

July 2015 Prayer Items

Psalm 23:4

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil;

For You are with me;

Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Colombia—As part of the ongoing internal conflict, Colombia has a long history of forced disappearances, rape, torture, and murder of those opposing the government. Additionally, human rights defenders who in recent days have spoken out calling for impartial investigations and a bringing to justice of those responsible for these atrocities have faced violence and threats themselves. Pray for the protection of family members of the disappeared who are seeking justice for their loved ones, such as Jacqueline Ramírez and Jhon Alexander Holguín Ramírez, who have received death threats and even been victim to violent attacks. Also pray for the safety of human rights lawyers, such as Andrea Torres Bautista and Berenice Celeita, who have received threats of rape and murder, and who have been followed and photographed by unknown individuals, for their work defending families of the disappeared and for sharing the grave human rights situation in Colombia in the United States and Canada. Pray that justice would be served for the victims of the ongoing human rights atrocities and that the government of Colombia would protect its citizens, seek the truth, and govern with justice and integrity. Pray that all involved in these situations would find the ultimate source of Truth and Justice in Christ. (Source: Amnesty International)

Middle East—Ongoing conflict in Iraq, and especially the invasion of Islamic State forces, have caused many to flee for their lives. Among the refugees are numerous Christian families, who are particularly vulnerable in the region. Beyond the fear and danger refugees face, their lives are disrupted in myriad ways that will have repercussions for years to come—including the loss of property, livelihoods, and education. Pray for the provision and protection of those fleeing Iraq in the wake of IS attacks. Give praise for the school for Iraqi Christian refugee children being set up in a nearby Middle Eastern country. Originally set up to teach 25, the school will be serving 100 children. Pray that those organizing and teaching will have the resources and stamina to help these children. Give thanks for this small piece of normalcy amid the loss and chaos these children and their families are experiencing. Pray for the safety of and provision for these families, that their faith would remain strong and that they might continue to be a witness to the faithfulness of God during the most difficult times. Pray for the country of Iraq and for those who perpetrate war and violence on innocent people. (Source: Voice of the Martyrs)

Eritrea—The United Nations Human Rights Council released a 484-page report this past June documenting gross and pervasive human rights abuses in Eritrea, which described as a totalitarian state. The report found that average citizens were subjected to spying and surveillance and their movements were monitored and restricted. It is estimated 5,000 Eritreans flee to countries like Libya each month in an attempt to escape the oppressive and dangerous conditions within their own nation, and those within and outside of Eritrea live in utter fear. There is basically no freedom of expression or religious freedom; Jehovah's Witnesses have no rights as citizens, and Christians are particular targets of the government, with approximately 2,000-3,000 imprisoned in some of the harshest conditions on the planet. While many are imprisoned for their beliefs and/or human rights activities, Christians are treated even more severely than other prisoners, routinely being denied food and clothing from family members and medical care. One prisoner reported being held with 19 other prisoners in a container that was only 5 m x 1.5 m, in complete darkness; they were lice infested and not allowed to shower. All citizens live under the threat of arbitrary arrest and are subject to punishments that the UN report describes as "unjust, unpredictable, unreasonable, and disproportionate." Continue to hold up the entire country of Eritrea and its population in prayer that they might be released from the utter darkness that pervades this nation. Pray for the sustenance of prisoners and their rapid

release. Pray that excessive and additional restrictions on Christian prisoners might be lifted and they might be visited by their families. Give thanks for the recognition the United Nations has given to this dire human rights situation and pray that the international community might respond to Eritrea in wise, just, and effective ways to influence the government toward change. Pray that the government might serve its citizenry with justice and integrity. Pray that the light, love, and salvation of Christ might transform this nation. (Source: Jubilee Campaign)

Burma- The Rohingya people, an ethnic and religious minority group in Burma, has experienced extreme discrimination and persecution, along with targeted acts of violence. Many were forced to leave their homes and are now living in makeshift internment camps, far from their jobs and their former neighbors, and constantly watched by the police. Please pray for their protection in the midst of what some are calling "the warning signs of genocide". Pray that those around them would intervene and call for fair treatment. Pray for advocates on their behalf so that further injustice and cruelty can be curbed. (Source: Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide)

Sudan- Praise God for His intervention in saving a group of Christians in Sudan. Twenty pastors had been kidnapped because of their threat to Islamic extremism. While they were fearing imminent death, a swarm of wild bees attacked the soldiers, forcing them to flee into the bush. This allowed the pastors a chance to untie themselves and escape. They all returned home safely. Praise God for encouraging rescues such as this and pray that many more Christians and oppressed Sudanese will experience God's protection. Pray that the oppressors would realize that they are fighting against God and repent of their rebellion toward Him. Pray for a mighty work of the Spirit to change the lives of many living in Sudan today. (Source: Voice of the Martyrs)

Nigeria- The Nigerian military has arrested thousands of boys and young men and held them in detention centers under torturous conditions. As a result of starvation, unsanitary conditions, beatings, or deliberate execution, 8000 have died since 2011 while in government custody. Please pray that the Nigerian government is held accountable for these crimes and that the new president, General Muhammadu Buhari, would follow through with his promise to improve human rights and guarantee a professional military. Indeed, please pray for comfort and strength for those who have lost loved ones at the hands of those who are called to protect them. (Source: Amnesty International)

Iran- Please pray for Pastor Saed Abedini, an American citizen who converted from Islam to Christianity and has been imprisoned in Iran for nearly 1000 days. He was recently beaten by fellow inmates while he was leaving his cell. Thankfully, guards assisted him when he cried out and he suffered no broken bones, though his face is black and blue. Please pray for his encouragement, and pray that his courage and trust in the Lord would not waver. Please pray that his chains would not be in vain, but that instead many Iranians would come to know the Savior because of his suffering. Lastly, pray for his release in the near future so that his family could be reunited with him. (Source: American Center for Law and Justice)

Philippines- On May 13, a fire took nearly a hundred lives in a flip-flop factory called Kentex Manufacturing. The large fire started because of safety violations. Please pray for comfort for the families of those who were killed and that they would receive help and compensation. Please pray for new jobs for the survivors and homes for the orphans who lost their parents in the fire. Pray that this tragedy would somehow lead people to the comfort and hope found in Jesus Christ. (Source: International Labor Rights Forum)

Mauritania- Biram Dah Abeid is an anti-slavery activist who has recently been imprisoned because of his efforts to free rural Mauritians from slavery. A descendent of slaves himself, Biram has been fighting to enforce the anti-slavery laws of 2007 that Mauritania fails to uphold

since he was just 19 years old. His wife Leyla, despite being eight months pregnant, supports her husband in his activism. Praise God for their courage, commitment and sacrifice on behalf of their enslaved black countrymen. Please pray that he would be released soon and that his work would bring about positive change. (Source: Walk Free)

Israel- Israel's Ministry of Education has boldly challenged all Israelis to read the Hebrew Scriptures. Pray that they would step up to the challenge and that Jesus Christ would speak to them through the pages of the Old Testament. Pray that they would see their need for Him as Messiah and Savior. In addition, pray for special protection from persecution for both Jews and Muslims that turn to Christ. (Source: Jews for Jesus)