



OUR MISSION AND SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN

(8 February: In memory
of Saint Josephine Bakhita)

O God, come to my assistance...

Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

CHANT: BEATI VOI POVERI

INTRODUCTION

In 1995, our predecessors at the 34th General Congregation declared in Decree 14 that solidarity with women is an integral part of the Society's mission in the service of faith because inseparable from the broader imperative of promoting universal justice. Along with the entire Society, we were invited to listen attentively and respectfully—"in a spirit of friendship and equality"—to what women, especially our partners in ministry, had to say and to commit ourselves to meaningful steps to highlight and strengthen our solidarity with them. The grounds for truly just and equal relations between human beings is, of course, our equality before God and

the oneness of our faith.

From Hagar to Lydia, from Monica to Theresa of Calcutta, the holy women of sacred scripture and history have served as models for us all. We remember before God how they opened themselves in faith to be forever changed by the power of the Holy Spirit, and how their lives, their faithfulness, their wisdom, and their prophetic witness have strengthened the family, the community, and the Church.

CHANT: MAGNIFICAT

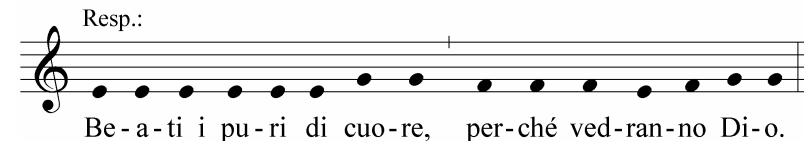
READING

Through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendant, heirs according to the promise.

Por la fe en Cristo Jesús todos sois hijos de Dios. Losque os habéis bautizado consagrándoos a Cristo os habéis revestido de Cristo. Ya no se distinguen judío y griego, esclavo y libre, hombre y mujer, pues con Cristo Jesús todos sois uno. Y si vosotros pertenecéis a Cristo, sois descendencia de Abrahán, herederos de la promesa.

(Gal. 3, 26-29)

Beatitudini



Beati i poveri di spirito,
perché di essi è il regno dei cieli.
Beati quelli che piangono,
perché saranno consolati. *Resp.:*

Beati i miti,
perché erediteranno la terra.
Beati quelli che hanno fame e sete della giustizia,
perché saranno saziati. *Resp.:*

Beati i misericordiosi,
perché troveranno misericordia.
Beati i puri di cuore,
perché vedranno Dio. *Resp.:*

Beati gli operatori di pace,
perché saranno chiamati figli di Dio.
Beati i perseguitati a causa della giustizia,
poiché di essi è il regno dei cieli. *Resp.:*

PRAYER IN SILENCE

INTERCESSIONS

Thanks be to God who has made us all one in the saving blood of Christ the Lord.

May your kingdom come, that justice may reign.

Bless and strengthen, O Lord, all women who nurture the young, tend to the elderly, and care for the earth with steadfast love and devotion, we pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Protect our sisters from harm, from abuse, from neglect and discrimination; may they be healed in mind, body, and soul of whatever afflictions and trials that befall them, we pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We remember Deborah and Judith, Naomi and Ruth, Elizabeth, Mary and Martha, and the women at the tomb. Encourage and renew all women among us who labor in ministry for the sake of the kingdom, especially our sisters in consecrated life, we pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Enlarge our gratitude for all the women who perform crucial but often thankless tasks in our communities. May they and all working women be respected, appreciated, and justly compensated, we pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Today we honor Saint Josephine Bakhita, who as a child in Sudan was kidnapped and sold into slavery, later converted to Christianity, was freed, and eventually entered religious life in Italy. Through her intercession, we pray especially for the women of Darfur and southern Sudan, who like slaves, find themselves powerless in the face of ethnic or religious hatred and violence; and for all women in Africa and around the world who suffer in particularly brutal fashion the cruelties and loss of war, famine, forced

migration, and structural injustice. Like Saint Josephine Bakhita, may they find in God an endless source of the consolation, hope, and sustaining love that sets us all free in Christ, we pray.

Lord, hear our prayer.

PATER NOSTER (IN LATIN)

CONCLUDING PRAYER

O God, we praise you today in particular for the multitudes of strong and devoted women who have guided us in faith, sustained and furthered our ministries, and so often stood as courageous witnesses of peace, trust, and reconciliation throughout the world. As we seek to follow in the footsteps of the holy witnesses of all the ages, from our Mother Mary and the apostles, to heroic modern believers like Saint Josephine Bakhita, help us to prepare ourselves inwardly, day after day, to place our trust in the mystery of faith. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now,
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen..**

Let us praise the Lord,

And give him thanks.

CHANT: Beati voi poveri