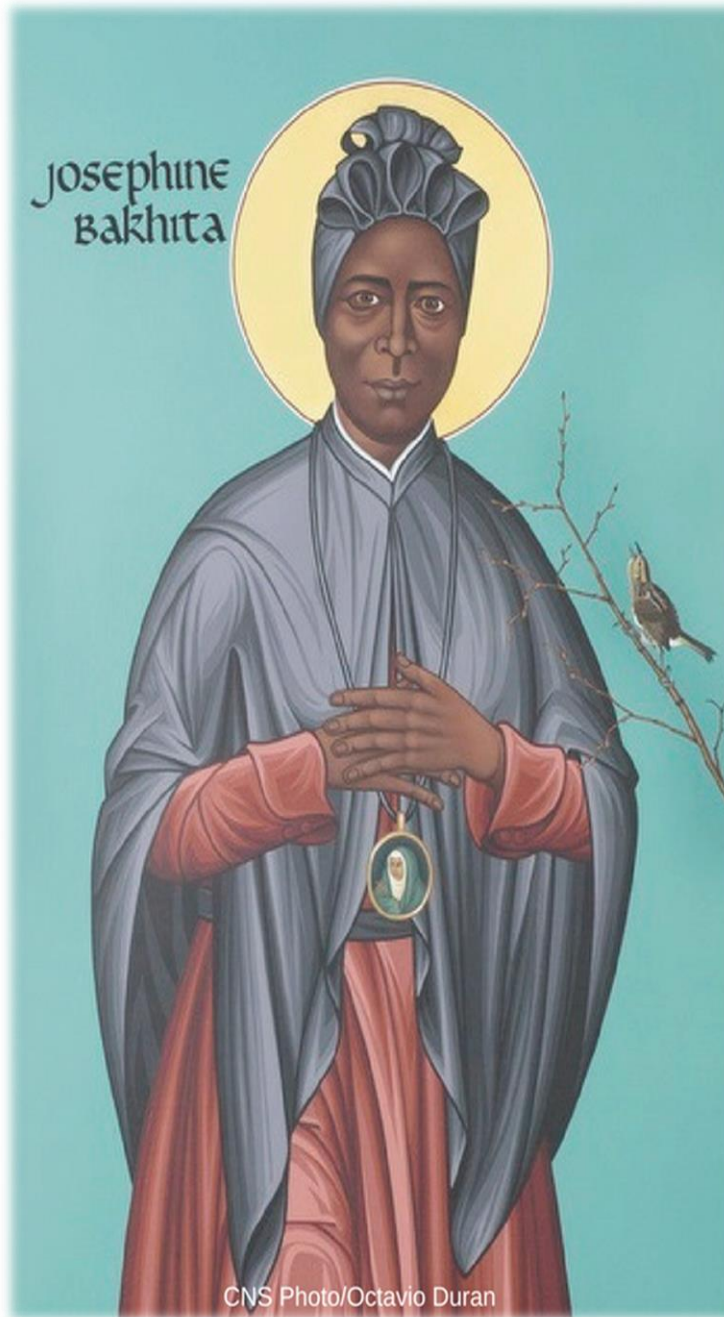


National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month
&
Day of Prayer Toolkit
2021



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.

Brought to you by:



Please find in this toolkit suggestions on how you can celebrate and educate others on National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month and the annual World Day of Prayer, Reflection, and Action against Human Trafficking.

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For questions about this toolkit, please contact:

MRSTraff@usccb.org

Important Dates

National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month

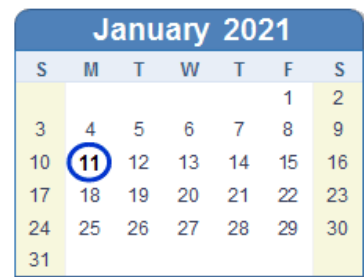
Since 2010, **January** has been declared *National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month* by presidential proclamation. This is an excellent opportunity for all of us to raise awareness about human trafficking, particularly how this crime can be prevented.

In the upcoming weeks, we encourage you to undertake efforts to educate communities on human trafficking. In doing so, you can also promote promising practices to help advance anti-trafficking initiatives in your own neighborhood, town, or city.

JANUARY 11

National Human Trafficking Awareness Day

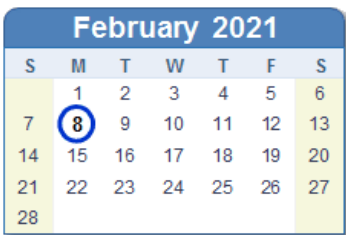
This day seeks to increase understanding among Americans that human trafficking happens in states and communities across the United States. Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery and occurs when a trafficker uses force, fraud or coercion to control another person for the purpose of engaging in commercial sex acts or soliciting labor or services against his/her will.



