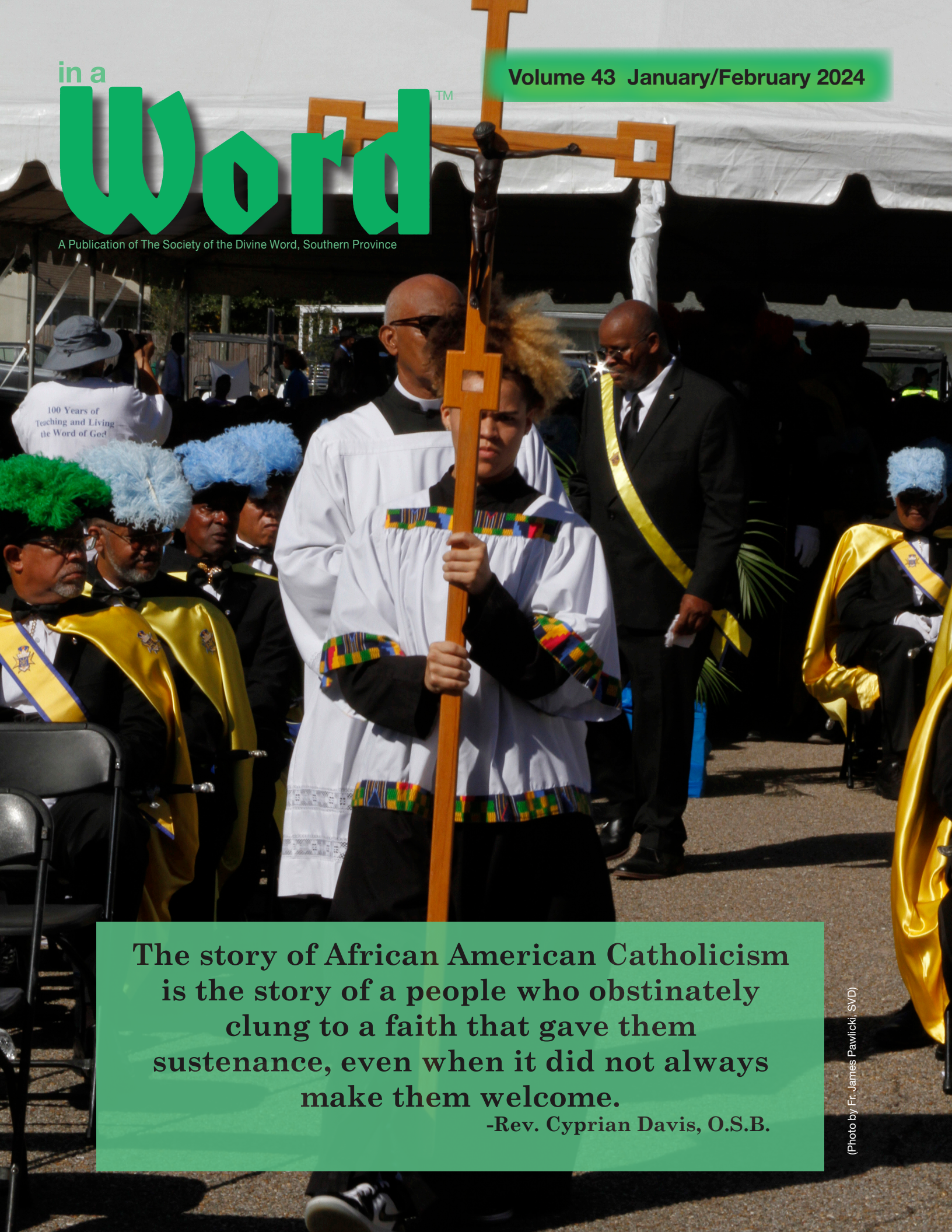


in a

# Word™

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**The story of African American Catholicism is the story of a people who obstinately clung to a faith that gave them sustenance, even when it did not always make them welcome.**

**-Rev. Cyprian Davis, O.S.B.**



# St. Moses the Black

c. 330-c.405

Feast is August 28

Born in Egypt

One of the more exciting of the early monks in the period of desert Christian monasticism was a Black African (Nubian) now honored as St. Moses the Black.

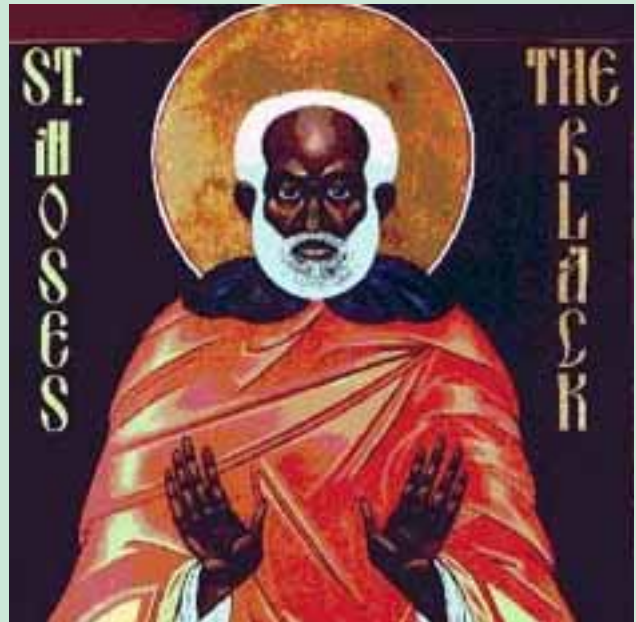
He had been a slave of a government official in Egypt who discharged him for theft and suspected murder. He became the leader of a gang of 75 bandits who roamed the Nile Valley and had the reputation for being associated with terror and violence.

