

# Reflection & Prayer to End Human Trafficking

January 11 – February 8, 2021



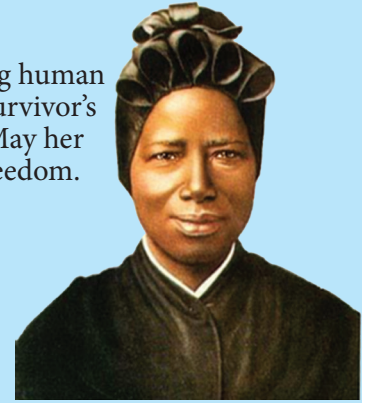
St. Josephine Bakhita was born in southern Sudan in 1869. As a young girl, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She was treated brutally by her captors as she was sold and resold. She did not remember her name; Bakhita, which means “fortunate one,” was the name given to her by her kidnappers.

## Daily Prayer

God of hope and peace, touch our hearts and energize our ongoing efforts in abolishing human trafficking, a heinous crime against humanity, so that every victim is freed and every survivor’s life renewed. You blessed St. Josephine Bakhita of Sudan with compassion for others. May her prayers comfort and strengthen the women, men, and children who are in search of freedom.

(Say appropriate daily prayer below)

We ask for transformation of heart for those who inflict pain, anguish and grief on our vulnerable sisters and brothers. Give us generosity to stand in solidarity with others so that together we heal the hearts and lives of all Your people. *Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever and ever. Amen.*



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|---|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Jan. 11</b> Nat’l Human Trafficking Awareness Day<br>We pray for the 40 million victims of labor and sex trafficking around the world. |   | <b>12</b> We pray for those who provide trafficking survivors services and support amid the COVID-19 pandemic.                       | <b>13</b> We pray for trafficking victims trapped in exploitative labor or sex situations dealing with life and death situations.         | <b>14</b> We pray for day laborers who are hired to work, then are denied their day’s pay and threatened when they complain.           |
| <b>15</b> We pray for healthcare providers, educators, advocates, and others who identify and support survivors.                          | <b>16</b> We pray for women and children trapped in India’s commercial sex industry forced to endure ongoing abuse.             | <b>17</b> We pray for victims working in dangerous conditions and living in inhumane situations provided by their employers.         | <b>18</b> We pray for the young woman who is excited about a job offer that appears too good to be true.                                  | <b>19</b> We pray for the young adults who run away from foster care and are coerced into sex trafficking.                             |
| <b>20</b> We pray for desperate migrants at risk of becoming victims of predatory labor tactics in this harsh economy.                    | <b>21</b> We pray for children and young adults isolated from peers and mentors who are vulnerable to online predators.         | <b>22</b> We pray for domestic workers who are working under abusive conditions during the COVID-19 lockdown.                        | <b>23</b> We pray for the victims who are trafficked by their spouses, romantic partners, parents or other family members.                | <b>24</b> We pray for the women seeking protection from their abusers who are turned away due to COVID-19 regulations in shelters.     |
| <b>25</b> We pray for those working in programs to help survivors to overcome trauma due to trafficking.                                  | <b>26</b> We pray for girls in rural Africa and Asia who must drop out of school and are at risk of being forced into marriage. | <b>27</b> We pray for victims of forced labor working under hazardous conditions exposing them to COVID-19.                          | <b>28</b> We pray for Asian & Pacific Islander women facing higher risk of domestic violence and sexual assault amid the pandemic.        | <b>29</b> We pray for women of color who face social and economic inequity and a higher risk of trafficking and exploitation.          |
| <b>30</b> We pray for migrant men who live and work in isolated conditions and are forbidden to interact with other coworkers.            | <b>31</b> We pray for agriculture workers who are victims of labor trafficking and in danger of contracting COVID-19.           | <b>Feb. 1</b> We pray for the youth befriended by another young adult paid to recruit him as the next victim.                        | <b>2</b> We pray for survivors who promote awareness to save others from becoming enslaved in trafficking schemes.                        | <b>3</b> We pray for the young woman who appears to be monitored by the person next to her when interacting with others on the street. |
| <b>4</b> We pray for trafficking victims who suffer lack of affordable healthcare, malnourishment, and substance dependence.              | <b>5</b> We pray for children who are targets of online grooming and exploitation through gaming and social media.              | <b>6</b> We pray for Native women victimized by crime and domestic violence and their children who are often their first responders. | <b>7 Super Bowl Sunday</b><br>We pray for the officials working to spotlight human trafficking and its link to this major sporting event. | <b>8 Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita</b><br>We pray for the young adult recruited for a job that requires him to move far away.         |

# Human Trafficking: Who Are the Victims and Survivors?

Also known as trafficking in persons or **modern-day slavery**, this is a crime that involves **compelling or coercing a person to provide labor or services, or to engage in commercial sex acts**. The coercion can be subtle or overt, physical or psychological, according to the federal definition provided by the US Dept. of Justice.

**Traffickers prey on individuals who are poor, vulnerable, living in an unsafe or unstable situation, or are in search of a better life.** In the U.S., **victims include some of the most vulnerable populations:** American Indian/Alaska Native communities, lesbian-gay-bisexual-transgender-questioning individuals, individuals with disabilities, undocumented migrants, runaway and homeless youth, temporary guest-workers and low-income individuals.  
– adapted from *International Rescue Committee*

During COVID-19, **traffickers have created innovative ways to take advantage of the pandemic to target vulnerable victims.** In particular, the pandemic has surfaced systemic and deeply rooted economic inequalities – a root cause of human trafficking.

A 2019 Data Report by the Polaris Project based on the U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline identified 22,326 victims and survivors. They were trafficked in the following ways:

Sex trafficking - 14,597  
Sex and labor - 1,048

Labor trafficking - 4,934  
Other - 1,747

## Vanessa's Story

Vanessa called the hotline when she finally decided it was time to get out. She and several other women were being held in a home and forced to engage in prostitution. If they refused or fought, their trafficker withheld food and water and threatened them with a firearm. Their trafficker had cameras placed throughout the house to monitor them. At the time of her call, she was with a buyer and requested that law enforcement be sent to remove her and the other victims from their situation. The hotline was able to report and rescuers acted quickly to extract Vanessa and the other women. During their investigation, the Trafficking Hotline's law enforcement partners determined that Vanessa's situation was part of a larger network based in another city and state.

By Polaris Project

<https://humantraffickinghotline.org/sites/default/files/Polaris-2019-US-National-Human-Trafficking-Hotline-Data-Report.pdf>

## Our awareness can save victims.

If we see and/or suspect something is wrong, we are urged to call the National Hotline.  
**It only takes a suspicion.**

**See something  
suspicious?**

**National Hotline  
888-3737-888**

**BEFREE Textline  
233733**