

June prayer items

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with Thanksgiving. Colossians 4:2
Pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

Central America—As the refugee crisis in the Middle East and Europe has been unfolding, another refugee crisis on the other side of the globe has been largely overlooked. Tens of thousands of children, often unaccompanied, attempt to flee endemic poverty, the violent coercion of gangs, by systemic corruption in their home countries in Central America by riding “el tren de la muerte” (the train of death)—a vast and extremely dangerous network of freight trains across Mexico. Pray for children like Chava (pseudonym), who was threatened with violence and death when he refused to join the gang in his hometown, fleeing from town to town. When he finally found a town where that gang did not have a stronghold, it was only a short amount of time before he was targeted by a rival gang. Literally on the run for his life, he had to quit school and has only an eighth-grade education. El tren de la muerte is a dangerous and often deadly alternative for these kids, who embark in desperation on this journey, and most often find mistreatment, incarceration, and deportation if they survive to the end. Pray for the protection of these desperate and vulnerable children—pray that there would be provision and compassion for them in their circumstances. Pray for the gangs that terrorize and enslave these children, that a great awakening and conviction would occur amid these horrific, criminal organizations. Pray for the governments of Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador that they would deal with endemic corruption in their own ranks and begin to protect and provide for the children within their borders. Pray for the U.S. government and citizens to deal compassionately, wisely, and respectfully to people so very desperate that they would risk life and limb to escape such dire situations at home. (*Source: Time; World Vision*)

Algeria—Using a discriminatory decree from 2006 regulating the use of buildings by non-Muslims for worship, the Algerian government ordered the closure of a church in Tizi Ouzou province at the end of April 2016. This is the second such closure in a two-month time period. This decree and subsequent church closures severely limit the activities of non-Muslim worshippers and directly contradicts freedoms ensured by the Algerian constitution, and their responsibilities under international law. We join with Middle East Concern in praying: that the church's leaders will know the peace of Jesus, the wisdom of the Father and the guidance of the Holy Spirit as they try to deal with this difficult situation; that the closure order will be withdrawn, and that the church will be able to worship in the building without further hindrance; that the law will be changed so that it ensures religious freedoms such as freedom to worship and freedom to evangelize; and that those responsible for the closure order will know the conviction of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness and new life offered by Jesus. (*Source: Middle East Concern*)

Vietnam—Since the 1970s, Father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly has been actively working for political reform, human rights, and religious freedom in Vietnam. For that work, he has been harassed, detained, and has spent a total of more than 15 years in prison. Most recently, he was sentenced in 2007 to eight years in jail, during which time he suffered several strokes and a brain tumor. We rejoice and give thanks that at the end of May 2016, Father Ly was granted early release. Continue to pray for Father Ly, as he adjusts to life again outside of prison. Pray that this 65-year-old priest might experience healing and the peace and comfort of Christ, even as he continues to be a witness for our Lord. Pray for other human rights defenders such as Tran Thi Hong and lawyer Nguyen Van Dai, who remain detained. And pray for the Vietnamese government that they might reform their harsh policies against religious minorities and political dissidents. (*Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide*)

Mauritania—Several months ago, CAN prayed for and joined with the international community in calling for the release of anti-slavery activist Biram Dah Abeid, who spent 18 months in prison for his activism in his home country, the African nation of Mauritania. We give praise and thanks for his release at the end of May 2016, after a second appeal. Pray for his protection and provision as he continues to work on behalf of justice and freedom in one of the countries most plagued by slavery. Pray that the Mauritanian government

will see the gross injustice in their land and rectify it rather than punish those who speak out for freedom and truth. (Source: Walkfree.org)

International—The International Organization for Migration reported that in the last week of May 2016, more than 1,000 people died in three separate shipwrecks, which occurred over a few days, in the Mediterranean Sea between Libya and Italy. This follows several other incidents happening just weeks before where again more than 1,000 people died in an attempt to flee to safer countries than their own homes of origin. Persevere in prayer for this ongoing crisis, devastating so many lives and families, and creating instability and vulnerability for thousands of individuals. Pray for the provision and protection of those who have become so vulnerable because of world events, and pray that those in places of safety would be able to see these numbers for the individual people—mothers, fathers, children—that they are, and that they would be wise and compassionate and timely in their response. (Source: *Time*)

