



## **FEAST OF ST JOSEPHINE BAKHITA**

### **Primary School Context and Prayer Sheet**

St Josephine was born in the Sudan, East Africa, in 1869.

Between the ages of 7 to 9 she was kidnapped and sold into slavery, moving around many families, caring for the children of the family and looking after the home. Some families were kind, however others were cruel and Josephine was sometimes treated badly – even beaten. Josephine worked for an Italian official who brought her to Italy to care for his children. While the family was on holiday Josephine went to stay with some religious women called the Canossian Sisters in Venice. Here she was very touched by the faith, hope and love of the Sisters. Some friends helped Josephine go to court to become a free woman. No longer a slave, Josephine made up her own mind to join the Canossian Sisters and to follow Jesus by offering hospitality to people who visited their convent, being kind to all people and making sure the convent and school were places of safety, harmony and joy. Even when Josephine was struggling with illness and pain, she still brightened the lives of those who met her. Josephine died on 8 February 1947. This is why we celebrate her feast day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February.

In 2000 Josephine was declared a saint by the Catholic church. She is remembered as a women of faith and forgiveness, courage and compassion. One of her sayings that we remember today is:

*The Lord has loved me so much: we must love everyone... we must be compassionate!*

In the Mary Ward family around the world we also remember St Josephine today as the patron saint or special saint of people who are still victims of slavery. It is hard to believe that many children today are forced to work against their will and are not able to attend school like we do to make money to support their families. Children in some countries make our chocolate, clothes, coffee, shoes and many other items that we use every day.

So today we pray and learn together as a Loreto family, asking St Josephine to touch our hearts and minds:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

We pray in honour of St Josephine Bakhita and ask her to teach us about kindness, love, forgiveness and justice, let us pray to the Lord

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

We pray for all victims of slavery in Australia and all countries of the world. May governments and leaders work hard to make laws that keep people free and happy, let us pray to the Lord

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

We pray for children who are forced into slavery, that they will be supported to live with full human rights, let us pray to the Lord

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

We pray for our Loreto Rumbek friends in Sudan as St Josephine was born in their land. May these Mary Ward friends and students blossom in their wonderful school, let us pray to the Lord

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

We pray for the Loreto family worldwide, that we will continue to learn about modern slavery and take small actions to make our world a more safe and just place for everyone, let us pray to the Lord

**All: Lord, hear our prayer**

Mary Ward	Pray for us
Gonzaga Barry	Pray for us
St Josephine Bakhita	Pray for us

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

