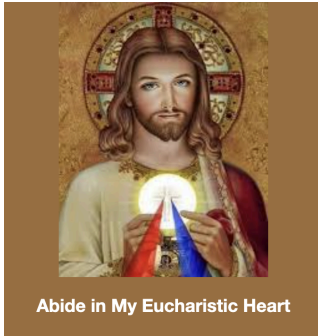


TASTE Reflection Questions
April 11, 2024



St. Josephine Bakhita
To Forgive and to be Free
Fr. Ebuka Mbanude

When you look at the Crucifix,
you understand how much Jesus loved you then.
When you look at the Sacred Host,
you understand how much He loves you now.
~ St. Teresa of Calcutta.



1. What did you find most interesting about this talk?

2. St Bakhita said, “If I were to meet the slave-traders who kidnapped me and even those who tortured me, I would **KNEEL AND KISS THEIR HANDS**, for if that did not happen, I would not be a Christian and religious today....The Lord has loved me so much: We must love everyone...We must be compassionate.

- Does St Bakhita’s complete forgiveness, and even gratefulness of her abusers surprise or inspire you?
- Have you ever forgiven someone and even been grateful for the evil done to you?
(If not, have you observed this forgiveness and gratefulness by another)?
- How did you feel after forgiving another or after observing such an action?

3. Two things seemed to bring St. Bakhita to God: First, when seeing the **SUN, THE MOON AND THE STARS**, she wondered who could be the Master of these beautiful things and felt a great desire to see him, to know him and to pay him homage.” Second, when she saw **JESUS ON THE CROSS**, she wanted to know who was hanging on the cross and why he was killed. As she learned more about who Jesus was and how He was inflicted with violence, she was attracted to Him and He began to change her. Her revelations seemed to come full circle when she realized that she was a Daughter of God (the maker of the sun, the moon, and the stars).

- Has the beauty of nature ever drawn you closer to God? (Perhaps the recent Eclipse of the Sun) How?
- When you look at Jesus on the Cross, how does that image draw you closer to Him?
- Are there any other images that draw you close to God? Explain.

4. Some of us may be able to relate to some aspects of Bakhita’s story or maybe for some of us, it is too foreign. However, the part of her story that is very dear to each and every one of us is the part that deals with forgiveness and how forgiveness sets us free. Although it is not easy as we desire, pray for, and struggle to forgive, that is the place where God invites us to go and never to run away from it since that is where peace can be found.

- When you have trouble forgiving, how challenging is it to remain in the struggle to forgive?
- Do you trust that God will always be there with you in this most difficult place? Why or why not?
- Have you found peace after forgiveness? Explain.