

## Prayer for the Persecuted Church February 16, 2018

### Ruthless Attacks Against Christians Continue in Nigeria

*2/12/18 Nigeria (WWM)*

A new wave of violent attacks has hit Adamawa, Nasarawa, and Benue, where Boko Haram and Fulani militants continue to bring calamity to Christians. A Christian student was killed and others were injured at the Modibbo Adama University of Technology, where assailants set nine stores ablaze where Christian students keep their property. Tinde and Dumne villages were destroyed, houses in Benue were set ablaze, and since January 15 in Nasarawa, roughly 25 villages have been destroyed.

- Pray for the government's silence regarding these atrocities to gain international condemnation.
- Pray for Christians to find protection and strategies to safeguard their churches, families, and villages.
- Pray for the Nigerian authorities to crack down on those attacking innocent Nigerians.

### Landmines in Raqqa Continue to Inflict Fear and Misery

*2/11/18 Syria (Human Rights Watch)*

In January 2018, Human Rights Watch collected information from international medical organizations working around Raqqa, Syria. Nadim Houry, terrorism/counterterrorism program director at Human Rights Watch, stated that "international support for dealing with the aftermath of the battle...has not risen to the challenge." The deadly aftermath of antipersonnel mines left behind by ISIS militants has killed and injured hundreds of innocent civilians, including more than 150 children.

- Pray for the disarmament of landmines and discernment for Christians returning to residential areas.
- Pray for families that have suffered loss from landmines to find healing and support for their loss.
- Pray for those returning to Raqqa to find provision for their spiritual, physical, and emotional needs.

### Church in Egypt Reopens Doors While Awaiting Licensure

*2/11/18 Egypt (Wataninet)*

After three months of closure due to security fears, the Church of Pope Kyrillos and Archdeacon Habib Girgis reopened in north Cairo. The unfinished church has been used for worship for the last two years, and although an official inspection committee visited, no final decision has been announced. The Shubral-Kheima church is among those built before the 2016 law was passed requiring licensure and population growth has caused an urgent need for a place of worship within the Christian community.

- Pray for Copts to be protected as they continue to find places to gather for fellowship and worship.
- Pray for the government to provide proper licenses and protection for churches.
- Pray for favor in bringing about just laws and peaceful relationships among religious groups in Egypt.

## **Mob Burns Church in India Over False Accusations**

*2/10/18 India (Morning Star News)*

On January 16, Pastor Joeswa was surrounded by a mob of men and women carrying a corpse. They alleged that because he had prayed for the deceased woman, Seemi Devi, he was responsible for her death. They proceeded to set fire to the building, vehicles, and personal property as well as attempting to burn the woman's husband alive. Rinku Kumar, Devi's husband, was kept in police custody for his safety. Superintendent of Police Popsi Malik told Morning Star News that the couple had been attending church but were still practicing some Hindu rituals.

- Pray for God's protection and healing for those injured – especially Rinku Kumar, Devi's husband.
- Pray for God's peace to prevail and end mob violence against Christians in Rajouri District.
- Pray for boldness and safety for those sharing Christ and discipling new believers in India.

## **IRGC Uses Social Media to Identify Protesters**

*2/10/18 Iran (AEI)*

In December, social media became central to communication during protests in Mashhad. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and its associated news and correspondence agencies turned to social media to crowdsource identification of demonstration leaders. News agencies Tasnim and Gerdab.ir are asking Twitter followers to identify suspects as an effort to mobilize regime supporters to become informants. Through these actions, the government is seeking to create an effective test strategy to identify those who are loyal by betraying others.

- Pray for discernment and protection for those involved in the protests and for God's peace to surround families.
- Pray for the government of Iran as the regime seeks to rally Iranian nationalism.
- Pray for the truth to be known as protest information is described by the media.

## **Chinese Churches Ordered to Forbid Entry to Minors**

*2/9/18 China (Breitbart)*

Authorities have instructed pastors to post signs barring entry to minors as part of China's most recent restrictions affecting Christian churches. The new set of regulations on religious activities is part of an expansion of government bans already in place regarding children attending Christian services in certain districts. Chinese authorities stated that minors receiving religious education too early would affect the education system. Father Thomas from the Henan province believes that religious activities are being brought under strict government control.

