



## Feast Day of St. Josephine Bakhita

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

February 8, 2022

~ Office of Justice and Peace; Catholic Online



The Catholic Church celebrates the feast day of St. Josephine Bakhita on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February each year, her [life](#) was a journey from slavery to freedom and faith. The patron saint of Sudan, her life story inspires hope in the face of modern day indifference and exploitation.

As Pope Francis states: *“She is charged with showing to all the path to conversion, which enables us to change the way we see our neighbors, to recognize in every other person a brother or sister in our human family and to acknowledge his or her intrinsic dignity in truth and freedom. This saint, who lived at the turn of the twentieth century, is even today an exemplary witness of hope for the many victims of slavery; she can support the efforts of all those committed to fighting against this ‘open wound on the body of contemporary society.’”* Pope Francis on the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2015

Saint Josephine Margaret Bakhita was born around 1869 in the Darfur region of Sudan. She was a member of the Daju people and her uncle was a tribal chief. Due to her family lineage, she grew up happy and relatively prosperous, saying that as a child, she did not know suffering.

Historians believe that sometime in February 1877, Josephine was kidnapped by Arab slave traders. Although she was just a child she was forced to walk barefoot over 600 miles to a slave market. She was bought and sold at least twice during the grueling journey.

For the next 12 years she would be bought and sold and given away over a dozen times. She spent so much time in captivity that she forgot her original name.

As a slave, she was treated cruelly by several owners. Then, she was sold to the Italian Vice Consul, Callisto Legani. He was kind to her. When it was time for him to return to Italy, she begged to be taken with him and he agreed.

After a long journey back to Italy, Legani gave her away to another family as a gift and she served them as a nanny. This new family had dealings in Sudan and when her mistress decided to travel to Sudan without Josephine, she placed her in the custody of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. While with the Sisters she came to know about God.

When the mistress returned from Sudan, Josephine refused to leave the Sisters. This caused the Superior of the Institute for baptismal candidates among the sisters to complain to Italian authorities on Josephine's behalf.

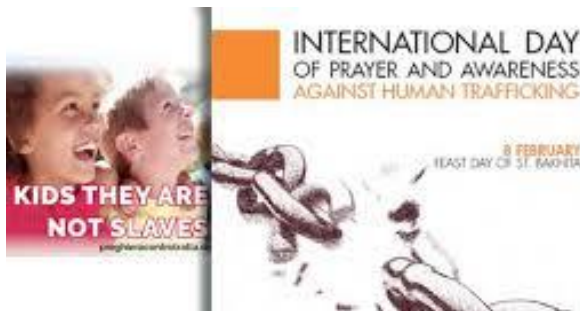
The case went to court, and the court found that slavery had been outlawed in Sudan before Josephine was born, so she could not be lawfully made a slave. She was declared free.

For the first time in her life, Josephine was free and could choose her own path. She chose to remain with the Canossian Sisters.

She was baptized in 1890 and three years later became a novice with the Canossian Daughters of Charity and took her final vows in 1896. For the next 42 years, she worked as a cook and doorkeeper at the convent. She was known for her gentle voice and smile.

She died on February 8, 1947. She was canonized by Saint Pope John Paul II on October 1, 2000. She is the patron saint of Sudan. To read the full account, please click [here](#)

## The International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking



This Day of Prayer is held on February 8<sup>th</sup> each year. In addition to prayer, the day is a call to action:

*“Our awareness must expand and extend to the very depths of this evil and its farthest reaches...from awareness to*

*prayer...from prayer to solidarity...and from solidarity to concerted action, until slavery and trafficking are no more,”* says Cardinal Peter Turkson.

