

ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA  
**MISSIONARY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION**



## 2023 ✝ Lent Mission Lesson Plan

Dear Mission Moderators, Principals and Directors & Coordinators of Religious Education,

*Thank you for your ongoing support of the Missionary Childhood Association-MCA!*

We are extremely excited to announce that new materials are being offered to engage the students and bring them to a closer awareness of the projects that are supported by **MCA** in the Mission lands.



We hope that during this holy season of Lent you use the following Lesson Plan. It will engage the students in Mission animation so they can bear witness to the lives of children in the Missions and put their faith into action through their prayers and sacrifices.

**NEW Bookmarks, Posters and collection boxes are available to order by emailing [MCA@archphila.org](mailto:MCA@archphila.org).**

These materials go hand-in-hand with this comprehensive lesson plan and teachers guide that can be used throughout the 40 days of Lent. There is also a **LENT ACTIVITY FOR FAMILIES** (Page Two) that can go home with the students on Ash Wednesday.



### **Introduction for Teachers and Catechists:**



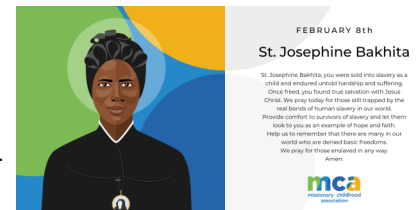
The lesson plan is designed to provide children with an awareness of the struggles of Missionaries and children in a particular Mission area, **South Sudan**. Begin reading the biography on **Saint Josephine Bakhita** (Page Three) and completing the follow up discussion activities. Saint Josephine Prayer Cards are available for download to distribute to your students [HERE](#).

We encourage you to continue praying this prayer with the students throughout Lent. After learning about St Josephine, who was from South Sudan, the children can learn about the current struggles that

that this Mission area is facing today with the **Mission Focus on South Sudan** (Page 4).

Throughout this exercise, it is important that the children are reminded that they are also *Missionaries*, and are called to provide for their brothers and sisters world wide, like those living in South Sudan and other areas like it.

Feel free to email [MCA@archphila.org](mailto:MCA@archphila.org) with follow up questions on any information that was provided. The closing prayer service is an opportunity for the students to not only pray, but make sacrifices. The last page on this resource, the **Lenten Sacrifice Challenge**, is a visual reminder to help the children support the Missions through the 40 days of Lent.





## 40 FINDS in 40 DAYS CALENDAR

During Lent, we challenge you to clean out and organize the areas listed below. You may find loose change to give to the Missions or items that can be donated to worthy charities along the way. During Holy Week, find any locations that you haven't covered, or offer help to your family members. Each day also has a Missionary Saint to pray to, ask for strength on your Lenten journey, making each day intentional with *Prayer and Sacrifice.*

### Lent Activity Challenge for Families

Ash Wednesday  <b>Junk Drawer</b> <i>Saint Vincent De Paul</i>	February 23rd <b>Utensil Drawer</b> <i>Saint Peter</i>	February 24th <b>Kitchen Cabinets</b> <i>Saint Junipero Serra</i>	February 25th <b>Laundry Room Drawer</b> <i>Saint Katharine Drexel</i>	February 27th <b>Laundry Room Cabinet</b> <i>Saint John Bosco</i>
February 28th <b>Bathroom Cabinet</b> <i>Saint Homobonus</i>	March 1st <b>Bathroom Drawer</b> <i>Saint Katharine Drexel</i>	March 2nd <b>Pantry</b> <i>Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton</i>	March 3rd <b>Pantry Drawer</b> <i>Saint Frances Cabrini</i>	March 4th <b>Toy Chest</b> <i>Saint Damian Molokai</i>
March 6th <b>Desk Drawer</b> <i>Saint Paul the Apostle</i>	March 7th <b>Under the Kitchen Sink</b> <i>Saint Frances Xavier</i>	March 8th <b>Refrigerator</b> <i>Saint John of God</i>	March 9th <b>Spice Cupboard</b> <i>Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne</i>	March 10th <b>Kitchen Drawer</b> <i>Saint Pedro de San Jose Betancur</i>
March 11th <b>TV Cabinet</b> <i>St. Marianne Cope</i>	March 13th <b>Book Shelf</b> <i>St. Thérèse of Lisieux</i>	March 14th <b>Parent's Closet</b> <i>Saint Scholastica</i>	March 15th <b>Sibling's Closet</b> <i>Saint Jerome</i>	March 16th <b>Parent's Drawer</b> <i>Saint Augustine</i>
March 17th <b>Sibling's Drawer</b> <i>Saint John Neumann</i>	March 18th <b>Bedroom Closet</b> <i>Saint Anthony</i>	March 20th <b>Bedroom Drawer</b> <i>Saint Agnes</i>	March 21st <b>Coat Closet</b> <i>Saints Timothy and Titus</i>	March 22nd <b>Linen Closet</b> <i>Saint Blaise</i>
March 23rd <b>Night Stand</b> <i>Saint Scholastica</i>	March 24th <b>Coffee Table Cabinet</b> <i>Saint Valentine</i>	March 25th <b>Foyer Table</b> <i>Saint Catherine of Sienna</i>	March 27th <b>Garage</b> <i>Saint Phillip</i>	March 28th <b>Garage Drawers</b> <i>Saint James</i>
March 29th <b>Garage Cabinets</b> <i>Saint Phillip Neri</i>	March 30th <b>Garage Shelves</b> <i>Saint Joseph</i>	March 31st <b>Car Dashboard Cabinet</b> <i>Saint Rita of Cascia</i>	April 1st <b>Car Center Console</b> <i>Saint Charles Lwanga &amp; Companions</i>	April 3rd <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Anthony of Padua</i>
April 4th <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Barnabas</i>	April 5th <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Maria Goretti</i>	April 6th <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Kateri Tekakwitha</i>	April 7th <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Thomas</i>	April 8th <b>Holy Week</b> <i>Saint Dominic</i>