January 2021						
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3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY 8

World Day of Prayer, Reflection, and Action against Human Trafficking & The Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhita



February 2021						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

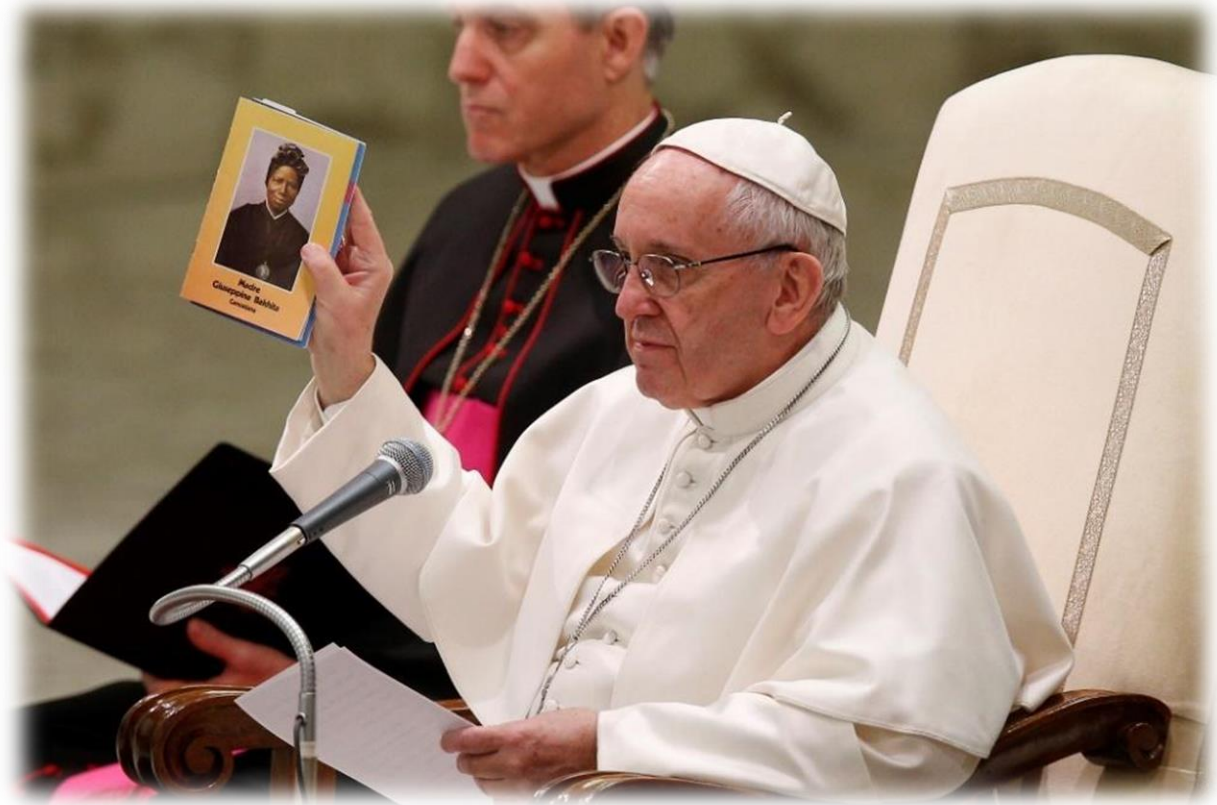
With encouragement from Pope Francis, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the International Union of Superiors General

designated February 8th as an annual day of prayer, reflection, and action against human trafficking. On this day, we remember and pray for survivors and victims of modern-day slavery. We pray that we may work together to remove the causes of this disgraceful scourge that is present in all our cities and neighborhoods. This day is also one of awareness and action: our prayers are strengthened three-fold when we accompany them with a willingness to become aware of the problem and become involved in erasing this evil.

February 8th is also the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita. Born in the Darfur region of Sudan in 1869, St. Bakhita was kidnapped and enslaved as a child. Eventually she was sold to an Italian diplomat and taken to Italy, where she valiantly asserted her freedom with the help of the Cannossian Sisters of Venice. Through her faith, St. Bakhita realized the promise of liberty inherent in the human spirit. She lived out the rest of her life as a Cannossian sister, sharing her empowering testimony of human freedom and dignity. In 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized Josephine Bakhita, noting that in this saint, “we find a shining advocate of genuine emancipation.”

