

October 2013

But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

—Matthew 5:44

*May the Lord answer you when you are in distress;
may the name of the God of Jacob protect you.*

*May he send you help from the sanctuary
and grant you support from Zion.*

—Psalm 20: 1, 2

International—Pray for members of Boko Haram, al Qaeda, Al-Shabaab, Taliban, and other groups and individuals who commit acts of illegal violence against those with whom they disagree. Pray that they would choose light instead of darkness, choose life and love instead of hatred, and choose the forgiveness of Christ. Pray for the heads of governments, here and around the globe, that they would act with integrity and with the interests of others foremost in their minds. Pray that they would be wise and humble.

North Korea—Pray for Kenneth Bae, a Korean-American who was arrested in North Korea in November 2012. He has been sentenced to fifteen years hard labor. His family is very concerned about his health, having just heard that he's been transferred to a hospital. He was leading a tour group when he was arrested. His family members say that he is a strong Christian trying to help North Korea, but he has been charged with activities to bring down the government. Pray that Mr. Bae would be granted release, considering how dangerous North Korean prisons can be. A special US envoy was arranging to visit North Korea to request freedom for Mr. Bae, but North Korea has just canceled the invitation. (*Source: Open Doors*)

Egypt—Independent, award-winning journalist Ahmed Abu Deraa was imprisoned in mid-September by the military government there because of reporting he did on military operations in the North Sinai region. Not only is Ahmed Abu Deraa, a 38-year-old father of two, being prosecuted for doing his job as a reporter, but military trials are notoriously unfair. Human rights organizations say that the arrest of a journalist for reporting events and the trial of a civilian in a military court are enormous setbacks to the cause of human rights and freedoms in Egypt. Pray for Egypt as it continues on its precarious course between freedom and oppression. Pray for the protection of Christian communities and other minorities. Pray for the protection of women in what has become a violent and unstable situation. Pray for the release of Ahmed Abu Deraa, for justice in his case, and for courage to continue to pursue discovering and reporting the truth. Pray for freedom of religion and freedom of speech within Egypt and the region. (*Source: Amnesty International*)

Vietnam—Part of the persecution routinely experienced by believers in Vietnam is the confiscation of their land by the government. On July 31, a group of Christians had gathered for prayer in front of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Ho Chi Minh City in peaceable protest to the handling of these land disputes. In response, the police arrived there to break up the gathering, arrest those praying, and severely beat any who resisted. Several believers needed medical attention. Pray for the healing and comfort of those believers injured in this incident. Pray for justice and fairness in regard to their property disputes. Pray for those who are in positions of authority but choose to abuse that privilege by illegally taking what is not theirs or treating praying citizens with brutality. Pray that Christians continue to respond to these injustices with prayer, peaceful protest, and forgiveness. Pray for the government of President Truong Tan Sang, Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung and Communist Party Leader Nguyen Phu Trong.

(Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

Tanzania—Increasing tension in the Tanzanian islands have led to an acid attack on a 61-year-old Catholic priest outside an internet cafe on September 13. Rev. Anselm Mwang'amba sustained burns on his face, chest, and arms. This most recent attack follows a spate of targeted violence during the past year: two British teenagers burned with acid, Rev. Evarist Mushi murdered and Rev. Ambrose Mkenda injured in separate shootings, and Zanzibar Mufti secretary Sheikh Fadhil Suleiman Seroga also attacked with acid. These attacks against Christians and certain Muslims appear to be linked to a radical Islamist group campaigning for the independence of Zanzibar. Pray that calls from Christian leaders for the Christian community not to retaliate will be heeded. Pray that relations between peaceable Christian and Muslim communities would be strengthened rather than strained by these events. Pray for leaders and police to be engaged and effective in protecting the population and prosecuting perpetrators. Pray for Zanzibar President Ali Mohamed Shein, for his leadership, and giving thanks for his immediate offer of a reward of \$6,000 for information leading to the arrest of Mwang'amba's attackers. Pray for those who have been injured or have lost loved ones in recent months due to this violence, that they may know the peace and comfort of Christ. *(Source: The Washington Post)*

