

## Prayer for the Persecuted Church October 13, 2017

From ICC...

### **Cathedral in Nigeria Celebrates 150 Year Anniversary**

*10/11/17 Nigeria (Vanguard)*

In March of 1867, the building of the Cathedral Church of Christ began. This is one of Nigeria's oldest Anglican churches, marking its 150th anniversary. This church has also served as a gathering place for worship for Christians from around the world. An event this rare brought about a large celebration, and there are also plans to plant another church in the Okun Ajah region. The celebration also honored Bishop Ajayi Crowther, the first African Anglican Bishop for Western Equatorial Africa.

Pray for this church as they continue to be a presence and witness in Nigeria.

Pray for the planting of the new church they plan to open in December.

Pray that those who attend these churches would be a light to those who do not yet know Christ.

### **Church in Pakistan Damaged in Grenade Attack by Extremists**

*10/11/17 Pakistan (Christians in Pak.)*

Unknown extremists recently damaged the Gospel Faith Church in Quetta, Pakistan, when they threw a grenade into it. No one was in the church when the attack took place, thankfully, but this also allowed the militants to escape before the police arrived. The attackers have not yet been identified, but an investigation into the incident continues and authorities have blocked off the area. This attack has led to higher security precautions at other places of worship in order to prevent similar attacks.

Pray that fear would not overtake those who attend this church.

Pray that authorities would be able to find the attackers in order to prevent this from happening again.

Pray for other churches, as places of worship are often targets for attacks.

### **Mother Describes Struggle of Raising Christian Children in Eritrea**

*10/11/17 Eritrea (Open Doors)*

Eritrea is one of the most repressive countries in the world. In 2002, the government closed all independent churches and since then have only allowed the practice of four religions. One woman, "Ruth," described how difficult it is to be a Christian in Eritrea. Her husband was a church leader when the government shut down their church and then imprisoned him. She and her children suffer from his absence and she said, "I long for the day that my husband and I can be present together in their lives."

Pray that Ruth's husband will be restored to her and her children soon.

Pray that other families who have to practice their faith in secret would remain encouraged and strong.

Pray for more in Eritrea to come to know Christ, in spite of the repressive state.

### **ISIS Recruits Domestic Abusers with the Promise of Sex Slaves**

*10/11/17 Iraq (The Independent)*

The Henry Jackson Society recently published a report showing the low levels ISIS has reached in order to recruit new members. The report shows evidence of ISIS using sex

slaves "as an incentive for new recruits and foreign fighters" to join their extremist group. ISIS also sees this as a way of punishing Yazidi women who do not subscribe to the Islamic faith. As ISIS loses ground, they are "gaining strongholds on trafficking routes" and using "organized crime" to continue their recruitment efforts in methods that are increasingly brutal.

Pray for the many women who are vulnerable to ISIS's inhumane and demeaning treatment of them.

Pray that the women enslaved by ISIS would be rescued soon.

Pray for those who have been rescued from ISIS as they face emotional and physical scars from their time in captivity.

## **Algerian Christian Convicted of Blasphemy Goes on Hunger Strike**

*10/11/17 Algeria (Premier)*

In August of 2016 an Algerian Christian convert, Slimane Bouhafis, was given a five-year prison sentence, along with a fine, for a social media post about Jesus overcoming Islam's lies. After an appeal, his sentence was lowered to three years with no fine. Later, his sentence was lowered even further, by another 16 months. However, his conditional release request was rejected and he has now gone on a hunger strike in protest of this decision. His family is entreating him to end the hunger strike for the sake of his "physical and psychological wellbeing."

Pray that Slimane Bouhafis would act in wisdom during the remainder of his time in prison.

Pray for his friends and family who have been affected by his arrest.

Pray for those who are routinely persecuted for practicing their faith in countries that try to suppress them.

## **Discrimination Continues to Impact Pakistan's Christians**

*10/11/17 Pakistan (Daily Times)*

Christians and other religious minorities are often discriminated against, from where they can live to what jobs they can hold, across Pakistan. The government's seemingly intentional blindness to these minorities' plights makes change seem impossible. The small glimmer of hope that they do have comes through media and social media where minorities have a greater voice. "For the last seventy years, minorities in Pakistan are suffering, protesting against the social hatred, discrimination and persecution but their grievances were never ever entertained."

Pray for Christians not to lose their faith even in times of persecution.

Pray for the Church to come together for encouragement and resolve to stay the course in their faith.

Pray for these governments who can alleviate the burdens that Christians in Pakistan often carry.

