

## PRAYER for FEBRUARY 2015

February 8, 2015 - Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita

### The First International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking



The First "International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking" will be celebrated in all dioceses and parishes in the world, in the groups and schools on 8 February 2015, the Feast Day of Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese slave, freed, who became a Canossian nun, and was declared a Saint in 2000. The initiative is promoted by the Pontifical Council of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the International Union of Superiors General .

The statement sent to Agenzia Fides highlights that "the primary objective of the International Day is to create greater awareness on this phenomenon and to reflect on the overall situation of violence and injustice that affect so many people, who have no voice, do not count, and are no one: they are simply slaves. Another goal is to attempt to provide solutions to counter this modern form of slavery by taking concrete actions". The phenomenon concerns the whole world. According to official data roughly 21 million people, often very poor and vulnerable, are victims of trafficking

for sexual exploitation, forced labour and begging, illegal organ removal, domestic servitude and forced marriages, illegal adoption and other forms of exploitation.

Each year, around 2.5 million people are victims of trafficking and slavery. On the other hand, for traffickers and pimps, this is one of the most lucrative illegal activities in the world, generating a total of 32 billion dollars a year. It is the third most profitable "business" after drugs and arms trafficking.

#### Prayer for an End to Human Trafficking

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 the Church.

O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped on a state of slavery; intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity.

Those whom people enslave, 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.