

# Chaplaincy Newsletter

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## Saintly Inspirations

### St Josephine Bakhita - Feast Day February 8th

Saint Josephine Margaret Bakhita was born around 1869 in the village of Olgossa 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 in El Obeid. For the next 12 years she would be bought, sold and given away over a dozen times. She spent so much time in captivity that she forgot her original name. As a slave, her experiences varied from fair treatment to cruel.

In 1883, she was sold to the Italian Vice Consul, Callisto Legani. She returned to Italy with him and was given to another family as a gift and served them as a nanny. When the family went away on business Josephine was placed in the custody of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. While she was in the custody of the sisters, she came to learn about God. According to Josephine, she had always known about God, who created all things, but she did not know who He was. The sisters answered her questions. She was deeply moved by her time with the sisters and discerned a call to follow Christ.

When her mistress returned, Josephine refused to leave. Her mistress spent three days trying to persuade her to leave the sisters, but Josephine remained steadfast. 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 what to do with her life. She chose to remain with the Canossian Sisters.

She was baptised on January 9, 1890 and took the name Josephine Margaret and Fortunata. (Fortunata is the Latin translation for her Arabic name, Bakhita). She also received the sacraments of her first holy communion and confirmation on the same day.

For the next 42 years of her life, she worked as a cook and a doorkeeper at the convent. She also travelled and visited other convents telling her story to other sisters and preparing them for work in Africa and was known for her gentle voice and smile. In her later years, she began to suffer physical pain and was forced to use a wheelchair. But she always remained cheerful. If anyone asked her how she was, she would reply, "As the master desires."

On the evening of February 8, 1947, Josephine spoke her last words, "Our Lady, Our Lady!" She then died. St Josephine is the patron saint of Sudan and victims of human trafficking.



## Chaplaincy News.....

Due to the high number of prayer requests received through the Chaplain we are starting an online prayer board for our school community. If you would like to have someone or a situation prayed for you can now email your request to [prayer@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk](mailto:prayer@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk)

Your intention will be prayed for during Friday's Adoration in the school Chapel and placed on the Faith Life page of the school website for other members of our community to also pray with you and on your behalf. Your prayer request will stay on the list of intentions for four weeks. All prayers will be posted as anonymous unless those requesting prayer let us know differently in their email.



Prayers of;  
Supplication/Intersession/Petition  
Thanksgiving/Gratitude  
Adoration/Blessing

[prayer@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk](mailto:prayer@wiseman.ealing.sch.uk)

**All Things for Christ**

**Mark 1:29-39** As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all who were ill and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you!' Jesus replied, 'Let us go somewhere else – to the nearby villages – so that I can preach there also. That is why I have come.' So he travelled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

In yesterday's Gospel, Jesus is ministering to the sick. The Gospel begins as Jesus leaves the synagogue. He and some of His disciples were going to Simon's home. When Jesus arrives at Simon's house, He is told that Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a fever. Jesus went to her, took her hand, and helped her up. And immediately the fever left her!

As sunset was approaching, many people came to Jesus bringing their loved ones who were ill or possessed by demons. Mark writes that Jesus immediately healed those who were sick and He also drove out the demons. Very early the next morning, Jesus left and found a deserted place where He prayed. He must have needed some time to be quiet, to rest, and to be alone in prayer.

If Jesus came into our town our city, would we approach Him and ask Him to heal us? What is the healing we would hope for? Would it be for a physical illness or a spiritual need? Would we ask Jesus to heal and restore someone we love? Would we ask Jesus to heal our world? Today I invite you to reflect on the healing that you desire for yourself and for our world. God will hear our prayer. We may not get an immediate response but need to trust that God is at work. God will respond. How patient will we be?

#### Message from Our Lady of the Visitation Parish:

If you are a student in Year 10 or above and wish to enrol on the Confirmation programme, please fill out an application form and return it to the Parish Office.

For an application form and further information, please follow the link:

<https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/greenford/sacramental-prep/confirmation/>

#### Thursday 11th February Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes

*O ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of Mercy,  
Health of the Sick, Refuge of Sinners, Comfortess of the  
Afflicted,*

*you know my wants, my troubles, my sufferings.*

*Look upon me with mercy.*

*When you appeared in the grotto of Lourdes, you made it a  
privileged sanctuary where you dispense your favours, and  
where many sufferers have obtained the cure of their  
infirmities, both spiritual and corporal.*

*I come, therefore, with unbounded confidence to implore your  
maternal intercession.*

*My loving Mother, obtain my request.*

*I will try to imitate your virtues so that I may one day share  
your company and bless you in eternity. Amen.*



#### Don't forget!

We take donations for the Ealing  
Foodbank all year round.  
The collection box is in the RE Office, on  
the 1st floor of  
Jerusalem.



#### Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Is now taking place every  
Friday lunchtime in the  
Chapel for all students  
and staff on site.