Moses was a large and imposing figure; he became rather notorious for his escapades. On one occasion, a barking sheep dog prevented Moses from executing a planned robbery, so he swore vengeance on the owner. Carrying out his threat, he approached the hut of his victim from the opposite side of the Nile and, placing his weapons between his teeth, swam the river. The owner of the dog heard the approach, so he hid along the river bank, thus escaping disaster, Moses, not finding the shepherd, took four rams from the flock, towed them back across the river, flayed them, sold the skins for wine, cooked the best parts, and feasted before walking back 50 miles to his camp.

Moses was transformed after he and his group attacked a monastery, intending to rob it. He was met by the abbot, whose peaceful and warm manner overwhelmed him. He immediately felt remorse for all his past sins, sincerely repented, and begged to remain at the monastery.

Moses was tortured by his past and for years was tempted to return to his old ways. One day, as he was confessing his sins to St. Macarius, an angel appeared with a tablet full of his sins. As he confessed, the angel began wiping the tablet clean. The more he confessed, the more the angel wiped, until by the end it was completely clean. After meeting St. Macarius and St. Isidore, he completely left his old ways behind him and became a monk.

The conversion of Moses was not instantaneous, he had a rather difficult time adjusting to regular monastic discipline. His flair for adventure remained with him. Once, while living in a small cell, he was attacked by four robbers. Much to their surprise,



Moses fought and overpowered them, tied them together and dragged them to the chapel where the other monks were praying. He dumped the crew in front of the other monks and exclaimed that he did not think it "Christian" to hurt the intruders. He asked what he should do with them. According to tradition, the overwhelmed robbers repented, were converted, and themselves became monks under the influence of Moses.

In another incident related in the sources, one of the brothers committed a fault. A council met and Moses was invited, but refused to attend. Someone came to him to let him know the others were waiting, at which Moses went to the meeting. He took a leaking jug filled with water and carried it on his shoulder (another version has him carrying a basket of sand with a hole in it). When he arrived, the others came out to meet him asking, "What is this?" Moses replied, "My sins run out behind me and I do not see them, but today I am coming to judge the errors of another." Hearing that, they said no more to the erring brother, but forgave him.

Moses became the spiritual leader of a colony of hermits in the desert near Skete. At some time, he had been ordained a priest — an uncommon phenomenon at that period for desert monks. When he was 75 years old, about the year 407, word came that a group of renegades planned to attack the colony. The brothers wished to defend themselves, but Moses forbade such action. He told them to retreat rather than take up the sword. He and seven others stayed on to greet the invaders with open arms, but all were martyred by the bandits. A modern interpretation honors St. Moses the Black as an apostle of nonviolence. He is remembered on the 28th of August. Today he is considered the patron saint of African Americans.

# St. Josephine Bakhita

1868-1947

Feast day is February 8

Born in Obeid, Sudan

St. Josephine Bakhita was born in Sudan in 1869. At the age of nine she was captured by slave traders. During the next ten years she passed through the hands of five different slave owners.

Bakhita was not the name she received from her parents at birth. **The fright and the terrible experience she went through made her forget the name her parents gave her. Bakhita, which means “fortunate”, was the name given to her by her kidnappers.**

Sold in the markets of El Obeid and Khartoum, she experienced the physical and moral humiliations and sufferings of slavery. Her third owner was a Turkish military officer and his family. **The women of the house mistreated Bakhita terribly, regularly beating her for no reason. They were so cruel to her they even tattooed her with a needle inflicting severe pain to the point she almost died.**

In the Sudanese capital, Bakhita was bought by an Italian consul, Callisto Legnani. For the first time since the day she was kidnapped, she realized with pleasant surprise that no one used the lash when giving her orders; instead, she was treated with love and cordiality. In the consul's residence Bakhita experienced peace, warmth and moments of joy, even though veiled with nostalgia for her own family whom, perhaps, she had lost forever.

The political situation forced the consul to leave for Italy. Bakhita went with him and a friend of his, a certain Mr. Augusto Michieli. On their arrival in Genoa, Mr. Legnani, at the request of Mr. Michieli's wife, agreed to leave Bakhita with them. She followed the new “fam-



***I have given everything to my Master: He will take care of me...the best thing for us is not what we consider best, but what the Lord wants of us!***

***-St. Josephine Bakhita***

ily”, which settled in Zianigo, near Mirano Veneto.