Important Dates Continued: February 8

On February 8th, Catholics around the world are encouraged to host or attend prayer services to generate greater awareness about human trafficking. Through prayer, we not only reflect on the experiences of those that have suffered through this affront to human dignity but also comfort, strengthen, and help empower survivors. As Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle stated, "On [February 8th], we will lift our voices loudly in prayer, hope, and love for trafficking victims and survivors. If just one person realizes from this day that they or someone they know is being trafficked, we will have made a difference."



CNS photo/Paul Haring

"The Catholic Church intends to intervene in every phase of the trafficking of human beings; she wants to protect them from deception and solicitation; she wants to find them and free them when they are transported and reduced to slavery; she wants to assist them once they are freed."

Pope Francis

Address to Participants in the World Day of Prayer, Reflection and Action against Human Trafficking, 2018

Human Trafficking Background and Overview

The Facts

- Calculated as a 150-billion-dollar industry, trafficking in persons has become the fastest growing source of illicit profit for criminals worldwide.
- There are an estimated *40.3 million* victims of **modern-day slavery worldwide**. Of these, *25 million* are victims of labor or sex trafficking and *15 million* are people trapped in forced marriages. Nearly 30% of all victims are men and boys, and an astounding *1 in 4 victims* are children.
- **Trafficking cases are increasing** under COVID-19, as traffickers prey upon people experiencing heightened vulnerabilities linked to pandemic-related lock downs, stay at home orders, and job loss.
- Two decades have passed since the United States adopted landmark legislation to combat trafficking. **The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA)** of 2000, and its several reauthorizations, defines what constitutes trafficking in the U.S., establishes trafficking as a federal crime, and offers protection for victims and survivors. Last year, the U.S. State Department launched a **publication** to celebrate 20 years of progress to combat human trafficking.
- Every year, the State Department issues the **Trafficking in Persons Report**, a diplomatic tool used to hold accountable government efforts around the world to address human trafficking. The latest edition underscores the important role of **faith-based organizations** in eradicating trafficking.

The Church's Position on Human Trafficking:

- The elimination of human trafficking is a priority issue for the Catholic Church. Because every life is a gift from God and is sacred, it deserves to be protected and nurtured. We each have a responsibility to fight against the violation and degradation of our brothers and sisters. The Vatican released a set of guidelines, or **pastoral orientations** to help the Catholic community eradicate trafficking.
- The Catechism of the Church forbids acts that cause the enslavement of humans. During the Second Vatican Council in 1965, the Church further stated “slavery, prostitution, the selling of women, and children, and disgraceful working conditions where people are treated as mere tools for profits rather than free and responsible persons are infamies and supreme dishonor to the creator.” (Gaudium et Spes, 1965).
- In 2014, Pope Francis stated during his Declaration on the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery: “[M]odern slavery, in terms of human trafficking, forced labor and prostitution, and organ trafficking, is a crime against humanity. Its victims are from all walks of life but are most frequently among the poorest and most vulnerable of our brothers and sisters.”
- Men and women religious play an integral part in the battle against human trafficking. In 2001, 800 women leaders of the International Union of Superiors General (UISG) passed a resolution dedicating one million members “to work in solidarity with one another within our own religious communities and in the countries in which we are located to address insistently at every level the abuse and sexual exploitation of women and children...” The **U.S. Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking** is the domestic response to this call.

Anti-Trafficking Resources Great Ways to Educate Yourself!



The **Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking (CCOAH)**, convened by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop's Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS), consists of 35 + national and international agencies working to end human trafficking and support survivors. Together, CCOAH members advocate for stronger state and federal legislation, promote trauma-informed and survivor-centered services for victims, raise public consciousness through grass roots action, and press the private sector and consumers to prioritize slave-free supply chains. Many of our CCOAH members have online education and outreach resources to help you learn more about human trafficking and make a difference in your local communities. See below to get started:

CCOAH EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The **USCCB BECOME A SHEPHERD Program** (Stop Human Trafficking and Exploitation, Protect, Help, Empower and Restore Dignity) educates community members about human trafficking from a Catholic perspective, equipping them with needed knowledge and skills to combat forced labor and commercial sexual exploitation at the local level. You can also sign up for **USCCB's Anti-Trafficking newsletter**.

U.S. Catholic Sisters against Human Trafficking (USCSAHT) is a collaborative, faith-based national network that offers **education**, supports access to **survivor services**, and engages in **advocacy** in an effort to eradicate modern-day slavery. You can also access their **faith resources** and monthly **Stop Trafficking newsletter**.

Catholic Health Association (CHA) - Comprised of more than 600 hospitals and 1,600 health facilities in all 50 states, CHA is the largest group of nonprofit health care providers in the nation. Preventing human trafficking through the engagement and intervention of the health care sector is one of its priority areas. See their **human trafficking overview** for health professionals and the general public.

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd educates and develops strategies to address social justice issues and advocates for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people. Check out their **human trafficking section**.

Through God's Grace Ministry - The mission of Through God's Grace Ministry is to empower the faith community to take action in the fight against trafficking in persons!

The International Catholic Migration Commission protects and serves uprooted people, including refugees, migrants and **victims of trafficking** - regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, or nationality.

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) - The Office of Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation coordinates OMI's advocacy work on behalf of those who suffer marginalization. Learn about **Bakhita: A Novel of the Saint of Sudan** by reading a book review by OMI's very own Mary O'Herron.

The Diocese of St. Petersburg has partnered with the U.S. Institute Against Human Trafficking, to ask parishes and Catholic schools to declare themselves *Trafficking Free Zones*. To learn more, go to the **Diocese's Anti-Trafficking Page**.

Talking Points

- As Catholics, we believe in the dignity of every human life and vehemently oppose human trafficking and modern-day slavery as it contravenes basic human dignity.
- As Pope Francis has stated: “Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ.”
- There are an estimated 40.3 million victims of human trafficking worldwide. Every country in the world is affected by human trafficking, including the United States.
- Human trafficking is connected to other issues of systemic oppression such as racism, endemic poverty, sexism, xenophobia, exploitative economic systems, and environmental degradation.
- Migrants and refugees are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking. Thousands of individuals are trafficked across U.S. borders and forced into slavery each year.
- Although sex trafficking remains a serious problem, foreign victims are more often found in situations of labor trafficking. In fact, two of the largest trafficking cases in the United States involved labor trafficking in Guam and New York.
- In addition to working to eradicate human trafficking, our nation should ensure that victims have the services and support they need to heal, find affordable housing, earn a living wage, and obtain self-sufficiency.



CNS photo/Stringer, EPA

Letters to the Editor Tips

Writing a letter to the editor (LTE) is the perfect way to offer your perspective or express your appreciation for an already-published article or commentary piece.

Please let us know if your letter to the editor is published! We will promote it on our social media platforms. Completing this final step in the LTE process helps ensure that your letter's impact is even greater. Email us at MRSTraff@uscgb.org with a link to your published LTE.

Letter to the Editor Writing Tips

- *Keep it short* (150-250 words). If you do not edit your LTE, the news outlet might edit it for you. Since they could cut out your main point, it is best to write something both punchy and brief.
- *Speak in your own voice*. Explain why the article matters to you. Talk about your faith, professional experience, or knowledge of human trafficking. Be personal and authentic.
- *Get local*. Editors are generally more interested in letters that highlight local impacts. Can you relate the issues raised in a national piece on human trafficking to issues impacting your own community?
- *Follow these best practices:*

Reference a recent article (if possible). Your letter is most likely to be published if it responds directly to the newspaper's recent coverage of a specific trafficking issue. Mention the article you are responding to by its headline and date of publication.

Send your LTE in the body of your email, not as an attachment.

Include contact information. Include your full name, contact information, location, and profession or expertise (if relevant) in the email as well. (The paper will not print your contact information.)

Be timely. Try to get your LTE submitted within 1-3 days after the relevant article is published.

Sample Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Your recent article, [name of article], discussing the issue of [labor/sex trafficking / supply chain transparency] expertly highlighted the existence of trafficking and human exploitation in our [community/country]. I found this piece particularly timely as January is the National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. Our [country/community] has a proud history of addressing human trafficking, but we can and must do more to ensure that victims are properly identified and assisted. This month serves as an opportunity to not only raise awareness of human trafficking but to commit to redoubling our engagement in meaningful prevention methods. And while we should make this commitment during the month of January, I urge us to remember that prevention and education efforts should be a focus every day of the year.

Sincerely,

OR (when responding to an article with a religious theme or that mentions a bishop or Church leader)

Dear Editor,

Your recent article, [*name of article*], discussing the issue of human trafficking and human exploitation was [*jarring/uplifting*]. As a Catholic, I understand that human trafficking undermines basic human dignity and inflicts harm upon human life. The prevention of human trafficking and misery is a moral issue and one that we must come together to advance. Our Catholic community believes that all humans are made in the image and likeness of God. As the Church prepares to celebrate the Day of Prayer for St. Josephine Bakhita on February 8th, I hope my fellow parishioners will take the opportunity to raise awareness of human trafficking. Further, I hope that all Catholics will take the opportunity to educate themselves on this form of human suffering so that we can be better positioned to eradicate this terrible crime.

Sincerely,

Social Media Samples

Leverage social media to amplify your anti-trafficking messages during January and February! We have several samples of posts and graphics to use and tailor to your local needs. You can also participate in existing social media campaigns – look for two great examples in blue.

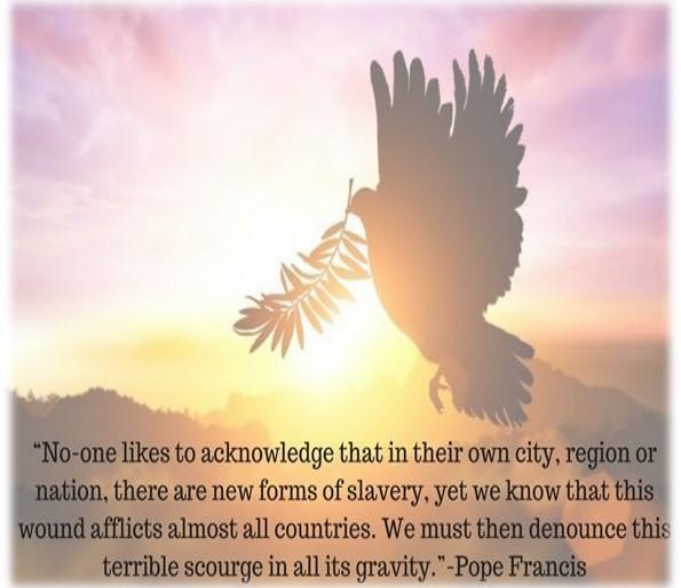
Posts for National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month (all of January):

- January is national slavery & #humantrafficking prevention month. Learn about the Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking at <https://bit.ly/36Q6riU>
- In January, we draw attention to #slavery & #humantrafficking. Learn how you can help victims of #trafficking by visiting <https://bit.ly/3andAJB> and <https://bit.ly/37oaOly>
- January has been designated as National Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month. There are more than 40 million people who have been affected by human trafficking worldwide. To learn more about trafficking, visit Justice for Immigrant’s anti-trafficking page: <https://bit.ly/3afmGrU>
- In January, and throughout the year, the Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking (CCOHT) works to eliminate the plight of trafficked victims. CCOHT advocates for stronger legislation, promotes survivor-centered services for victims, and raises public consciousness through grass roots action. Interested in becoming a member? Learn more at CCOHT: <https://bit.ly/3oVMehO>
- Join in the [@USCSAHTraffic (Twitter) @SistersAgainstTrafficking (Facebook)] campaign envisioning “An Economy Without Human Trafficking” by **downloading this sign**, writing in your vision, taking a picture with your message, and sharing on social media with #EconomyWithoutTrafficking and #EndHumanTrafficking.

Social Media Samples Continued

Posts for National Human Trafficking Awareness Day (January 11)

- Today is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. There are an estimated 40 million victims of human #trafficking and #slavery today. We pray for them and for an end to all forms of #slavery. #endtrafficking
- January 11th is National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. We pray for all victims of trafficking and work to #endtrafficking and #stopslavery.
- January 11th has been designated as National Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Today, we pray for all survivors of trafficking and work to #endtrafficking and #stopslavery.



Participate in #WearBlueDay (January 11)

Blue Campaign's #WearBlueDay raises awareness of human trafficking by inviting the public to take photos of themselves, friends, family, and colleagues donning blue clothing to share them on social media, along with the #WearBlueDay hashtag! **The Blue Campaign** is the Department of Homeland Security's national anti-trafficking public awareness campaign, designed to educate the public on how to recognize the indicators of human trafficking and safely report it.

Posts for World Day of Prayer, Reflection, and Action against Human Trafficking (February 8):

Leading up to the Day of Prayer:

- A survivor of kidnapping and #slavery, we celebrate a Day of #Prayer for St. Josephine Bakhita, the Patron Saint of Sudan and victims of trafficking, on Feb. 8th.
- Tomorrow, we will celebrate a Day of #Prayer for Saint Bakhita as we pray for survivors of #humantrafficking and #slavery.

