

GLOBAL  
FREEDOM  
NETWORK

# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AGAINST TRAFFICKING



8  
FEBRUARY  
2015

FEAST OF  
ST JOSEPHINE  
BAKHITA

## PRAYER FOR THE EQUAL FREEDOM AND DIGNITY OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS

**A**lmighty and eternal God, who through your Son made the world know that every person is free, has an infinite value and is destined for the supreme freedom of your love, and, being the subject and the purpose of your love, is called to have a personal relationship with you, let the Trinity dwell in the soul of all human beings. Grant that human beings may live and act in the fundamental belief that all people – men, women, boys and girls – are equal and have the same freedom and dignity. Grant that people may be aware that every human relationship that does not respect this belief that men, women, boys and girls, have the same freedom and dignity is a crime against humanity.

In our world where our brothers and sisters are persecuted and oppressed and suffer in mind, spirit and body for their faithfulness to you, grant that through our earnest prayer, our sincere fasting and self-denial, and our true almsgiving, men and women shall be moved to renew the societies in which they live so that freedom of conscience may be respected throughout the world.

May all people of good will feel love for their neighbour. Inspire rulers and governments to work tirelessly for peace, justice and freedom for everyone, and grant institutions and laws that defend the poorest of the poor, the most vulnerable, and all those who suffer injustice.

May war, oppression and all that is contrary to human dignity, especially the evils of modern slavery and human trafficking, be banished from our world forever.

Give us a spirit of responsibility and of service towards those who suffer and who are poor, that we may bring to them that love your Son made manifest by his suffering and death on the Cross.

Grant that everyone sees their neighbour, without exception, as another self, taking into account first of all his life and the means needed to live it with dignity, so as not to imitate the rich man who did nothing for the poor man, Lazarus.

Above all, in our times give us the grace to make ourselves the neighbour of every person, without exception, and to actively help him when he comes across our path, whether he is an old person abandoned by everyone, a foreign labourer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child wrongly suffering in the streets of the world, or a hungry and excluded person who calls on our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord: “whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

By the power of the Holy Spirit grant that we may bring the hope and the joy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone, and come to rejoice with you forever in heaven.

## PRAYER TO ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

St Josephine Bakhita,  
you were sold into slavery as a child  
and endured untold 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 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



*St Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869 and enslaved as a child. Eventually she was sold to an Italian diplomat and taken to Italy, where she was later brought to freedom through the help of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. Through their guidance, she learned about God and served him faithfully until her death in 1947. In October 2000, Josephine Bakhita was canonized by Pope John Paul II, at which point he noted that “in St. Josephine Bakhita we find a shining advocate of genuine emancipation. The history of her life inspires not passive acceptance but the firm resolve to work effectively to free girls and women from oppression and violence, and to return them to their dignity in the full exercise of their rights”.*

(St. Bakhita's Canonization Mass, October 1, 2000).



# JOINT DECLARATION OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY



We, the undersigned, are gathered here today for a historical initiative to inspire spiritual and practical action by all global faiths and people of good will everywhere to eradicate modern slavery across the world by 2020 and for all time.

In the eyes of God each human being is a free person, whether girl, boy, woman or man, and is destined to exist for the good of all in equality and fraternity. Modern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labour and prostitution, organ trafficking, and any relationship that fails to respect the fundamental conviction that all people are equal and have the same freedom and dignity, is a crime against humanity.

We pledge ourselves here today to do all in our power, within our faith communities and beyond, to work together for the freedom of all those who are enslaved and trafficked so that their future may be restored. Today we have the opportunity, awareness, wisdom, innovation and technology to achieve this human and moral imperative.

*Casina Pio IV, Vatican City - 2 December 2014*