

June 2021 Prayer

How long must your servant wait?
When will you punish my persecutors?
The arrogant dig pits to trap me,
contrary to your law.
All your commands are trustworthy;
help me, for I am being persecuted without cause.
They almost wiped me from the earth,
but I have not forsaken your precepts.
In your unfailing love preserve my life,
that I may obey the statutes of your mouth.

—Psalm 119: 84-88

Myanmar—The Burmese military attacked the Sacred Heart Church in eastern Myanmar in the middle of the night of May 24th, tragically killing four people. Hundreds of displaced elderly people and children were sheltering in the church when the attack occurred. Pray for these vulnerable people who are likely traumatized and have seen so much violence recently. Pray for those who lost loved ones, and pray for peace in this turbulent region. (Source: *International Christian Concern*)

Ethiopia/Eritrea—Since November when violent conflict broke out in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, approximately 50,000 people have been killed, more than 62,000 people have fled over the border to escape the violence, and thousands upon thousands have been internally displaced—their lives shattered and their homes and belongings destroyed. More than 90 percent of the people living in this area are in desperate need of food aid. While this conflict is largely political, it has also had harsh implications for Christians living there. This region borders Eritrea, which after securing its independence 30 years ago, has oppressed its own people with an iron fist. Pray for healing in both these countries, for political vying for power to cease, and innocent populations protected. Pray for the provision for those who have lost everything and great comfort for those who have lost loved ones. Pray for many to find the everlasting peace of Christ amid this turmoil and conflict. (Source: *CSW*)

India—Radical Hindu nationalists attempted to kill Pastor Bumbariya, but their gun would not fire for some reason. They then turned and shot his 52-year-old father to death and beat the pastor and two others from his family with their guns, swords, and sickles. They are now recovering in the hospital. The pastor said, “They took away our agricultural land, they destroyed our house, now they want our lives. I am worried about my family and children.” Pastor Bumbariya is a church planter who has started house churches in the area and has been attacked in the past. Please pray for him and his family to heal completely from these violent attacks and from the sad loss of his father. Pray for protection over him and his family and that he would continue his ministry unhindered. Pray that God would continue to preserve his life and send him encouragement during this bleak time. (Source: *Voice of the Martyrs*)

Sri Lanka—In mid-March 37 organizations, including Jubilee Campaign various multi-faith groups, signed a joint letter calling on the Sri Lankan government to abandon plans to introduce anti-conversion laws that would have a tremendous negative of religious minorities in the country. Since then, Sri Lanka has continued to pursue this course, and the same groups are reaching out to the US State Department and the US Commission on International Religious Freedom to you their diplomatic influence to encourage Sri Lanka to change course. Pray for the protection of religious minorities in Sri Lanka and that the government will reverse this oppression action. (Source: *Jubilee Campaign*)

Pakistan—Shagufta Kausar and Shfqat Emmanuel are a Christian couple who were sentenced to be put to death for blasphemy. They were accused of sending texts that insulted Muhammad seven years ago, although the allegations are likely false. Since then, they have each been in separate prisons in isolated cells. The wife is suffering from mental illness after being in isolation for so many years, and the husband is paralyzed from the waist down and is deteriorating physically. Because of his paralysis, he suffers from multiple bedsores and has

not been taken to the hospital. Please pray for this couple who has suffered for so many years and seem to be just being left to die. Pray for God's mercy in this case, that they would be miraculously released soon or brought to Heaven. Pray that they would receive prompt medical attention and that the authorities would have mercy on them. Pray that Pakistan's unjust blasphemy laws would be overturned for this couple and from now on. (Source: *The Guardian*)

Democratic Republic of Congo—The lakeside city of Goma is home to approximately 2 million people, until the volcano Mount Nyiragongo erupted spewing lava, ashes, and gases toward the city. Hundreds were injured or missing and at least 32 people died. UNICEF estimates as many as 280,000 children could be displaced. Crops and buildings were destroyed, including 12 schools and three health centers. More than 500,000 do not have access to clean water. Afterward tremors from earthquakes were felt as far as Rwanda's capital, and the volcano threatens to erupt again. Pray for all those affected by the volcano—who lost loved ones, homes, crops, those who have been displaced, wounded, traumatized—pray for comfort, provision, and protection. Pray that relief organizations will be able to respond quickly and effectively to aid those in need. (Source: *World Vision*)

South Sudan—South Sudan became an independent country in 2011, but, sadly, this young nation has experienced civil war since its beginning. Arab Islamic militias frequently attack this predominantly Christian nation. In mid-May, the village of Dungob Alei was attacked by unknown militants on an early Sunday morning, killing 13 and injuring 8. Please pray that this senseless violence would end. Pray for God's comfort and encouragement for those that are suffering such persecution and have lost loved ones. Pray also for healing for those that were injured. (Source: *International Christian Concern*)

Haiti—The poorest country in the Americas, 4.4 million people out of a population of 11 million are estimated to be food insecure in Haiti, including 1.9 million children. UNICEF is predicating that severe acute malnutrition will double in the coming year, and along with it as rise in violence and crime. Recently, a group of Catholic clergy were abducted amid an epidemic of kidnappings. The upcoming hurricane season will likely make access to food and other resources more difficult, and the number of children receiving immunizations has seriously declined as well. In light of these dire circumstances, pray for the vulnerable population of Haiti, especially children. Pray that relief might be provided, lives preserved, and that the government might find ways to uplift its people. Pray that those with material resources around the world would respond generously to the great need. (Source: *BBC*)

Burkina Faso—On May 18, unknown attackers shot and killed fifteen Christians in Northern Burkina Faso near the border of Mali. The Christians had gathered in a small village to celebrate a baptism in an Islamic area that has recently seen a rise in militia groups. As we praise God that these fifteen people were believers and are now safely in His presence, we also pray for those that were left behind and are now grieving. Pray for family members and friends and for all those who are scared of more attacks in the future. Please pray that these extremists that opened fire would recognize their sin and cruel violence and turn to Christ for forgiveness and salvation. (Source: *Reuters*)

Belarus—In an unprecedented move to crush dissent, the government of Belarus used false pretenses to force down a Ryanair flight in order to illegally detain activist Raman Pratasevich and his girlfriend, Sofya Sapega. Pratasevich was the editor of Nexta, which covered the protests that erupted after the disputed presidential elections of August 9. His life is definitely at risk, and he could easily face up to 15 years in prison for his human rights work. This brazen attack follows the kidnapping of three Belarusian opposition activists who were dumped at the Ukrainian border in an attempt to forcibly expel them. Hundreds have been arrested on bogus charges in light of the protests, and Belarus responding to freedom of speech and peaceful protest with a clear message to their citizen that they will stop at nothing to crush dissent. Amid international outcry, German prosecutors are looking to launch an inquiry into the violations of international law in the case of Raman Pratasevich. Pray for justice, freedom, and equity to be restored to Belarus. Pray that the inquiry into this violations would be swift, truthful, and effective. Pray for the protection and freedom of Raman Pratasevich and the hundreds of other dissenters seeking free and fair elections and an end to corruption in Belarus. (Source: *Human Rights Watch*)