



logo©2004 by R Fulwiler

# Seasoning the Seasons™

The Institute for Christian Formation, Inc.

Text©2009 by Sandra A. Chakeres. All rights reserved.

Saint Josephine Bakhita

## Saint Josephine Bakhita: February 8

Some of our Saints, such as Saint Paul, whose conversion we celebrate on January 25th, lived in the early days of Christianity. And other Saints are from more modern times. Saint Josephine Bakhita is one of our "newer" Saints on our Universal Roman Calendar. Josephine was born around 1869 in the African country of Sudan, probably in the area around Darfur which is so much in the news these days.

We don't even know what Josephine's real name was. She was captured and sold into slavery at a young age, and was given the name *Bakhita*, which means *lucky one* or *fortunate one*. She eventually ended up in Italy, where she became a Christian. After spending time as a catechumen (someone preparing for baptism), she celebrated the sacraments of initiation (baptism, confirmation and Eucharist) on January 9th, 1890, and was given the baptismal name Josephine. This experience was so powerful for her that she was often seen kissing the baptismal font while exclaiming, "*Here I became a daughter of God.*"



Josephine Bakhita joined a religious order, the Canossian Daughters of Charity, and professed her religious vows on December 8, 1896. For fifty years in this religious order, she served in various ways such as cooking, sewing, and greeting people at the door.

Josephine Bakhita died a natural death from a painful disease on February 8, 1947. Her last words were, "*Our Lady! Our Lady!*" She was invoking Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

On October 1st, 2000, Pope John Paul II canonized Josephine Bakhita. She is our first Sudanese Saint, and is patron of Sudan. Her Feast Day is February 8th. Jose-

phine's slave name, Bakhita, means *fortunate one*. How fortunate *we* are to have such a wonderful role model!

