

# Reflection & Prayer to End Human Trafficking

January 11 – February 8, 2024



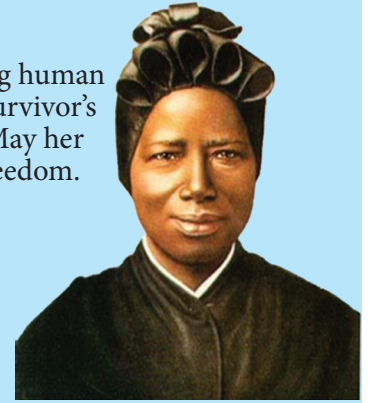
St. Josephine Bakhita was born in southern Sudan in 1869. As a young girl, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She was treated brutally by her captors as she was sold and resold. She did not remember her name; Bakhita, which means “fortunate one,” was the name given to her by her kidnappers.

## 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.*



<b>Jan. 11</b> Nat’l Human Trafficking Awareness Day We pray for the women, men, and children displaced by war, who have lost their families and suffer from unspeakable violence.		<b>12</b> We pray for prisoners in the U.S. who are forced to work with minimal or no pay at all and cannot seek workers’ rights.	<b>13</b> We pray for women/girls who are victims of any domestic violence: physical, psychological, sexual, emotional, + more.	<b>14</b> We pray for the children and forced laborers working in cobalt mines and are exposed to toxic air.
<b>15</b> We pray that we become more compassionate and generous to people who have been sexually exploited.	<b>16</b> We pray for incarcerated firefighters who fight wildfires in many states throughout the U.S. sometimes for zero pay.	<b>17</b> We pray for victims who are immigrants, lack legal documentation, and often are threatened with deportation.	<b>18</b> We pray for children engaged in the dangerous work of crushing and grinding soil and panning gold with bare hands.	<b>19</b> We pray for traffickers and violence perpetrators, who groom, coerce, and shame their victims, for a chance of heart.
<b>20</b> We pray for victims of labor trafficking who are forced to sleep in their place of work and are not paid.	<b>21</b> We pray for the mother who is threatened with separation from her children if she does not comply with demands.	<b>22</b> We pray for the millions of people worldwide who lack social support and are at greater risk of being trafficked.	<b>23</b> We pray for the young victims lured into romantic relationships only to be exploited through forced prostitution.	<b>24</b> We pray for all the vulnerable children who are taken from their families and forced to be child soldiers.
<b>25</b> We pray for the young girls who are intimidated, humiliated, manipulated, isolated, and terrorized by their boyfriends.	<b>26</b> We pray we hold corporations accountable for buying minerals from mining companies using forced child labor.	<b>27</b> We pray for all those who work endlessly to end human trafficking in our neighborhoods and worldwide	<b>28</b> We pray to make prison labor voluntary and eliminate policies that punish prisoners unable or unwilling to work.	<b>29</b> We pray for the hundreds of thousands of miners injured every year who are forced to labor in the extractive industry.
<b>30</b> We pray for strength, hope, and resilience for vulnerable survivors worldwide.	<b>31</b> We pray that children feel confident telling someone about the bullying and psychological violence against them.	<b>Feb. 1</b> We pray for the safety of migrants facing traffickers as they travel across countries seeking safety	<b>2</b> We pray that vulnerable people become aware and are not deceived and trafficked at large sporting events.	<b>3</b> We pray for pregnant women who are struggling to survive and protect their unborn in war-devastated countries.
<b>4</b> We pray for men who have been exploited and abused and are ashamed to report it.	<b>5</b> We pray survivors have access to shelter or transitional housing where they feel safe and can start their healing process.	<b>6</b> We pray for the more than 15,000 miners who are killed every year in the mining industry in Africa, South America, and China.	<b>7</b> We pray for farmworkers who put food at our tables and are often victims of enslaved labor practices.	<b>8</b> <b>Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita</b> We pray for the freedom of all who are enslaved around the world. May they find support and hope.

# Human Trafficking Awareness

## Important to Know

### WHAT DO SMARTPHONES, COMPUTERS, AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES WE USE AND HAVE LEARNED TO DEPEND ON DAILY HAVE IN COMMON?

They all are powered using the cobalt mineral which is mined by vulnerable workers, in many cases by children and forced laborers. Almost all lithium-ion rechargeable batteries are manufactured using cobalt. China owns most of the mining companies in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). They control the supply chain from cobalt mining to lithium-ion batteries. Other minerals used in electronics and mined there are Coltan, tungsten, and tin.

The mining of minerals not only abuses people's rights but also contributes to environmental devastation. It starts with a high-tech industrial mining company arriving, cutting down trees, and devastating the land for the homes of hundreds of low-income families who live in the area. Their water and air become polluted with toxic dust. Once the industrial company leaves, hundreds of thousands of poor Congolese people are forced by militias to mine and dig by hand what may be left over. Children as young as seven are trafficked; the money earned is turned over to the militias. Digging tunnels by hand, which has no ventilation, gives them additional access to cobalt. The tunnels often collapse and trap primarily children inside.

### HOW ARE CORPORATIONS HELD ACCOUNTABLE?

A federal class action lawsuit was filed against Apple, Tesla, Google, Microsoft, and Dell by the International Rights Advocates. They buy cobalt for the lithium-ion batteries that power the products they make. Not surprisingly, these corporations denied responsibility for the trafficking and forced labor in DRC. They claim they have "strict policies" against child labor in their supply chain. The court held an oral argument on December 8, 2022. A victory would set an important precedent – hold multinational corporations liable for human rights abuses within their supply chains.

Learn more <https://www.internationalrightsadvocates.org/cases/cobalt>

### WHAT CAN WE DO?

We can empower ourselves with knowledge of child labor or forced labor violations worldwide. The Sweat and Toil app developed by the International Labor Affairs helps document child labor and forced labor worldwide. It helps:

- Check for countries' efforts to eliminate child labor
- Find child labor data
- Browse goods produced with child labor or forced labor
- Review laws, ratifications, and enforcement efforts
- See what governments can do to end child labor
- Combat child labor and forced labor
- Download the app <https://www.dol.gov/general/apps/ilab>

**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  
1-888-373-3888**

**BEFREE Textline  
233733**