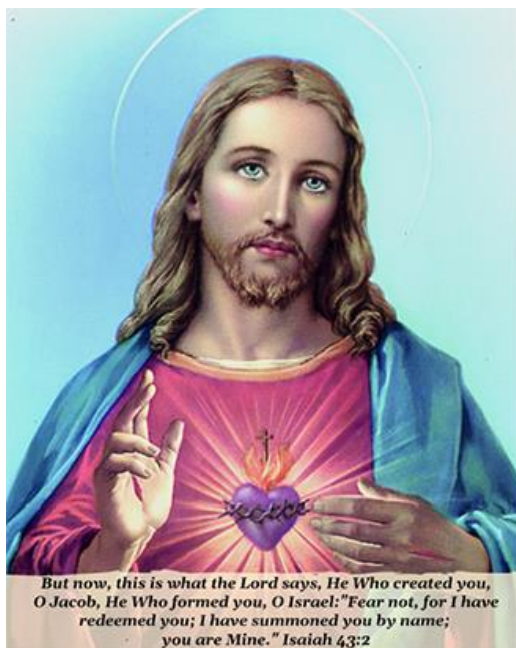
In this sense another goal of the day is to encourage people to act and to take concrete steps to help eradicate slavery and trafficking. Indeed, an essential part of freedom is our ongoing effort to ensure it is woven into the fabric of our society.

To access resources for the International Day of Prayer please click [here](#)



## Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the St. Frances X. Cabrini Shrine, New York City Announce Joyful News for the Institute

It is with great joy that we share the news that yesterday, on the **World Day for Consecrated Life**, **Evon Somirla** and **Evarlyn Ndeti** became novices with the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Both young women help out at the Shrine regularly, and are much beloved. We ask you to keep them in your prayers.



*But now, this is what the Lord says, He Who created you, O Jacob, He Who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are Mine." Isaiah 43:2*

Missionary Sisters  
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus  
cordially invite you to share in the  
Eucharistic celebration of the  
Final Profession of:

**Sister Asnakech Asefa, MSC**  
**Sister Aynalem Paulos, MSC**  
**Sister Berhane Ashebo, MSC**

St. Frances Cabrini Shrine  
in New York City  
Thursday, February 17, 2022  
3pm local time

**Father Thomas Faiola, OFM CAP.**  
President



Missionary Sisters  
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Additional joy arrives at the Shrine later in the month, when Final Profession of Vows takes place for **Sr. Asnakech Asefa, MSC**, **Sr. Aynalem Paulos, MSC**, and **Sr. Berhane Ashebo, MSC**. You are warmly welcome to join us for this special Eucharistic celebration. Please pray for these Sisters in coming weeks as they prepare for their perpetual vows. ~ submitted by *Julia Attaway, Executive Director*

### Update Readers:

Did you know that on most days  
on the homepage of

[www.motherscbrini.org](http://www.motherscbrini.org)

an inspirational message or scriptural reading  
is posted for your meditation and reflection?  
Please stop by our website and check it out.

# With Uplifted Hearts and Thanks to God



MSC novices Evarlyn Netti, (l.) and Evon Somirla.

Yesterday, on the World Day for Consecrated Life, Evarlyn Ndeti and Evon Somirla became novices with the Missionary Sisters at a ceremony in New York City. This is cause for great thanks and celebration!

In addition to many Missionary Sisters from the Guadalupe Province, they were joined by two General Councilors, Sr. Maria Regina Canale, MSC and Sr. Bernadette Anello, MSC. Sr. Bernadette welcomed everyone on this sacred occasion.

Sr. Lucy Panettieri, MSC offered an introduction noting that, “Religious life begins with reception into the novitiate. The Novitiate, more than a place, must be an experience of God and mission.”

### The emphasis for this ceremony is threefold:

- First:** Deepening of one’s baptismal commitment. Each receives the baptismal candle as the candidate is called forth to begin religious life.
- Second:** Listening and responding to the Word of God. Each candidate chooses a spiritual passage that is meaningful to her calling.
- Third:** Each candidate receives the Constitutions of the MSC Institute and is given the novitiate cross which she will wear.

We extend our blessings and good wishes to Evarlyn and Evon and ask that God bestows His grace upon them.



