



GOD
OF MERCY
AND LOVE

we place our African American and African Families before You today. May we be proud of our history and never forget those who paid a great price for our liberation. Bless us one by one and keep our hearts and minds fixed on higher ground. Help us to live for you and not for ourselves, and may we cherish and proclaim the gift of life. Bless our parents, guardians and grandparents, relatives and friends. Give us the amazing grace to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Help us, as Your children, to live in such a way that the beauty and greatness of authentic love is reflected in all that we say and do. Give a healing anointing to those less fortunate, especially the motherless, the fatherless, the broken, the sick and the lonely. Bless our departed family members and friends. May they be led into the light of Your dwelling place where we will never grow old, where we will share the fullness of redemption and shout the victory for all eternity. This we ask in the Precious Name of Jesus, our Savior and Blessed Assurance. Amen. Holy Mary, Mother of Our Families, pray for us.

Prayer composed by
FR. JIM GOODE, OFM,
who in 1989 founded this National Day of Prayer
for the African American and African Family.



I AM PRAYING FOR YOU
ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

NATIONAL
DAY OF
PRAYER
FOR THE
AFRICAN
AMERICAN
AND
AFRICAN
FAMILY

FEBRUARY 1, 2015

COURAGE

FOR THE STEP I'M ON
ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

By THERESE WILSON FAVORS and Rev. JAMES E. GOODE OFM

Courage is an interesting and powerful virtue to obtain. When we step into a foreign scenario that requires faith and hope, we pray for a double portion of courage. Believing folk know that courage emitted at the right time and deposited onto the right situation can make way for confidence and grace. Believing folk know that courage can become both strength for the journey and shield to combat the evil that finds it's way to your address; huffing and puffing ...trying to blow you and your house down. Life challenges will lead you to pray courage for the step you are on! For echoes of Jesus' words reverberate in our souls... Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me (John 14:1).

Our Jesus stands ready to aid and assist, administering courage for the step you are on. Jesus says... "Come to me". That means that Jesus will meet you where you are in life and move you to take up just enough courage for the step you are on. Don't take for granted this intimate closeness that Jesus' desires to provide. Jesus' call to Come to Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28) is not a maybe; it is a sure and blessed act of love. Oftentimes the rest needed is courage. Courage coupled with faith gives you the ability to face impossibilities and turn improbable outcomes into miraculous realities.

St. Josephine Bakhita knows both the joy and benefits of courage. She needed it for survival. From slavery to homelessness, St. Josephine Bakhita prayed Courage. Snatched from her family, displaced to sojourn into a foreign land, still in the chains of bondage, she prayed Courage. St. Josephine Bakhita prayed Courage because she knew that Courage is the flip side of despair. When St. Josephine Bakhita

entered religious life, her primary mission was to stand at the door of the convent and await visitors. She did not know their past nor their situation in life but St. Josephine was in the ministry of letting people in and out, through those doors. Surely, she became an encourager saying... "Courage, I am praying for you". Those unfamiliar to her ultimately became her family for sometimes in life, you make family where you find family. Courage was the wisdom she passed on to them along with the blessed assurance that she would pray for them.

Once you pray Courage; trust and believe that God will mount you up with strength as if on eagles wings. God's courage; God's grace embedded within you will carry you to a new destination in life, flipping that desperation into God's restoration project of hope. Perhaps this is why St. Josephine Bakhita passed on to her circle of sojourners this spiritual wisdom ... "Courage, I am praying for you" along with... "What a great grace it is to know God."

Take courage Brothers and Sisters, for St. Josephine Bakhita and all our righteous ancestors of faith are praying for you. Take courage, Brothers and Sisters for our Jesus is praying for you. Now, let us pray for ourselves and each other for our families need courage in order to overcome the daily demons of this world. Our families need courage ...to raise their children and other folks children. We need courage to conquer violence in our communities... Courage to build up our people when daily dosages of helplessness haunt us... Courage to keep on loving when it is difficult and draining... Courage to be on mission among those who our world wants to dismiss.

Take Courage, dear Brothers and Sisters. St. Josephine Bakhita is praying for you. Take Courage, dear Brothers and Sister, our Jesus is praying for you and your family. Our Jesus will dispatch just the right amount of courage for the step you are on. Let's "raise our eyes toward the mountains, from where our help comes! Our help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. God will not let your foot slip and our God never sleeps (Psalm 121:1-4). Pray dear Brothers and Sisters for Courage is on its way, let's take it and fly as if on eagles wings!



I AM PRAYING FOR YOU

ST. JOSEPHINE BAKHITA

SUPPORTERS

BLESSED SACRAMENT SISTERS
BLACK AND INDIAN MISSION
FRANCISCAN HANDMAIDS OF MARY
HOLY FAMILY SISTERS
KNIGHTS OF PETER CLAVER AND LADIES AUXILIARY
NATIONAL AFRICAN AMERICAN CATHOLIC YOUTH
MINISTRY NETWORK
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK CATHOLIC ADMINISTRATORS
NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC APOSTOLATE FOR LIFE
NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC CLERGY CAUCUS
NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC CONGRESS
NATIONAL BLACK SISTERS' CONFERENCE
OBLATE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE
ORDER OF FRIARS MINOR
PROVINCE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
SOCIETY OF THE DIVINE WORD
SOLID GROUND FRANCISCAN MINISTRY
THE JOSEPHITES
USCCB SECRETARIAT FOR
CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE CHURCH

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
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HOW TO CELEBRATE THIS DAY

WORSHIP together at the Eucharistic Table
and pray as a family on the National Day of
Prayer for the African American and
African Family.

Celebrate a meal together and tell
your FAMILY STORY.

Set aside some time to read the FAMILY BIBLE.
Say a prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother
of God, for the needs of all families throughout
the world.

As a family let us prepare and give a meal
to a family in need in our Church or local
community in this the National Day of Prayer
for the African American and African Family.

Join in SOLIDARITY with our African
sisters and brothers in the Motherland,
as we pray for their needs and
their families.

**NATIONAL DAY
OF PRAYER
FOR THE AFRICAN
AMERICAN
AND AFRICAN FAMILY**

COURAGE