### Saint Josephine Bakhita's Story:

Born in 1869 in South Sudan, Josephine was a member of the Daju people and her uncle was a tribal chief. As one of six, Josephine's life was happy and relatively prosperous. One day, when she was out for a walk with a friend, she was kidnapped and sold into slavery. She was nine years old and never saw her family again.

During the following 12 years, she experienced such trauma, as she was bought, sold and given away a dozen times, that she forgot her birth name. Her kidnappers called her *Bakhita*, which means "fortunate." Her name was a contradiction as maltreatment and suffering was a part of her daily life. Throughout this mistreatment, Bakhita retained a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty of the natural world. She said later in life that she thought to herself, *"Who could be the Master of these beautiful things? I felt a great desire to see Him, to know Him and to pay Him homage."*

Bakhita was finally sold to an Italian master to serve as a nanny. The family moved to Venice, Italy from Africa. When the master and his wife took a trip back to Sudan, they decided to leave Bakhita and their daughter in the care of the Canossian Sisters, Missionaries who taught them about the Catholic faith and God's great love for everyone.

When the couple returned to Italy and declared that they would all return to Sudan with Josephine as their slave, she courageously refused. The Canossian Sisters intervened for Bakhita. ***She was declared free!*** Bakhita was baptized, taking the name Josephine. She was assigned to a convent in the town of Schio, in Italy's Vicenza region. For the next 42 years of her life, she served as a cook and a doorkeeper.

She also traveled and visited other convents telling her story to other sisters and preparing them for work in Africa. In this way she was a great help to future Missionaries, and she bore witness to the struggles that many children in the Mission lands of Africa were facing. When speaking of her enslavement, she often professed she would thank her kidnappers. For had she not been kidnapped, she might never have come to know Jesus Christ and entered His Church.

She was known for her gentle voice, smile and charismatic spirit. When she died on February 8, 1947, thousands of people waited to pass by her body to honor this humble woman known for her piety and charity.



*Even in the worst times of her life, Saint Josephine loved the beauty of God's creation. This month, organize a **World Mission Rosary Prayer Walk** around your school's campus. End the rosary with a prayer to Saint Josephine Bakhita.*

### Mission Saint: Lent

### Saint Josephine Bakhita



***"If I was to meet those slave raiders that abducted me and those who tortured me, I'd kneel down to them to kiss their hands, because, if it had not have been for them, I would not have become a Christian and Religious woman."***

**-Saint Bakhita-the Fortunate One**

**Feast Day:** February 8th

**Patron of:** Sudan,  
Modern day slavery and  
human trafficking

**Birth:** 1869

**Death:** February 8, 1947





## Mission Focus: South Sudan

*Sacrifice like Missionaries this Lenten Season*

South Sudan, is one of the world's youngest countries, after gaining its independence from Sudan in 2011. Located in northeast Africa, this landlocked nation of 11 million people shares borders with some of the continent's poorest countries.

In square miles, South Sudan is slightly smaller Texas. The country is yet to recover from a brutal five year civil war: two years after the independence, fighting broke out. South Sudan suffered from extreme violence, that children, *just like you*, have had to act as soldiers.