More Social Media

On the Day of Prayer:

- Over 70 years ago, St. Bakhita, the Patron Saint of Sudan and victims of trafficking, passed away. Today, we pray for those who have been victims of #slavery & trafficking.
- Today, we celebrate a Day of #Prayer for victims of #humantrafficking & #slavery as we celebrate the incredible life of Saint Bakhita.
- St. Bakhita survived slavery and persevered. Once she gained freedom, Josephine became a Canossian sister. She dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. In her honor, we recognize today as a Day of #Prayer for victims of #humantrafficking.
- Many years ago, Josephine Bakhita lived as a slave. Years later, St. Bakhita was canonized and is now known as the patron Saint of Sudan. She is also uplifted as the patron saint of victims of trafficking. Today, in her honor, we pray for those who have been victims of modern-day slavery.



Participate in a day long prayer marathon for World Day of Prayer Against Human Trafficking

This virtual prayer service is sponsored by @TalithaKumRome featuring 50+ networks of Catholics and women religious around the world, working and praying to #endhumantrafficking. Follow [@USCSAHTraffic (Twitter) or @SistersAgainstTrafficking (Facebook)] for the links.]

Downloadable Social Media Graphics

Download Here

#HumanTrafficking

Let us lift our voices loudly in prayer, hope, and love for trafficking victims and survivors.

BISHOP EUSEBIO ELIZONDO OF SEATTLE



#HumanTrafficking

I CHALLENGE YOU to find out how slavery touches your life and to do what you can to **REDUCE THE SUFFERING** of those who are enslaved.

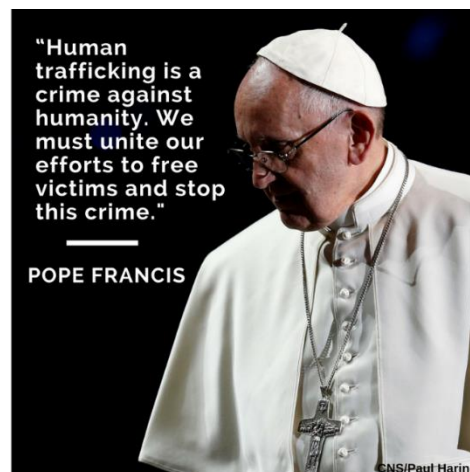
SISTER ANNE VICTORY, HM
PRESIDENT, U.S. CATHOLIC SISTERS
AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING



#HumanTrafficking

We cannot rest until **TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN PERSONS IS ELIMINATED** from the globe.

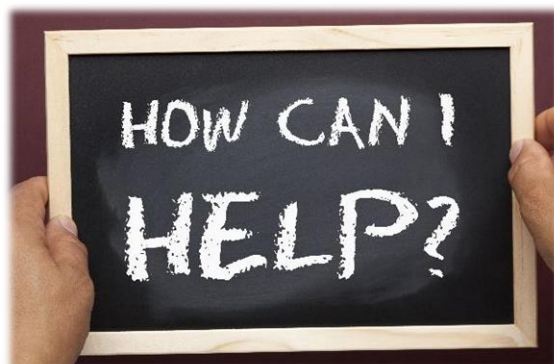
BISHOP THOMAS WENSKI OF MIAMI



Community Engagement Ideas

Become a Responsible Consumer

- Find out how many victims of forced labor were involved in producing the products you most commonly buy by visiting the [slavery footprint](#) website.
- Download the [Sweat & Toil app](#) from the U.S. Department of Labor. Use when shopping to know which products and countries contribute to child labor.
- Prefer to read about these products at the U.S. Department of Labor website? Check out their [List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor](#).
- Inquire if the hotel where you are staying has signed the [Tourism Child-Protective Code of Conduct](#). This set of principles requires code members to train their employees on how to identify & report trafficking cases. If your hotel has not signed, encourage them to do so.
- Educate yourself on how to better patronize businesses who are making serious efforts to keep their supply chains free of slave labor. Use [this handout](#) to learn how ethical trade equals just working conditions and wages, an antidote to labor trafficking!



Sign the Safety Pledge - *National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC)*

Perpetrators increasingly are targeting children online. NCMEC has seen a 93.3.% increase in online child enticement since the outbreak of the pandemic. Help to safeguard children from becoming victims of child sex trafficking by [Signing the Safety Pledge](#) and encourage others to do the same.

Host an Educational Event

Host a virtual movie night using zoom or your platform of preference. Screen one of the following films to further educate your community on human trafficking.