- Pray for boldness for missionaries and church leaders, and creativity in sharing the love of Christ.
- Pray for conviction and salvation for the Chinese people and that they will reject atheistic materialism.
- Pray for Chinese Christians to have discernment while meeting together for worship and evangelism.

From the Voice of the Martyrs website:

<http://www.icommittoprayer.com>

## **Five Christians Detained for Celebrating “European” Religion**

*Feb. 15, 2018 | Laos*

Five Khmu believers were arrested and fined for holding a Christmas celebration on Dec. 15. The Christians had received permission from village authorities, but district officials arrested them after learning they had invited a pastor from a neighboring village. The five believers were held in prison for a few nights and fined about \$600 before being released. “Christians are still restricted in this district,” a local official told Radio Free Asia. “They are not allowed to teach from the Bible or to spread their religion to others, because Christianity is the religion of the Europeans and Americans.” A VOM field leader said the men have been arrested previously for sharing the gospel, but they refuse to stop their evangelical work despite warnings from authorities. Praise God for their boldness.

## **Pray for Naomi, Whose Husband Was Killed by Islamists**

*Feb. 15, 2018 | Kenya*

Christian widows whose husbands were killed in Islamist attacks are gradually returning to their coastal Kenyan homes. After an attack in June 2014 in which Islamists went door to door killing Christians, Naomi and her four children fled to her parents’ home in another village. They spent a difficult year there grieving and healing, but Naomi then decided to return to her farm. With encouragement and help from VOM, she now manages the farm with help from her two sons, ages 11 and 8. In a good season the farm sustains them, but its productivity depends on weather conditions. Pray for Naomi as she raises her children and continues to grieve the loss of her husband.

## **Pray for New Believers in a Safe House**

*Feb. 15, 2018 | Bangladesh*

After focusing on an unreached area for the past 11 months, an evangelist has seen hundreds of Muslims come to faith in Christ. As a result, some have experienced persecution. A young married couple took shelter in a VOM-supported safe house for several months when they were kicked out of their family because of their Christian faith. After receiving training in how to study the Bible and how to live every day with Jesus, they moved out of the safe house and are now supporting themselves. Since January 2017, the safe house has served 65 persecuted believers. Pray for those still in the safe house as well as for those who have moved on after receiving instruction there. Praise God for all those coming to know Christ through the work of this evangelist.

## From Open Doors Prayer Calendars:

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

### February 16 | VIETNAM

Pray for the organizers of a church outreach event, that they will not be discouraged to push through the event despite being given false hopes by the authorities. Pray they would continue to work diligently.

### February 17 | IRAQ

Please pray for the church in Iraq. The number of Christians has gone down dramatically over the past decades. Compared to the 1990s, only around 10 percent of the Christian population still lives in Iraq. Pray that the church will remain an integral part of Iraqi society.

### February 18 | MALDIVES

There is no institutional church here. Those who follow Jesus can only celebrate Him in the privacy of their homes or in their hearts. Pray for all followers of Jesus, that they will still be able to come together and encourage one another in the Lord.

### February 19 | ALGERIA

In this Muslim-majority nation, Christians are often pushed to the margins of society, and judged by different standards than anyone else. Pray for believers in Algeria to look to God for their identity, not in a race, ethnicity or national origin.

### February 20 | KENYA

Please pray for Kenyan widow, Caroline Riziki. Suspected al-Shabaab members came to her house and hacked her husband and a neighbor's son to death. Caroline witnessed the event and is deeply traumatized. Please pray for her to recover emotionally from such a horrific act.

### February 21 | KYRGYZSTAN

Pray for an elderly Kyrgyz woman, Darina.\* In recent years, her oldest son Keram\* has been very aggressive towards his mother's faith. Please pray for Darina's safety and comfort, and pray for Keram to be saved by Jesus.

### February 22 | CHAD

Pray for 17-year-old Halime from a small village in northern Chad. She encountered Christ in her dreams. She decided to follow Him, but now that her family knows, they threaten her. Pray for her to remain steadfast.