Many people lost their loved ones and more than a third of the country's 11 million people were uprooted from the place they called home. It is estimated that 2.2 million people, nearly 20% of the population, are still displaced and the United Nations warns that up to 10 million will need food aid in 2023. *There are just over 12 Million people in our state of Pennsylvania, so you can imagine just how many people are struggling in the entire country of South Sudan.*



### MISSION ACTIVITY FOR LENT

**Consider giving up a soda or your favorite dessert *each day in Lent*, you could save about **\$1.90** a day from a vending machine.**

**This small amount is what many families in South Sudan rely to eat *DAILY*.**

Food is not the only issue for the South Sudanese people. Those who were able to remain home have very difficult lives: Violence is ongoing, roads are in poor condition and there is a severe lack of health care. Receiving a proper education is also very difficult due to the lack of facilities, trained teachers, and materials. Less than a third of the population knows how to read and write.

Father Michael Barton, a missionary writes.

*"I feel like, without a priest, people in situations such as this one could easily lose hope, lose sight of the fact that life, when infused by the enormous gift of faith, is a tremendous gift that we are called to protect."*

Missionaries heavily rely on their brothers and sisters in the United States.

If you need gas to visit the many parishes that are far from the centers of the city, or when the time comes to buy a Bible, medicines, or even a light bulb, we rely exclusively on the faithful, who are poorer than we are, or from Catholics all over the world, who support us through MCA." An **estimated 82% of the people in the country live on \$1.90 a day**. By supporting **MCA**, you are helping Missionaries like Father Michael and families most in need like those living in South Sudan.

**Last year, MCA sent \$290,000.00 to South Sudan.**

**MCA members in South Sudan also sacrificed and collected \$ 1,660 so that other children in the world may come to know the love of Jesus, too.**

# + LENTEN

## Prayer Service

### *Introduction for Teachers and Catechists:*

After learning about the struggles of **Saint Josephine Bakhita** throughout her life time, and the current hardships of the children living in South Sudan, now is the perfect time to reflect with your students on what they have heard.



The theme of this prayer service is **Prayer and Sacrifice**. Here you will find a opening activity, scripture reading, reflection and an additional Mission story and activity. All of these elements can be used in an assembly with a large group or with your classroom, in addition to the previous Lent activities provided.

We encourage all to continue praying for the Missions during Lent and to take up sacrifices for the projects supported by **MCA**.



## Opening

**Prayer and Sacrifice** are two words that we are familiar with. Some of us learned to pray before we even learned how to read or write! And even though we may not have understood what a sacrifice is as early as that, we certainly have had to experience giving up something we loved.

**Can you think of an example?** Whether it is a favorite toy you had to share with a younger sibling or even sacrificing one more tasty treat after we've had too many. Take this time to think about what these words mean to you. **When was the last time you said a prayer or made a sacrifice?** Explore these words and work together to create a definition for each. As you listen to the reading, think about these two words - **Prayer and Sacrifice**.

## Scripture Reading James 2:14-17

### Reflection

***"Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead."***

I want you to imagine that you are at lunch, and you have a friend who does not feel well because they are extremely hungry and forgot their lunch. Your response would not be to simply tell them "Go eat!", instead we would share our food. This reading explains that it is not enough to just say things and wish people well, we must take action and provide help to others. Earlier you worked together to create a definition for the words **Prayer and Sacrifice**. During that activity, did you make any connection between these two words? We just talked about how faith has no meaning without action, and it is the same for prayer and sacrifice. Especially during the season of Lent, our prayers for the children in Mission lands, should be supported by our sacrifices for them too!

### Bonus Challenge:

Take the time now to create new definitions. The definition for **PRAYER**, must include the word *Sacrifice*. And the definition of **SACRIFICE**, must have the word *Prayer*.

## Mission Activity

At Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish, in Juba, South Sudan, children gather outside an abandoned thread factory, **using old spools as seats while they learn their catechism**. The factory itself has become a makeshift church because their regular chapel is unsafe.

At last report, **Missionary Childhood** members worldwide sent \$490,000.00 to the Archdiocese of Juba to help rebuild the Church and its services there.

Of those funds, \$7,000 went to Saint Thomas the Apostle Parish for faith formation programs. Amazingly, **MCA members** in South Sudan were able to sacrifice **\$408.00**, so that other children in the world may come to know the love of Jesus, too.

**We can be inspired by the children of Juba** who despite their circumstances, have shown that they truly know the definition of prayer and sacrifice and have put their faith into action!

**NOW IS TIME FOR US TO DO IT TOO.**





# LENTEN SACRIFICE CHALLENGE!

Let this activity serve as a reminder of the children you just heard about in the prayer service, who are sitting on spools as they learn each day. Color and decorate this sheet of paper however you like then place it on a flat surface. During Lent, cover one coin each day. Half way through Lent, you will have **collected \$1.90**. This is the same amount of money that families in South Sudan live on daily. If you are up for the challenge, don't stop at just one coin a day! Stack as many as you can throughout the **40 days of Lent**.