- **The Price of Free**
Witness the reality of boys and girls across the world compelled to perform slave labor in decrepit factories – a phenomenon fueled by the growing demand for cheap products. Learn about the work of Nobel Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi as he and his team dedicate their lives to rescuing and rehabilitating trafficked children in India. This film – the winner of the Sundance Grand Jury Prize in 2018 - illustrates the link between consumer behavior in the United States with child trafficking abroad and what it will take from each of us to clean up supply chains. You can stream the film by going to the [Price of Free website](#).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. After watching the film, has your idea of who is responsible for child labor and child trafficking changed? How and why?
2. Kailash's nonprofit organization BBA works to rehabilitate rescued children, and to prevent their re-exploitation. What challenges did you notice about supporting these boys and girls?
3. Knowing that many of our goods are made with child labor, what can we do as individuals?
For more questions, download the [Price of Free discussion guide](#).

Community Engagement Ideas Continued

- **Bakhita: From Slave to Saint**

SYNOPSIS: We first meet Bakhita in a rural village of Sudan when she is captured by slave traders. After years of being beaten and abused, a white merchant Federico Marin buys her from her current owner and brings her to Italy. Once in the Marin household, the daughter of the master Aurora takes a strong liking to Bakhita and chooses her as her nanny. Bakhita is treated like an outsider and accused of being wicked by other servants because of her black skin. Despite this, Bakhita proves to be generous to everyone she encounters even if they have wronged her. Befriending a priest, she discovers a life of hope and religious support. The hardest hurdle Bakhita must overcome is that of acquiring her freedom. To learn more about the film, go to [Ignatius Press](#).

BAKHITA DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. It is not always easy to help others who seem different than us. What can the Bible teach us about overcoming these prejudices based on fear?
2. How can we be more like Bakhita and work to forgive those who have victimized others and help them see a life of dignity and respect for others?
3. Sometimes we must make sacrifices to help others. What are some realistic sacrifices we can make in our daily lives to help the fight against human trafficking?

Say a Daily Prayer

Download and print the [Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange's Prayer and Reflection Calendar](#), with special prayers for every day from January 11 (National Human Trafficking Awareness Day) to St. Josephine's Feast Day on February 8. It is available in [Spanish](#) as well!

Join Us! Invitations to Virtual Events

JANUARY 19, 2021 | 3:00 PM EST

Witness and Grace: A Conversation on Anti-Human Trafficking

Global Sisters Report

JANUARY 25, 2021 | 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM EST

A Victim Centered Approach to Health Care for Survivors of Human Trafficking

The John J. Brunetti Human Trafficking Academy, St. Thomas University

FEBRUARY 8, 2021 | 10:00 AM - 1:45 PM EST

Prayer Service, Survivors Panel, and Mass Honoring the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking

The John J. Brunetti Human Trafficking Academy & the Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking

Suggested Intercessions for the Prayer of the Faithful

Please choose some of the following to be included among the intercessions in your parish during the February 8th World Day of Prayer, Reflection, and Action against Human Trafficking.

Response:

We Pray to the Lord or God of Hope, Set us Free.

The Pope, Bishops, and Catholic Faithful

For Pope Francis, that our Heavenly Father may gift him with wisdom as he calls the Church to reject the inherent evil of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

For our bishop, *[name here]*, that he may be encouraged by our prayers to lead God's people in building a culture that respects human dignity, we pray to the Lord.

For the bishops, that they continue to be leaders in the fight against modern-day slavery, both domestically and abroad, we pray to the Lord.

For our priests and deacons, that they may boldly proclaim Church teaching on human dignity and the Church's teaching on human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

For our religious sisters and brothers, that God inspire them with the continued commitment to fight the evil of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

For all Catholics, that God inspire them to take action in their local communities to support and protect survivors of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

Victims and Survivors of Human Trafficking

For everyone who is trapped in a situation of slavery, that God will help to liberate them from their chains, we pray to the Lord.

For an end to human trafficking, that the dignity of all of God's children will be protected, we pray to the Lord.

For those caught up in a situation of human trafficking, that their perpetrators be brought to justice and that they might find a path to healing, we pray to the Lord.

For survivors of traffic, that God guide them to a path down which they might find wholeness and peace, we pray to the Lord.

For survivors of human trafficking, that they might find the support they need to start a new life, we pray to the Lord.



Suggested Intercessions Continued

Government Officials

For the President of the United States, and government leaders, that they continue to work tirelessly to end the slavery that continues to exist in our communities, we pray to the Lord.

For the President of the United States and all government officials, that they may support legislation that better protects vulnerable populations in our midst, we pray to the Lord.

For policy makers in our nation, that God grants them the wisdom to enact laws that provide greater protection for victims and survivors of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

Additional Intercessions

For law enforcement, that God grants them the wisdom to recognize situations of forced labor and sexual slavery, while working to protect its victims and punish its perpetrators, we pray to the Lord.