International—In the past decade, 81 million acres of land have been confiscated worldwide in a practice that has been termed by the international community as “land grabs.” Thousands of families around the world—always the poorest and most vulnerable—have been evicted from their homes, their possessions confiscated, and their lands given to large, multinational food companies to raise cash crops for export. The injustice is deepened, as it is almost always carried out in regions that frequently experience food shortages themselves. Pray for the victims of this injustice, such as the 769 families in the Polochic Valley in Guatemala, whose homes and crops were burned as they were forced from the land, and at least 3 people were killed. Pray that they might be restored to their homes, that restitution would be made for their losses, and that the Father of widows and orphans would sustain them and provide for them. Pray that the many large corporations, such as Coca-Cola, Pepsi, General Mills, Kellogg's, Associated British Foods, Mars, and Mondelez—who all scored low or failing grades in this arena—might be convicted of the wrongness of these practices and be moved to change their corporate values. Pray for the large population of consumers around the world that they might become informed and might be moved to act through their buying power and their voices to demonstrate to these companies that they do not want to purchase products manufactured at the cost of families, communities, and even human lives. *(Source: Oxfam)*

Kenya—On September 21, terrorists stormed the Westgate Mall in Nairobi, killing at least 61 people and injuring many more. Others remain unaccounted for. In the days following, details reveal that the innocent victims at the mall were not only murdered, but many endured gruesome torture prior to their deaths. Pray for the families and friends of those killed in the attack and for the many victims who survived but will undoubtedly face a long process of healing and restoration. Pray for the nation of Kenya, as the whole country must deal in various ways with the aftermath of this tragedy. Pray that authorities will handle this in timely, effective, and appropriate ways. Pray for the perpetrators to be apprehended, brought to justice, but also, to individually become convicted of the evil of their actions and turn from darkness to light. Pray for members of al-Shabaab, that the horror of this event might repel them from further involvement. Pray for the transforming power of Christ to change many lives through these circumstances. *(Multiple sources)*

Pakistan—Pray for the families and friends of the more than 80 men, women, and children who were killed on September 22, after a suicide bombing at a church in Peshawar, northwest Pakistan, and also, for the more than 120 others severely wounded in this tragic event, that they all would know the

comfort, peace, and healing of Christ. Pray that through the Holy Spirit they would respond with grace and forgiveness. Pray for those who encouraged the suicide bombers to embark on this violence, that they would recognize the evil of this path and turn to Christ. Give thanks for the public outrage at this attack, among Christian and Muslim leaders, and pray that these events might lead to greater tolerance of different faiths in Pakistan. Continue in prayer for Asia Bibi, Zafar Bhatti, and Imran Ghafur, who remain imprisoned for their faith. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)

Iran—During July and August, at least 20 Christians were arrested and detained throughout Iran, in cities such as Tehran, Karaj, Isfahan and Tabriz. Pray specifically for Ebrahim, Masoud, and Sevada, who were among the 20 arrested and who await trials. Pray for the recent transition of presidential power to President Hassan Rouhani, that it may lead to a new era of greater freedom and tolerance in Iran, and that he will make good on his publicly declared intentions to improve the human rights situation in Iran, including the drafting of a “civil rights charter.” Pray that these detained believers will be upheld and sustained by the Holy Spirit, as they await court dates, that they will receive justice, and that their witness will be strong throughout their ordeals. Pray for the Ministry of Intelligence and the Judiciary in Iran, over whom President Rouhani does not have direct control, and who are responsible for most of the human rights abuses in Iran. Pray for wisdom, discernment, and the direction from the Holy Spirit for those undergoing legal proceedings, and for Christian leaders in the community of believers in Iran. Pray for all believers in Iran—for protection, comfort, courage, and wisdom. Continue in prayer for Pastor Saeed, detained a year ago in September, and currently appealing his eight-year sentence. (*Source: Middle East Concern*)

International—Continue in prayer for Father Nguyen Van Ly (Vietnam), Chheddar Bhote (Nepal), and Tohar Haydarov (Uzbekistan), who all are serving prison sentences for their faith in Christ. Pray that they know they are not forgotten by believers around the world, and especially not by their Father in heaven. Pray for their sustenance and that many will see Christ and come to love Him through their lives and suffering. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)