When their daughter Mimmina was born, Bakhita became her babysitter and friend. The acquisition and management of a large hotel in Suakin on the Red Sea forced Mrs. Michieli to move to Suakin to help her husband. Meanwhile, on the advice of their administrator, Mimmina and Bakhita were entrusted to the Canossian Sisters of the Institute of Catechumens in Venice. It was there that Bakhita came to know about God, whom “she had experienced in her heart without knowing who he was” since she was

a child. *“Seeing the sun, the moon and the stars, I said to myself: who could be the Master of these beautiful things? And I felt a great desire to see him, to know him and to pay him homage...”*

This African flower, who knew the anguish of kidnapping and slavery, bloomed

marvelously in Italy, in response to God's grace, with the Daughters of Charity, where **everyone still calls her “Mother Moretta” (our Black Mother)**.

She asked for Baptism and after several months in the catechumenate, Bakhita received the sacraments of Christian initiation and was given a new name, Josephine. It was January 9, 1890.

On December 8, 1896 she took vows with the Daughters of Charity of Canoosa who welcomed her with open arms. For the remaining years of her life her sanctity shone through her whole life. Everyone great and small were touched by her.

At the cathedral in Obeid, Sudan, a painting of Bakhita hangs next to that of the Blessed Mother, the Queen of Africa.



# in a word or two




Sr. Rose Martin, Kathryn Glenn SSps,  
1940- 2024.

It is with deep sadness that we announce that Sr. Rose Martin Kathryn Glenn passed away on January 24, 2024 at the age of 83.

She was born in Birmingham, AL on September 16, 1940. She joined the Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit in 1958 and lived as a religious missionary for 63 years. She served as a nurse in Ghana, then as a pediatric nurse practitioner Lake County, IL and Chicago Youth Headstart Program and then as Director of Health for Jubilee Schools in Memphis, TN. Services for Sr. Rose Martin were held at the Convent of the Holy Spirit, 319 Waukegan Rd., Northfield, IL, on January 29, 2024.

As one family member said "Sr. Rose was loved and her life mattered". May she rest in peace!





**2024 ARCHBISHOP LYKE CONFERENCE**

**STANDING IN THE NEED OF PRAYER:**  
*Reclaiming Our Black Catholic Liturgy*

June 18-22, 2024  
Embassy Suites by Hilton  
Grapevine DFW Airport North  
2401 Bass Pro Drive  
Grapevine, TX 76051



To obtain direct information and updates, please go to the website and sign into our mailing list

[www.lykeconference.com](http://www.lykeconference.com)



## PRAYER

Saint Josephine Bakhita,  
you were enslaved as a child;  
you were bought and sold, you were treated brutally.  
Intercede, we implore you, for all those  
who are trapped in trafficking and slavery.  
May their captors let them go,  
and may this evil be erased from the face of the earth.  
Saint Josephine Bakhita,  
once you regained your freedom,  
you did not let your sufferings define your life.  
You chose a path of kindness and generosity.  
Help those blinded by greed and lust who trample  
the human rights and dignity of their brothers and sisters.  
Help them to break out of their hateful chains,  
to become fully human again, and to imitate  
your kindness and generosity.  
Loving and Gracious God,  
make us instruments of your Spirit for bringing liberation  
to those who are enslaved and denied freedom.  
Help us to be strongly committed to taking action  
against human trafficking and bless our efforts  
to raise awareness and support all people  
of goodwill in fighting against trafficking and exploitation.  
We make this prayer through Christ, our Lord.  
Amen.

(Adapted from Pontifical Orientations on Human Trafficking)



**X INTERNATIONAL DAY  
OF PRAYER AND  
AWARENESS AGAINST  
HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
2024**

*Save  
the  
Date*

***Black Catholic Women:  
Called, Blessed, and Sent***

**5th National Black Catholic  
Women's Gathering**

**Friday, July 26 - Sunday, July 28, 2024**

**Louisville Marriott East  
1903 Embassy Square Boulevard  
Louisville, Kentucky 40299**

**REGISTRATION:**

**TO RESERVE A ROOM:**

[HTTPS://BOOK.PASSKEY.COM/E/50739](https://book.passkey.com/E/50739)

(2024 NATIONAL BLACK CATHOLIC WOMEN'S  
GATHERING)

**MARRIOTT: 1-502-491-1184**

**ROOM RATE: \$163.54 (PER NIGHT—INCLUDES TAX)**

**COMPLIMENTARY PARKING AVAILABLE**

**Deadline for Hotel Reservation - July 4, 2024**

**\$300 / NON-NBSC MEMBERS**

**\$250 / NBSC MEMBERS AND ASSOCIATES**

For more information

contact NBSC:

[nbsc@nbsc68.org](mailto:nbsc@nbsc68.org)



Divine Word Missionaries is an international missionary community of over 7,000 brothers and priests. In 1905 the SVDs began working among African Americans in the Southern United States. Today, Divine Word Missionaries work in over 35 parishes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, Florida and Arkansas.

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