

**Advent** – The season of Advent is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to preparing for the celebration of the Lord’s birth on Christmas and for Christ’s second coming at the end of time. It is also a time to remember expectant mothers preparing for the birth of their children. Let us read the article “*10 Ways to Support Her When She’s Unexpectedly Expecting*” at <https://www.respectlife.org/support-her> and say a *Prayer for Pregnant Mothers*: “*O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers facing difficulties. Guide us as we strive to make our parish communities places of welcome and assistance for mothers in need. Help us become instruments of God’s love and compassion. Mary, Mother of the Church, graciously help us build a culture of life and a civilization of love, together with all people of good will, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life. Amen.*” (Prayer is inspired by St. John Paul II’s encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* and created to accompany the Archdiocese project *Walking with Moms in Need*; prayer card is available here: <https://www.walkingwithmoms.com/prayer-for-pregnant-mothers>)

**St. Josephine Bakhita** – Born in Sudan in 1869 and enslaved as a child, Josephine Bakhita was sold to an Italian diplomat and taken to Italy. She was later brought to freedom through the help of the Canossian Daughters of Charity. In October 2000, she was canonized by Pope John Paul II, who noted that “in St. Josephine Bakhita we find a shining advocate of genuine emancipation. The history of her life inspires not passive acceptance, but the firm resolve to work effectively to free girls and women from oppression and violence, and to return them to their dignity in the full exercise of their rights.” “O St. Bakhita, assist all those who are trapped in a state of slavery; Intercede with God on their behalf so that they will be released from their chains of captivity. Those whom man enslaves, let God set free.” — USCCB, “*Prayer to St. Josephine Bakhita.*”

**Quotes** – \* “Having received the gift of the Gospel of Life, we are the people of life and a people for life. It is our duty to proclaim the Gospel of Life to the world. To proclaim Jesus is to proclaim life itself. Gratitude and joy at the incomparable dignity of the human person impel us to bring the Gospel of life to the hearts of all people and make it penetrate every part of society.” — USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, “*The Gospel of Life: A Brief Summary.*” \* “Jesus calls each of us to ‘care for the other as a person for whom God has made us responsible’ (EV 87). ...The encyclical *The Gospel of Life* recognizes the full range of threats against human life, from poverty and malnutrition to murder and war. Particular emphasis, however, is placed on threats to life at its beginning and end—precisely when it is most in need of protection. In modern times, children in their mothers’ wombs and those approaching the end of their lives are certainly among the ‘least of these’ in our world’s estimation.” Excerpt from *Evangelium vitae*, © 1995, Libreria Editrice Vaticana. — USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, <https://www.respectlife.org/live-the-gospel-of-life>

**Our Prayers** – \* For all the faithful: May the Lord help us build a culture of life in vigilant expectation of His return; *We pray to the Lord*: \* May God help us prepare the way of the Lord by acting with tenderness and compassion, especially toward the most vulnerable among us; *We pray to the Lord*: \* For women who are unexpectedly pregnant: May they be filled with trust in God’s providence and lovingly welcome the gift of their child; *We pray to the Lord*: \* For all victims of human trafficking: That they may find hope and healing in the Lord who proclaims liberty to captives and release to prisoners; *We pray to the Lord*: