

July 2025 Prayer

Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him.

—Psalm 34:8

Democratic Republic of Congo—Almost a year ago, members of the Allied Democratic Forces attacked Esther's family for no reason. Esther watched her house burn down and her husband and son get killed before she was captured and held in the forest, assaulted day after day by the rebel commanders and held at gunpoint numerous times. A Christian named Yusuf, having endured and escaped a similar experience, helped Esther escape and brought her back to her daughter. Yusuf helped Esther get connected with the International Christian Center, with whom she is rebuilding her life. Pray for endurance, peace, and hope for Esther and that she would see the goodness of the Lord. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

International—Pray for the over 122 million people that are currently forcibly displaced from their homes. This represents a 5 percent increase from 2023. This is the highest number than at any other point in modern history. Most are internally displaced and have *not* reached an international border or been able to seek asylum outside their country of origin. The most significant cause of displacement, internally and internationally, is war and violence. Additionally, natural disaster, persecution, and political repression are factors that contribute to these numbers—long before economic need. All are considered migrants until they can officially seek asylum. Pray that wherever displaced people flee they are met with empathy and care for physical and medical needs. Pray that God would provide miraculously and that the church around the world—in all countries—would step up to the privilege of being His hands and feet to those who are hungry, sick, lacking clothing and necessities, imprisoned, or threatened. (*Sources: Doctors without Borders; UNHRC*)

Nigeria—On June 3, Sunday Ishaya, Joshua Mishi, and Range Kpeh were killed in an ambush. They were on their way home from work when they were attacked. The women of the area sang songs and held leaves in the air (a symbol of grief in their area) to remember the men they had lost. They also did this as a way of protesting the lack of effort the army shows in protecting their community. Almost five hundred men from their community have been killed by ambushes and other accidents by the military drone base. The women shouted, “We had husbands! The army is doing nothing.” Pray that the violence in Nigeria would settle, that the locals would be able to feel safe in their hometowns, and that they would cling to Jesus in their fear, grief, and trials. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

Syria—On June 22, two assailants, suspected to be Islamic State terrorists, attacked Saint Elias Orthodox Church in Dwelaa, Damascus, with machine guns. One attacker fled, while the other was a suicide bomber who detonated himself. Ultimately, 25 people were killed and 70 injured in the packed church. This follows on the heels of the murder of three Murshidi men from Al-Murshidiyyah religious community. Give thanks that police responded to the attacks and have increased security around churches and Christian communities. Continue to pray for the safety and courage of the Church in Syria, as they are among the targeted minority communities, along with the Druze and Al-Murshidiyyah. Pray for peace, reconciliation, and unity in Syria and an end to sectarian violence and hate speech. Pray for advocates and contact in Syria working to aid those who are being persecuted that God would renew their strength, protect them, and give them effective strategies. (*Source: CSW*)

Iran/Panama—Iranian Christian families who had immigrated to Panama are struggling to find homes. They were given a six month extension after having been through detainments and on the run as

refugees and asylum seekers. If they return to Iran, they are at risk of facing major persecution but if they do not find a home in time that may be the outcome. Pray that they will find enough support to stay in Panama and that they will learn to trust the Lord for the help that can only come from His provision. Pray that they would seek Him in their time of need. (*Source: International Christian Concern*)

Middle East (undisclosed)—Pray for N, a Muslim-background believer, who is a refugee along with her family, in an Arab country as she has been receiving threats from other refugees and has been facing hours of interrogation by secret police because of her conversion to Christianity several years ago. Give thanks that she has the support of her husband, despite the fact that he is not a Christian. Pray that she would experience God's comfort, protection, and wisdom as she responds to threats and to interrogations. Praise God that her family has been selected to be refugees resettled to a western country, and pray that this process will go quickly and efficiently and that N and her family will remain safe until they can be resettled. Pray that she and those around her will be able to see God's work and intervention through the events in her life—even these most challenging and frightening ones. Pray that many would see Christ through her witness, especially those who have threatened and persecuted her. (*Source: Middle East Concern*)

Sierra Leone—A young woman recently had to run away from home when her family threatened to kill her for being a believer. Her home was full of secret demonic worship that included human sacrifice. She had refused to join them after finding Christ through friends at school, saying, "My faith doesn't permit me. I'm a daughter of Christ." This enraged her family, and they threatened her. She escaped and is hiding with a group of other Christian women in the woods. Pray for all of their safety and that they would remember that the Lord goes before them. Pray that they would not lose hope and faith while they are struggling and to continue to glorify Christ as His daughters. (*Source: Voice of the Martyrs*)

Colombia—The country is one of, if not the deadliest countries in the world for human rights defenders and religious leaders—especially targeted by armed groups in Colombia who will not tolerate any authority other than their own. Just recently the bodies of eight religious and social leaders were found after being killed at an abandoned property after being summoned for interrogation by rebel groups. All but one were active leaders and members from two Protestant denominations: the Evangelical Alliance of Colombia Denomination (DEAC) and the Foursquare Gospel Church (ICCG), except for one man who was the uncle of two of the other victims. Among them was Maryuri Hernández, the mother of a five-year-old daughter, and married couple Isaíd Gómez and Maribel Silva, who leave behind two children as orphans. Though the government and FARC reached a peace agreement in 2016, splinter factions who have refused to put down arms continue to fight and terrorize local communities. All have already fled violence and religious persecution in Arauca, a province bordering Venezuela where several armed groups are active. Pray for Christians and especially pastors and leaders who are often the most courageous to speak out about the violence and criminal activity of these groups and corruption in general. Pray for their safety and for their faith to remain strong. Pray for the comfort and healing of the loved ones left behind after this horrendous act. Pray that God will intervene to bring justice, integrity, peace, and safety to Colombia. (*Sources: BBC; CSW*)

Uzbekistan—A new law was passed that makes teaching religion to children illegal without official authorization. The law was made to prevent "Islamic extremism" but because of the way it is stated it will also affect Christians. There is already an extremely small percentage of Christians in Uzbekistan so pray that this law will not keep families and teachers from sharing Christ with children. Pray that the

law would be changed or that believers will be able to find a safe way to continue educating children in the Bible and discipling young believers. (Source: *Voice of the Martyrs*)

Eritrea (Warning: contains distressing accounts of sexual violence)—In November 2020, Ethiopian prime minister and one-time Nobel Peace Prize winner, Abiy Ahmed, sent troops into Ethiopia's north-most state of Tigray, after alleging the state's ruling party posed a threat to national security. Ethiopia also recruited the help of Eritrea—a one-time enemy of Ethiopia, who were only too glad to attack even part of their former adversaries. Though a cease-fire is technically in place, recent UN reports document large parts of Tigray still occupied by Ethiopian troops, who along with Eritrean troops committed and continue to commit horrific acts of sexual assault and violence. Tens of thousands of Tigrayan women were brutally gang raped, held captive, had objects such as rusty screws, nail clippers, and even notes wrapped in plastic shoved into their wombs. Such notes included messages about not forgetting the war in the 1990s and making sure all Tigrayan women are dead or infertile. Women were stabbed, beaten, mutilated, had acid thrown on them, set on fire and more. Healthcare workers were threatened if they tried to help or treat any of the women—yet a clinic in Mekelle run by nuns has been treating as many women as they are able to despite lack of resources and aid. Many other clinics and relief agencies had to close after the Trump administration closed USAID-funded projects and the UK cut their aid by 40 percent. These atrocities against young girls and women are ongoing. Please pray for an end to this violence. Pray for the funding of relief and medical intervention for the survivors of these attacks. Pray for perpetrators of these crimes—up to the highest levels of the Ethiopian and Eritrean governments—to be held accountable and for justice to be served. This is essential also to the deterrence of war crimes and genocide being committed in other conflicts globally. (Source: *The Guardian*)