



Marking the First International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking, February 8, 2015, the Most Reverend Paul-André Durocher, Archbishop of Gatineau and President of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), has issued a message reflecting on the impact of human trafficking. Encouraged by Pope Francis, the Day of Prayer and Awareness is an initiative by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, and the International Union of Superiors General. It is celebrated on the feast day of Saint Josephine Bakhita (1869-1947), a former Sudanese slave who eventually was freed and became a nun.

In his message, Archbishop Durocher outlines the life stories of several people living in Canada who were victims of human trafficking. He also proposes how Canadians can deepen their awareness of the problem and combat it, and gives the example of women religious as seen in the work of the Canadian Religious Conference. The CRC, he states in his message, "made this a priority in 2004, in response to calls from women religious throughout the world. In this [Year of Consecrated Life](#), let us give thanks to God for this prophetic voice and re-echo it around us."

[Link to the message of the CCCB President \(PDF\)](#)

[Link to CRC resources on human trafficking](#)

[Link to an outline of Saint Josephine Bakhita's life and spirituality](#)

[Link to the prayer by the Holy See for the First International Day of Prayer and Awareness](#)

[against Human Trafficking \(PDF\)](#)

*PHOTO: CNS/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters*