

October 2020 Prayer Items

I sought the LORD, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.

—Psalm 34: 4-7

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

—Galatians 6:10

Uganda—A former Imam named Sulaiman became a Christian in 2017 and led his two children (then 11 and 13) to the Lord. His conversion angered an extremist Muslim who took part in an abduction of his son and daughter in 2018. Just recently, two years later, police rescued his daughter from the home of a witch doctor who had taken the young girl as his wife. This man is known for committing human sacrifices, and, tragically, it is believed that he killed Sulaiman's son. Please pray for this terrible and tragic situation. Pray that this young girl would be healed and comforted by our God of all Comfort. Pray that the Father of Mercies would gently restore her from all she's seen and experienced. Pray for Sulaiman and his wife to be comforted while they mourn their son's death and cling to Christ as they navigate this trauma and minister to their daughter. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

North Korea—Christians that are found out in this most oppressive regime on earth are sent indefinitely to labor camps or immediately killed. Sadly, parents often hide their faith from their children until they are old enough so they don't accidentally give away their family's secret. Yet the church in North Korea seems to be growing, particularly in the labor camps. Pray fervently for these courageous overcomers to persevere and to be miraculously protected. Pray for God to provide all their needs. Pray that they will have safe opportunities in and out of prison to share the Good News. Pray that leader Kim Jong Un would turn from his wickedness and submit to God. Pray that this nation would one day soon glorify Christ and be a light to countries around them. (*Source: Open Doors*)

India—On September 10, the Indian government froze the bank accounts of Amnesty International in what appears to be another reprisal for the human rights investigations in the country, forcing the watchdog group to halt work in the country. The Indian government has used similar tactics of repression and intimidation in the past against Amnesty and other NGOs. By pursuing this course, they join Russia and Turkey, who have seized Amnesty offices and threatened regional directors with imprisonment—all of which are raising concerns of rising authoritarianism around the globe. Pray for the safety of all human rights workers in India and those who are speaking up for freedom and against corruption, many of whom are also speaking up for Christians in the region and the poor. Pray for those who are vulnerable of abuse while the efforts of humanitarian groups are being thwarted. Pray that many in India might find eternal freedom in Christ. (*Sources: NPR; Washington Post; BBC*)

Somalia—In this country where 99 percent of the population is Muslim, the number of Christians is only in the hundreds. Also, everyone is expected to practice Islam, and persecution towards Christians is one of the worst in the world. Please pray for our unnamed brothers and sisters in this spiritually dark country. Pray for them to stand strong, equipped with the full armor of God, full of love, humility, kindness, forgiveness, and peace. Pray that their witness would bring many others to the faith, and pray for God to watch over them and keep them safe. (*Source: Open Doors*)

Iran—Sam and Maryam, an Iranian couple in Bushehr who are Muslim converts to Christ, have been forced to return their adopted baby daughter, Lydia, to the orphanage because of their Christian faith. The government strongly discourages adoption across differing religious backgrounds, and the court has ordered that they not be permitted to keep their one-year-old, even though she was adopted in 2019. Please pray for God’s intervention in this situation so that this little one would miraculously be able to stay with her adoptive parents. Pray also for her health as she has medical issues. Pray for comfort and protection for her as she is back at the orphanage and for comfort for them as they mourn and fight to get her back. (Source: *International Christian Concern*)

China—Anna Fifield has reported from and written about Asia for a decade, and in a September article in the *Washington Post*, she documented troubling changes in China that she describes as more like living in North Korea than the China of recent years. Reporters are now constantly followed and monitored by “enforcers,” facial recognition cameras are ubiquitous, children have been taken from Uighur parents and put into orphanages. These developments have accelerated since Xi Jinping took power. And not unlike the Kim Dynasty in North Korea, he has had enormous portraits of himself featured during National Day parades, his name was featured in dozens of headlines in one issue of the People’s Daily newspaper, and numerous bookstores only stock copies of Xi’s three volumes of “The Governance of China.” Satellite images reveal the rapid expansion of detention camps. Now in addition to Chinese citizens who have no real judicial process or recourse, even international journalists and foreign citizens have not been held hostage and used as political pawns. Canadians Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor have been held by China for more than 650 days, retribution for Canada’s arrest of a Huawei executive. The persecution of Christian, Uighur Muslims, and other religious minorities have reached new highs, while Xi has developed a cult of personality and a propaganda machine not seen since Mao. Pray for freedom in China, for protection and preservation of vulnerable people in this oppressive regime, pray against the darkness fueling it. Pray for Xi Jinping and the Chinese people. (Source: *Washington Post*)

Pakistan—On September 24, a Senate committee in Pakistan—the Standing Committee on Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony—rejected the The Protection of Rights of Minorities Bill, 2020, which called for the protection of religious minorities. International Christian Concern reports: “According to a study by the Movement for Solidarity and Peace Pakistan, an estimated 1,000 Christian and Hindu women are abducted, forcefully married, and forcefully converted to Islam every year. Sexual assaults and fraudulent marriages are used by perpetrators to entrap victims and authorities are often complicit.” Additionally, Pakistan has been named by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) as one of the worst perpetrators of religious discrimination and persecution in the world. In addition to rejecting the bill, which was seen as a vital first step in protecting minorities in Pakistan, one committee member suggested that a bill should be introduced to protect the rights of Muslims in Pakistan. (Source: *International Christian Concern*)

Eritrea—Eritrean officials have released at least twenty Christian prisoners, possibly because of the coronavirus. These believers have been in prison for years, held in deplorable conditions, in one of the world’s most difficult countries to be a Christian. The prison itself is a series of underground tunnels, built by prisoners. Praise God that these Christians have finally been set free, and pray that many, many more would be allowed to leave soon. Pray for the safety, comfort, and courage for our two to three thousand brothers and sisters still in Eritrean prisons today. (Source: *BBC*)

United States—A 27-page federal complaint, accuses an immigration center in Georgia of performing questionable hysterectomies, denying detainees COVID testing—despite having rapid-testing equipment purchased for \$14,000 each—and of having shredded medical records. Along with these allegations, made by a nurse working at the facility and from a number of detainees, staff failed to test or quarantine detainees who were COVID symptomatic, failed to maintain even basic hygiene standards, including leaving blood in exam rooms, falsely documented seeing patients they hadn't seen, and intentionally under-reporting COVID cases. Additionally, staff were denied appropriate protective equipment and threatened with discipline if they refused to work under dangerous conditions. Pray for those being held in detention centers as they seek protection, safety, and opportunity through internationally recognized means. Pray that this process would not expose them to further abuse and exploitation. Pray that those who treat other humans with indifference and grossly neglect basic professional standards that endanger others might be held accountable for their actions. Pray for justice and integrity for the least of these, and pray for those who spoke up for it. (*Sources: ABC News—Georgia; Associated Press*)

Egypt—Fifteen people have been arrested in Egypt, most of them women, under vague charges of violating “morality codes” on social media, such as TikTok. One of the women only encouraged other female viewers that they, too, could earn money as social media influencers, and another woman was arrested for giving an account of a being beaten and raped by a gang of men. Many women have been sentenced to years in prison for videos as benign as dancing or singing fully clothed. Prosecutors in these cases have abused broad “morality laws” to imprison newscasters for criticizing Muslim scholars, or to attempt to subject female defendants to “virginity tests,” which are gross human rights abuses and scientifically unsubstantiated. Pray for the protection of women who speak out in Egypt and who give other women a voice and independence. Pray for the protection of freedoms of expression, of privacy, and of freedom from gender discrimination. (*Source: Human Rights Watch*)