children at the average age of 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.”
– St. Bakhita

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

Love 146, an international anti-trafficking agency [New Haven, CT] provides prevention education, and care for at-risk minors and underage victims.

“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.”
– St. Bakhita

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 help 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

Polaris Project, founded in 2002, serves victims and survivors of human trafficking and the anti-trafficking community through the National Human Trafficking Hotline and develops system-level strategies to disrupt and prevent human trafficking.

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

– St. Bakhita

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

and restore their God-given right to 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

Trauma incurred by children when trafficked severely impacts the cognitive development of the victim's brain, causing it to be rewired as a survival mechanism and impairing its ability to develop trust and form healthy relationships.

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

– St. Bakhita

Intention: That victims and survivors of human trafficking may know 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

Naugatuck Valley Project, a regional organization of religious congregations, local labor unions, and housing cooperatives, partners with the CT Domestic Worker Campaign in advocating for the rights of domestic workers at-risk of being trafficked.

“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.”

– St. Bakhita

Intention: That Christ and Mary, His Mother, may guide and strengthen Holy Mother Church in her mission to shed Light in the darkness of the world, and set free all who are ensnared in human trafficking.

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., a regional anti-trafficking organization, provides education, outreach