**Photo above:** Sr. Genet Henok, MSC (2<sup>nd</sup> l.) makes the formal Presentation of Candidates at the International Novitiate in NYC.

**Photo right:** Missionary Sisters gather for a photo on this happy and sacred occasion.



# Mother Cabrini Shrine, Golden CO

## Heart of Jesus Campaign – Surpasses \$4.5 million goal!



Our hearts are overflowing with gratitude as we share with you that we have surpassed our \$4.5 million goal for our Heart of Jesus Capital Campaign. Thank you so much for your support and generosity!

One year ago, we publicly announced our plans for some major renovations to our facilities. We are humbled and so grateful for the support and encouragement we have received. The new gift shop and conference room were completed in May, and we are so pleased with the results! The next phase of construction which includes the chapel expansion and elevator installation will begin later this summer.

Following the example of Mother Cabrini, we continue to place our trust in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and we are grateful for his intercession as we preserve and restore this precious Shrine for our visitors today and for future generations. Thank you so much for your generous support to this Heart of Jesus Capital Campaign.

To watch a video about the Capital Campaign please click [here](#)

With gratitude in the Heart of Jesus,  
The Missionary Sisters, Staff and Capital Campaign Committee  
Mother Cabrini Shrine

P.S. If you haven't had a chance to give, we are still accepting donations for the campaign. With rising construction costs, we anticipate the total amount of the renovations to be closer to \$4.8 million.



## 7 Ways to Celebrate Black History Month at Cabrini

Cabrini University's Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (ODEIB) will host a series of community discussions in celebration and observance of Black History Month.

"The programs and activities that we have planned for Black History Month demonstrate the connection between the work of the Office of DEI and Belonging and the Cabrini commitment to social justice," said Lailah Dunbar, Director, ODEIB. "We trust that as we deepen our awareness of the journey of all Americans, we expand our hearts, and our faith becomes action."

Cabrini students, faculty, staff, and alumni are invited to gather in person and virtually for ODEIB's 2022 Black History Month programming:

**Underground Railroad Table Dedication Ceremony** - Tuesday, Feb. 8, 2pm, Bruckmann Memorial Chapel of St. Joseph

Join us for the dedication of a very special historical artifact, in collaboration with Campus Ministry. A small wooden table owned by the Catlins, a family who escaped slavery in the South through the Underground Railroad in 1834, will be dedicated in the campus chapel. The Catlin family table has passed through the hands of history-making barbers, Black veterans, Bethel AME church members, a Catholic church and now, Cabrini University. A new Cabrini tradition will also be announced during the event. To access more events, please click [here](#)

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## Black Poets Express the Emotions of Black History Month

~ by Sr. Mary Navarre, *Global Sisters Report*

Black writers, gifted with words of wisdom continue to inspire. A longtime favorite is the poet, Langston Hughes. "Hold fast to dreams," he wrote in the well-known poem "Dream": For if dreams die/Life is a broken-winged bird/That cannot fly." I love everything about this poem: the sound, the rhythm, the images, the message to hang onto our dreams, to keep hold of hope – always and forever.



Poet  
Amanda  
Gorman

Maya Angelou's poetry likewise births hope. Her poem "On the Pulse of Morning," contains stanza after another filled with wisdom and hope. "Lift up your eyes upon/This day breaking for you," she wrote. "Give birth again/To the dream."

Contemporary poet Amanda Gorman, is an "old soul" in her words and spirit. She holds out hope for better days. In her new poem, she writes, "Be bold sang Time this year/For when you honor yesterday/Tomorrow ye shall find." Gorman's poem holds timeless images and words ancient and new. She holds out hope that we can come together, overcoming all that divides.