Uganda-- 27-year-old Michael was leaving a church meeting in February when he was attacked by a mob of ten Muslims. They kicked and beat him, and then ran away when bystanders came to his aide and brought him to a clinic. Michael is an evangelist and the local Muslims had been angry because he was sharing his faith. Because of brain swelling the husband and father of two is just now healing and able to walk and talk again. Praise God that Michael shares his faith so boldly and that he is recovering from the violent attack. Please pray for his healing and future protection, and that God would use him and his church to lead others to a saving knowledge of Christ. Pray as the police investigate this crime that it would deter others from acting violently and that Ugandan law would continue to protect freedom of religion. (Source: *Open Doors*)

India-- A group of Hindu radicals disrupted an evening service at the Full Gospel Church on April 15 threatening to kill people if they didn't stop praying. As church members continued singing, the radical group attacked the crowd. A pregnant woman was thrown down and injured, resulting in severe trauma to the unborn baby. She had an emergency c-section at the hospital and gave birth to a premature, but healthy baby girl. Praise God that both mother and baby are doing well and that He protected them. Pray for the growing conflict in the small village where Christians and Hindus lived together peaceably until this year. Now, in an effort to create an all-Hindu nation, radicals are insisting that Christians convert back to Hinduism or be denied community water and safety. Pray that God will be a constant source of help to the believers there. Pray for peace and old friendships to be restored. (Source: *Voice of the Martyrs*)

Iran-- A full-time church worker in Iran shared how she and her husband prepared their daughter for the inevitable time when they would be arrested and in-prisoned. They began teaching her when she was a child that the Bible teaches that Christians will undergo persecution. So when their daughter was 12 and they were taken away to prison she began to pray as they had taught her. The difficulty for the parents increased when they were completely denied communication with her, and they worried how she would do without being able to talk to them. The mother shared how God filled her in her prison cell with miraculous, unbelievable joy and that joy became the strength to place her daughter in the Lord's capable hands. Later, when they were released, the daughter described how God used that time of uncertainty and persecution to cause her to call out to Him in prayer and increase her faith in Him. Praise God for believers in Iran and around the world who are willing to suffer for Christ, and that God is ever with them, providing the joy and strength that they need. Pray especially for those that have children at home that they are separated from. May God give particular comfort and supernatural peace to both parents and children as they suffer separately. May He truly show them that He is a Father to the fatherless and take tender care of those with children. (Source: *Open Doors*)

Nepal-- The earthquake last year that registered at a magnitude of 7.8 brought devastation to the village where Pastor Pahil leads a small church. In the midst of their fear, many villagers sought help and counsel from the pastor, who encouraged them with Bible verses. The community of believers was also able to provide food, clothing, and schooling to those from nearby villages that had lost so much in the earthquakes and landslides. Six people came to Christ through this outreach and general feelings in the community are positive toward the church now. Praise God that He brought good out of the earthquake's devastation. Pray

for the Gospel and the believers' loving service to positively impact more lives in Nepal. (*Source: Gospel for Asia*)

North Korea/ China-- Pastor Han Chung-Ryeol was murdered on April 30, in Changbai, China, near the North Korean border. He led a church near the border and had a wife and two children. Friends say that he was regularly helping victims of human trafficking, orphans, and anyone that left North Korea. He taught them about Christ and then encouraged them to go back to North Korea to tell others about the Lord. North Korean authorities apparently ordered him to be brought to North Korea for interrogation, and most likely they were responsible for his brutal death. Praise God for the many lives that have been changed through Pastor Han's ministry. Pray for the Lord to bring peace, help, and comfort to his wife, son, daughter, and other loved ones. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)