## **FROM OPEN DOORS PRAYER ALERTS...**

### **MUSLIM BACKGROUN BELIEVER IN KYRGZSTAN FACES DIFFICULT DILEMMA**

Pastor Kimil\* lives in a small Kyrgyz town alongside many Uzbek people. For several years, Kimil, a Muslim Background Believer, and his wife and four school-age children

had their own small business—a chicken farm. He also pastored a local Christian church and he was actively preaching among Uzbek and Kyrgyz Muslims in his town. Local Muslim authorities don't like his Christian activity, because many Muslim people converted to Christianity through Kimil. Many times, they have threatened to imprison him, close his business or kick him and his family out of the town.

There have been an unusual number of inspections this year from various state structures. The revenue service, the sanitary and epidemiological service, and the financial police have all come to inspect the farm. Kimil established his business according to all the local rules and state codes, but despite that, the authorities have found reasons to fine him on several occasions. He just paid the fines and kept working, but in September he was ordered to close his business, without any explanations or reasons. The chicken farm was the only income for Kimil's family. Now, the pastor and his family are facing a difficult dilemma—leave their ministry and church and go to another city to survive, or stay and keep fighting.

## **CHILDREN'S WORSHIP INTERRUPTED BY A MAN WITH AX**

Happy Saturday, a children's worship service in Pulo Gebang flats, East Jakarta, turned frightening when it was interrupted by a man wielding an ax. The police investigation revealed that the culprit, Nasoem Sulaiman, commonly called Joker, said he had been irritated by the noise from the worship service and wanted to rest after some work he had done around the building. This was his third attempt since 2015 to interrupt the worship.

"What he did has caused fear among our children," said their teacher and the parents of these children (see the video in the YouTube Freddy Soenyoto, General Secretary of the Fellowship of Evangelical church and Institutions of Indonesia (PGLII), urged Christians to respond peacefully but also called on the police to uphold the law.

The police, Agustino Darmawan (head of People's Housing and Settlement of Jakarta), and the perpetrator have come to an agreement that if he attempts this or a similar act again, he will be prosecuted.

## **CHRISTIAN POLITICIAN ACCUSED OF PROSELYTIZING**

Fifteen non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Malaysia filed a police report against Selangor State Assembly speaker Hannah Yeoh for trying to preach Christianity through her autobiography *Becoming Hannah: A Personal Journey* sold in bookstores nationwide since 2014.

"She called Christians to come back and build the Kingdom of God. What does she mean by building the Kingdom of God? Which God is she referring to? We believe it is an attempt to spread the Christian beliefs to others. The authorities must take action," said Mohamed Hafiz Mohamed Nordin, the chairman of Jaringan Muslimin Pulau Pinang (JMPP), a Muslim NGOs.

In response, Hannah Yeoh told FMT News (Free Malaysia Today), "The Kingdom of God was mentioned many times in the Bible about His righteousness governing our hearts and minds. He says to love Him, to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, to reject corruption, to walk humbly, to do justice, to look after the orphans and widows. That, my friend, is what the Kingdom of God looks like."

These charges arise amidst other religious intolerance occurring more and more frequently. In a Muslim majority residential apartment, Flora Damansara, Muslims insisted that everyone living there must observe the Islamic code of dress. And in another incident,

a Facebook post showed a self-service launderette with a sign saying, "Muslim-friendly. This shop only accepts Muslim customers for sanctity factors."

All these affronts and accusations have resulted in a divided community, pitting one group against the other. Even some Christians are worsening the situation by condemning the other side. Praise God for the Sultan of Johor, the head of Islam in the state where the Muslim launderette is located. The Sultan made a very firm stand against the owner and ordered him to apologize to him and his subjects for the discriminatory policy. Pray for more Muslim leaders like him to stand up boldly against such religious intolerance.

### **From the Open Doors Prayer Diary...**

[https://www.opendoorsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/October-PFA.pdf?utm\\_source=September%20PFA&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=OctoberPFA2017](https://www.opendoorsusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/October-PFA.pdf?utm_source=September%20PFA&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=OctoberPFA2017)

### **October 13 | TURKMENISTAN**

Pray for a secret home group who recently had its leader arrested and place of meeting taken from them.

### **October 14 | PHILIPPINES**

Pray for students at Mindanao State University who were held hostage by Islamic militants.

### **October 15 | INDONESIA**

Pray for the church to be more intentional and bold in sharing the gospel to Muslims, and that they will lead the way in the fight against hate speech and violence.

### **October 16 | CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

Pray that the Lord will grant security forces success in restoring peace in the areas of CAR that need it the most.

### **October 17 | SRI LANKA**

Pray for a church that was threatened and protested by Buddhist monks. Pray for their safety and that they would be bold in their faith.

### **October 18 | INDIA**

Pray for the church of India as persecution against Christians continues to increase. Pray for their strength.

### **October 19 | CHINA**

Pray for Christian groups. They are being shut down and searched due to a widespread anti-terror campaign by the government.