

**Friday, 8 February: Saint Josephine Bakhita**

Josephine was born in 1869 in the Darfur region of western Sudan. Slave traders kidnapped her and named her Bakhita, meaning 'fortunate'. She was sold as a slave several times until 1883, when she was sold to the Italian consul, who treated her with kindness and warmth. When he returned to Italy with his family, she accompanied them, and in 1888 she went to live at the Catechumenate of the Canossian Sisters in Venice. She was baptized in 1890, taking the name Josephine. According to Italian law, since she had reached the age of majority, she was now free. She chose to join the Canossian Daughters of Charity and lived 50 years in religious life in Schio (Vicenza). She led a simple life as a cook, seamstress and doorkeeper. Her gentleness and compassion for the poor and suffering endeared her to all. She is still known today in Schio as "our Black Mother." She died in 1947, after a long illness, and was canonized in 2000. The first saint from Sudan, Josephine Bakhita is the patron of that country.



**4th Sunday in Ordinary Time**



**Gospel-Luke 4:21-30**

Jesus began speaking in the synagogue, saying: "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." And all spoke highly of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They also asked, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" He said to them, "Surely you will quote me this proverb, 'Physician, cure yourself,' and say, 'Do here in your native place the things that we heard were done in Capernaum.'" And he said, "Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place. Indeed, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah when the sky was closed for three and a half years and a severe famine spread over the entire land. It was to none of these that Elijah was sent, but only to a widow in Zarephath in the land of Sidon. Again, there were many lepers in Israel during the time of Elisha the prophet; yet not one of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." When the people in the synagogue heard this, they were all filled with fury. They rose up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town had been built, to hurl him down headlong. But Jesus passed through the midst of them and went away.

**ST. JOSEPH'S NEWSLETTER**

**3 February 2019**

**Lunar New Year Additional Mass Schedule 2019**

**Lunar New Year Thanks-giving Mass**

3 February (Sunday) 9pm

**Lunar New Year Day Mass**

5 February (Tuesday) 12noon

**Mass on Second Day of Lunar New Year**

6 February (Wednesday) 12noon

**Mass on Third Day of Lunar New Year**

7 February (Thursday) 12noon

**ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH 37 GARDEN ROAD, HONG KONG**

T: (852) 2522-3992 F: (852) 2537-7463 W: <http://www.stjosephs.hk> E: [saintjoseph@gmail.com](mailto:saintjoseph@gmail.com)

**Eucharistic Celebrations**

Weekdays: 7:45 a.m., 12 noon & 6:00 p.m. Anticipated Sunday Masses: Saturday 6:00 p.m.  
Sundays: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11:30 a.m. & 6:00 p.m. Tagalog Masses: 1, 2:30 & 4:00 p.m.  
Sunday School Mass at St. Joseph's College, 7 Kennedy Road, Hong Kong 9 a.m.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE MASS

As Jesus inaugurates his mission in Nazareth, the people in his town, though amazed at his gracious words, question his claim because he is just one of them, being the son of Joseph. They are furious when Jesus cites two examples of how God sent great prophets to non-Israelites. True acceptance and following of Jesus involve openness to the Spirit's call to search our hearts. In Jesus, the love of God is offered to all, not only to a few people. For not being open to the Holy Spirit in our lives we ask the Lord for forgiveness... *I confess...*

## HEADINGS FOR READINGS

**Jeremiah 1: 4-5, 17-19** - God tells Jeremiah the prophet that his message will be opposed but God stands by his side always.

**1 Corinthians 12: 31 - 13: 13** - Christian love is the best way to follow Jesus.

**Luke 4: 21-30** - The people of Nazareth reject Jesus.

## SCRIPTURE NOTE

God's words in today's First Reading point us beyond Jeremiah to Jesus. Like Jeremiah, Jesus was consecrated in the womb and sent as a "prophet to the nations".

Like the prophets before Him, Jesus too faces hostility. In today's Gospel, the crowd in His hometown synagogue quickly turns on Him, apparently demanding a sign, some proof of divine origins—that He's more than just "the son of Joseph."

The sign He gives them is that of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. From their colorful careers Jesus draws two stories. In each, the prophets bypass "many . . . in Israel" to bestow God's blessings on non-Israelites who had faith that the prophets were men of God. "None . . . not one" in Israel was found deserving, Jesus emphasizes.

His point isn't lost on His audience. They know He's likening them to the "many . . . in Israel" in the days of the prophets. That's why they try to shove Him off the cliff. As He promised to protect Jeremiah, the Lord delivers Jesus from those who would crush Him.

And as were Elijah and Elisha, Jesus is sent to proclaim God's gift of salvation—not exclusively to one nation or people, but to all who realize in faith that from the womb God alone is their hope, their rescuer, their "rock of refuge," as we sing in today's Psalm.

Prophecies, Paul tells us in today's Epistle, are partial and pass away "when the perfect comes." In Jesus, the word of the prophets has been brought to perfection, fulfilled in those who have ears to hear, as He declares in today's Gospel.

Greater than the gifts of faith and hope, Jesus shows us how to love as He loved—to love God as our Father, as the one who formed us in the womb and destined us to hear His saving Word.

This is the salvation, the "mighty works of the Lord," that we, like the psalmist, are thankful to proclaim daily in the Eucharist. (Scott Hann)

The  
**WORD**  
by name  
is Jesus Christ

## Calendars

### Tuesday, 5 February : Saint Agatha

*Agatha is known mainly through legend. She died during the time of Decian persecution (249-251). It is alleged that she was sent to a brothel to force her to give up her faith. After she was tortured, the apostle Peter is said to have appeared and cured her. The following day she died in prison of the new cruelties.*

*Her intervention was credited with stilling the eruption of Mount Etna the year after her burial. In the Middle Ages, especially in southern Germany, bread, candles, fruits and letters were blessed in her name to ward off destruction by fire. She is considered a patron of miners, alpine guides and nurses. She is mentioned in Eucharistic Prayer I.*



### Wednesday, 6 February: Saint Paul Miki and Companions

*Jesuit seminarian Paul Miki went to his martyrdom proclaiming his faith. On 6 February, 1597, he and 25 companions, clergy and lay, were killed for their faith in Nagasaki, Japan. They were suspended on crosses and killed by spears thrust through the heart. Before his death, Paul affirmed his faith in Christ and offered forgiveness to those responsible for his death.*

*This persecution was triggered by a nationalist fear of foreigners: for almost the next 200 years, Japan would be closed to the rest of the world. Despite this isolation, the faith survived without any priests and with only the sacrament of baptism. Paul Miki and his companions were canonized in 1862. Paul Miki is the patron saint of Japan.*