To read the entire article, please click [here](#)

*This article originally appeared in VISION Vocation Guide, a publication of the National Religious Vocations Conference. We will present the article in several segments.*

## *From the Guadalupe Province Vocation Promotion Team...*

### **Latino Young People, Family and Vocation**

~ by Sister Ana Cecilia Montalvo, F.Sp.S

Thousands of men and women throughout the history of Christianity have offered to God their possessions, their dearest and most legitimate loves, their very lives, for the kingdom of heaven because they found Jesus the Precious Pearl for which everything is sold. They are, no doubt, a beautiful testimony for you, who feel God's calling to consecrated or priestly life and ask yourself, "Do I have to choose between my family and God's calling?"

In the Latino Hispanic culture, family plays a very important role in our lives and in the decisions we make. The bond with our parents and siblings is so strong that when we are following our vocation, leaving the family becomes one of the most important issues to discern.

#### Detachment and blessing

I remember when I entered consecrated life. It was the early morning of August 25 when we left my hometown for the convent about eight hours away. Accompanied by my grandparents, my parents, and my three siblings, I was beginning a new adventure following Jesus in the Congregation of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit. There were mixed feelings in my heart: on the one hand, the joy of beginning my first stage of formation in consecrated life and, on the other hand, the pain of separation from my family. At the time I asked myself, "When will I see them again? Who will continue to support them?"

When we arrived at the convent, the sisters welcomed us warmly and explained to my family the stage of formation I was about to begin. Then it was time to say goodbye. I received the blessing of my grandparents and my parents, and with a lump in my throat and an aching heart, I bid them farewell with the certainty that God was asking me to take this step. I can say, without hesitation, that this departure was the biggest and hardest I have ever felt in my consecrated life.



In accompanying young people in their vocational discernment, I have discovered three elements related to the family that must be discerned and illuminated from the experience of God who is provident and faithful.

#### Responsibility for material support

The responsibility felt by young people whose parents invested time, money, and effort in their education so they could "be somebody" in society is very strong. Giving back to parents what they

invested in – giving them the satisfaction of seeing children graduate and have a good job – motivates many young people to keep working to improve themselves.

*Jose', who is in his last year of college, feels that Jesus is calling him to consecrated life; he has a great attraction to the priesthood. Ever since he was a child, he was encouraged to have great respect and admiration for priests. His parents, who emigrated to the United States 25 years ago, have made tremendous efforts to give him a good education. Jose' knows that when he finishes his studies, he has to look for a good job and return some of the resources they invested in him.*

Next week: Living Close to Family and Offspring

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## Prayer Requests

### ***Marsha Floyd***

Prayers are requested for Marsha Floyd who underwent extensive surgery yesterday. Her family asks for prayers for her recovery.

### ***Dr. Tim Mantz's cousin***

Dr. Tim Mantz, Dean of the School of Business and Professional Studies at Cabrini University, requests prayers for his cousin, a minister, who is seriously ill and in intensive care. Pray that he will be restored to full health.

### ***Lucille McClellan***

Prayers are requested for Lucille McClellan who recently underwent surgery for the amputation of her arm. Mrs. McClellan's husband passed away suddenly last week. Please keep her in your prayers at this very difficult time in her life.



### ***MSC Novices***

Yesterday, on the **World Day for Consecrated Life**, **Evon Somirla** and **Evarlyn Ndeti** became novices with the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is cause for much joy and thanksgiving. We ask you to keep them in your prayers.

### ***Prayers for Perpetual Vows***

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, MSC sisters, Sr. Asnakech, Sr. Aynalem and Sr. Berhane will profess their Perpetual Vows as MSCs. Let us accompany them with our prayers as they anticipate this sacred step in serving the people of God.

### ***Prayers for a friend***

A Cabrini University staff member requests prayers for a friend who has a very serious health issue. She is asking for prayers in her time of need. Please remember this person in your prayers.

## In Loving Memory

### ***Thomas McClellan***

Sr. Christine Marie Baltas, MSC asks that we please pray for the repose of the soul of Thomas McClellan who passed away suddenly last week. May he rest in God's eternal light.