

Prayer for the Persecuted Church December 8, 2017

From International Christian Concern (ICC)

<http://info.persecution.org/newsbites-december-8>

Iraq Authorities Must Do More to Protect the Rights of Minorities

12/6/17 Iraq (CNA)

In the wake of ISIS's occupation of Nineveh, the UN convened to discuss the repercussions of the last several years. They are adamant "that the region's future depends upon the preservation of the practices of pluralism and diversity." Often, minorities' rights are taken away, but during ISIS's occupation, even those in the majority had basic rights stripped from them. One archbishop stressed that Christians and the diversity they bring "should be considered 'part of the solution, not part of the problem, in terms of bringing peace and humans rights' to the country."

Pray for Iraq as the whole country is reeling from the effects of ISIS.

Pray for the leadership in this country as they seek solutions to human rights issues.

Pray for those trying to rebuild their lives in the aftermath of war.

Nigerian Gov't Accused of Bombing Christians

12/6/17 Nigeria (Daily Post Nigeria)

For years now, Fulani herdsman in Nigeria have been attacking Christian villages, fighting for land, and devastating homes and families. The government is often accused of taking no action against this kind of inhumane treatment. The president, Muhammadu Buhari, has also been accused of protecting the Fulani herdsman instead of the Christians they persecute. Buhari was recently accused of sending "the Nigerian Air Force to 'bomb' Christians defending themselves against Fulani herdsman oppressors in Numan, Adama-wa State."

Pray for these Christian villages that are susceptible to persecution by the Fulani herdsman.

Pray for those who have already lost homes, land, and loved ones during attacks.

Pray for someone in authority to step up and provide protection for the vulnerable.

Christian Boy Killed by Hand Grenade in Pakistan

12/4/17 Pakistan (UCAN)

A hand grenade thrown "at the main gate of a Christian colony in... Chaman," Pakistan killed three people, including a seven-year-old boy. Those injured were brought to a local hospital for treatment. This attack happened just one day after Taliban gunmen entered a college and killed nine people. "Both...terrorist attacks happened as Muslims were celebrating... the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad." On religious holidays, minority Christian populations tend to experience an increase in religiously motivated violence.

Pray for the family that lost this seven-year-old boy to such violence.

Pray for the healing of those injured in the attack.

Pray that those responsible for the attack would be found and held accountable.

Controversy Continues over Call to Prayer in India About Elections

12/4/17 India (Crux)

An Indian bishop, Thomas Macwan, wrote a letter before a recent election, asking “for prayers for the victory of ‘humane leaders faithful to the Constitution’ during the elections in the state of Gujarat.” Since then, he has been accused of attempting to cause polarization in the state. Macwan sees the heavy influence these election results will have over the country as he asks for prayer for such an important occasion. He wishes that human rights violations, among many other injustices, will be dealt with fairly in the future.

Pray for India’s Gujarat state as they head toward elections.

Pray that those whom Macwan sent his letter to would be faithful to uphold their state in prayer.

Pray for those in leadership positions throughout India.

St. George’s Church Opens Its Doors Following April Attack

12/4/17 Egypt (Christianity Today)

On April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday, St. George’s Church in Tanta, Egypt, suffered a terrorist attack, in which 40 people died and more than 70 others were injured. Due to damages from the blast, the church has been undergoing renovations since then, and just re-opened its doors. The church was provided with security and many people gathered on Sunday for the first mass since the attack. Just last month, another attack at St. George’s was stopped ahead of time by security services at the church.

Pray for those still dealing with the trauma and loss from the attack carried out against this church.

Pray that the security forces at the church would be vigilant and able to prevent future attacks.

Pray that those who attend this church would be strong in their faith in the midst of persecution.

Second Iranian Christian Released from Prison After Paying Heavy Bail

12/4/17 Iran (Mohabat News)

On October 19, 2017, Abdol-Ali Pourmand, a Christian man from southwestern Iran, was arrested. While in jail, he was required to sign a confession paper that was blank at the time. It is thought that this is a way “the Iranian government...[can] fabricate evidence against Christian citizens.” He was released after paying a hefty bail of about \$60,000.00 USD. Iranian authorities often devise false charges against Christians, such as alleged threats to national security, in order to justify their crackdown on this minority population.

Pray for this man who was unjustly arrested and has suffered heavy financial and emotional losses.

Pray that those who are wrongly imprisoned would not lose their faith.

Pray for the friends and family members who are heavily affected by a loved one’s imprisonment.

From the Voice of the Martyrs website:

<http://www.icommittoprayer.com>

Pray for Christian Leaders Charged with Forced Conversions

Dec. 07, 2017 | India

In September, six Christian lay leaders were invited to a man's house to pray for his sick wife. While praying, a group of people arrived at the house, forced the Christians outside and beat them. They took the six Christians to the police station and filed charges against them, accusing them of forcing people to convert to Christianity. The Christians were imprisoned for one month but have since been released. Please pray that these believers will remain faithful. Pray that the charges will be dropped and that nonbelievers in their community will be inspired by their example.

Pray for Algerian Christians Facing Increasing Intimidation

Dec. 07, 2017 | Algeria

Authorities in northwestern Algeria shut down a church and arrested several Christians recently. "Over the past few months, it seems that the Algerian government is doing this all over the country," a VOM worker said. On Nov. 9, authorities in Ain Turk closed a church, confiscated its equipment and arrested several worshipers after accusing the church of illegally printing materials for evangelism. Those arrested were questioned by police before being released, and the church equipment was later returned. VOM workers said Islamic extremists are pressuring the government to intimidate Christians. "The Algerian believers are standing strong and not giving in to their tactics," the VOM worker said.

Pray for Christians Forced to Reject Their Faith

Dec. 07, 2017 | China

Government officials in Jiangxi province have pledged to help Christians living in poverty under the condition that they reject their faith, follow communism and replace their pictures of Jesus with pictures of President Xi Jinping. While authorities claim the Christians are voluntarily replacing their religious images, believers have reportedly been visited by Communist Party officials checking to make sure the images have been replaced. These recent actions are linked to new regulations on religion that were implemented in the name of national security. The regulations prohibit unregistered religious groups from teaching about religion or participating in meetings outside the country. In addition, an ordinance scheduled to take effect in February will impose hefty fines on organizers of unapproved religious activities, another sign of increasing scrutiny of Christians. Pray for Chinese believers as they face increased persecution.

From Open Doors Prayer Calendars:

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/take-action/pray/monthly-prayer-calendar/>

December 8 | MEXICO

Please pray for Jose de la Cruz, a Wixarica Christian leader. He and 20 other Christians were displaced from their land. December 9 | JORDAN Pray that the refugee crisis would provide an opportunity for many to hear the gospel.

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December 10 | KYRGYZSTAN PRAISE REPORT:

A Christian camp was fined after a police search, but later the fines were reduced by 50%. Praise God!

December 11 | PAKISTAN

Pray for the more than 40 children who were encouraged in their faith by "Kidspiration," an initiative used to strengthen churches in the region.

December 12 | CENTRAL ASIA

Pray for persecuted missionaries who went to a district of a central Asian country for outreach and were arrested there. Pray for their safety and release.

December 13 | MEXICO

Pray for an upcoming event on freedom and religion in Jalisco.

December 14 | TAJIKISTAN

Pray for God's protection for Christian children's camps, as well as for the leaders who run them.