For men and women who serve those exploited by human trafficking, that God will grant them the strength and commitment to accompany survivors on their path to healing and wholeness, we pray to the Lord.

For perpetrators of slavery, that they repent of their evil ways and turn to God for forgiveness, we pray to the Lord.

For all people of God and of good will, may we increase our courage to publicly address the systemic causes of human trafficking, we pray to the Lord.

For our neighbors, coworkers, friends, fellow Christians, and all people, that they may increase in their awareness of the problem of human trafficking and become a voice in the public square calling for its abolition, we pray to the Lord.



Downloadable Prayer Card

[Download Here](#)

ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA



ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

1869-1947

MEMORIAL: FEBRUARY 8

February 8th has been designated by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the International Union of Superiors General as an annual day of prayer and awareness against human trafficking. February 8th is the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita, who was kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery in Sudan and Italy. She learned from Canossian nuns that she was created in the image of God and possessed human dignity. Once she asserted herself and refused to be enslaved, Josephine became a Canossian sister and dedicated her life to sharing her testament of deliverance from slavery and comforting the poor and suffering.

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)



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A 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.

Oración a Santa Josefina Bakhita

Santa Josefina Bakhita, cuando niña, fuiste vendida como esclava y tuviste que pasar increíbles dificultades y sufrimiento. Una vez liberada de tu esclavitud física, hallaste la verdadera redención en tu encuentro con Cristo y su Iglesia.

Oh, Santa Bakhita, ayuda a todos aquellos que están atrapados en la esclavitud; en nombre de ellos, intercede ante Dios para que sean liberados de las cadenas de su cautiverio. Que Dios libere a todo aquel que ha sido esclavizado por el hombre.

Bríndales alivio a los que sobreviven la esclavitud y permite que ellos te vean como modelo de fe y esperanza. Ayuda a todos los sobrevivientes para que encuentren la sanación de sus heridas. Te suplicamos orar e interceder por los que se encuentran esclavizados entre nosotros.

Amén.

Thank you from:

Coalition of Catholic Organizations Against Human Trafficking



Modern day slavery violates the sanctity, dignity & fundamental rights of the human person. Through coercion, deceit, and physical abuse, nearly 25 million adults and children are forced to perform backbreaking unpaid labor or commercial sex acts for the economic benefit of others. Many of the goods we buy may be tainted by slavery, found in global supply chains from cocoa to fish to cobalt.

To help end this dehumanizing practice and advocate for systemic change, 35 national and international agencies came together in 2003 to form the Coalition of Catholic Organizations against Human Trafficking (CCOAH). CCOAH strives to answer Pope Francis' urgent call "to join forces to prevent the slave trade and guarantee protection and assistance to victims."

Our Coalition engages in and promotes a four-pronged approach to help eliminate the scourge of human trafficking: Prevention, Protection, Prosecution, & Partnership.

TOGETHER WE:

- Advocate for stronger state and federal anti-trafficking legislation
- Promote trauma informed and survivor centered services for trafficking survivors
- Raise public consciousness through education campaigns and grassroots action
- Press the private sector and consumers to prioritize slave-free supply chains

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Archdiocese of Atlanta, Office of Life, Dignity and Justice

Archdiocese of Hartford, Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry

Archdiocese of Indianapolis - Catholic Charities

Archdiocese of San Francisco, Office of Human Life & Dignity

Catholic Charities-Cleveland

Catholic Relief Services

Christian Brothers Investment Services

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces

Daughters of Charity, USA

Dawn's Place

Diocese of Charlotte

Diocese of Orlando Human Trafficking Task Force

Diocese of St. Petersburg, Office of Life, Justice, & Advocacy

Felician Sisters of North America

Franciscan Action Network

Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters

Human Trafficking Academy, St. Thomas University School of Law, Miami

IL Women Religious Against Human Trafficking

Intercommunity Peace & Justice Center

International Catholic Migration Commission

Justice Committee of the Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia

Ladies of Charity USA

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

MACAMS

Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns

Maryland Catholic Conference

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

Notre Dame Sisters, Omaha

Region VI Coalition for Responsible Investment

Seventh Generation Interfaith Coalition for Responsible Investment

Sisters of Mercy of the Americas — West Midwest Community

Sisters of the Divine Savior, North American Province

Sisters of the Humility of Mary, Villa Maria, PA

Society of the Holy Child Jesus

The Catholic Health Association of the United States

The Ladies of Charity of the United States of America

Through God's Grace Ministry

Tri-State Coalition for Responsible Investment

U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services

Join us!

For more information about becoming a member, contact MRSTraff@uscbb.org.