



# CHURCH IN CHAINS

AN IRISH VOICE FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS



## NIGERIA

Martyred while preaching

ISSUE 117

AUTUMN 2016

## Where do you live?

For Irish people, the place where we live determines how easy or hard it is to access public transport, schools, hospitals, parks and shops.



**For Christians in Nigeria, the place where they live has a strong influence on whether they will face persecution.** In the mainly Christian south, there is complete religious freedom, whereas in the mainly Muslim north, the influence of Islamic (Sharia) law means Christians face many restrictions and pressures. **Christians living in the north-east of Nigeria have been terrorised by Boko Haram militants for many years.**

**In the Middle Belt states (where both Muslims and Christians live), tensions are rising because of the increasing numbers of violent attacks on Christian farmers by Muslim cattle herders** and the seeming inability of the Nigerian government to stop the attacks.

Read on to find out more and please pray for our brothers and sisters in Nigeria who suffer because of where they live.

Yours for the Persecuted,

David Turner

**Come to our conference at the Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, Dublin on Saturday 10 September to hear Rev Soja Bewarang (who lives in the Middle Belt of Nigeria). Pre-register using the enclosed Response Form, or at [www.churchinchains.ie](http://www.churchinchains.ie)**

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*SOURCES: The main feature on Nigeria was compiled with reference to numerous sources including Aid to the Church in Need, Al Jazeera, All Africa, BBC, Christian Association of Nigeria, Christian Post, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, CNN, Leadership, Morning Star News, Naij.com, Open Doors International, UN, Vanguard, Washington Post, and World Watch Monitor.*

**COVER IMAGE: Eunice Elisha, an evangelist murdered in July 2016**  
**Photo Credit: Morning Star News**

# The Three Big Threats to Christians

Three issues have dominated the lives of Christians in northern Nigeria and the Middle Belt states for the past number of years: the ongoing violent campaign of the Islamist terrorist group, Boko Haram, the existence of Sharia law in many northern states and the seeming inability of the government to protect Christians from attack.

In February, President Buhari stated, **"Boko Haram has been systematically decimated"** while in July, Colonel Sanni Usman of the Nigerian Army said, *"We can beat our chest and decisively say we have dealt with Boko Haram."* While it is true to

say that the number of attacks launched by Boko Haram in Nigeria has reduced greatly during 2016, they have left devastation in their wake. More than two million Nigerians have been forced to leave their homes to escape the violence. In July, Médecins Sans Frontières warned of a humanitarian disaster, stating that 500,000 people are in urgent need of food, shelter and medical care including over 200,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

**In other parts of northern Nigeria, Christians continue to live under the shadow of Sharia law** (in place in twelve states since 1999). The Christian population in some northern states has dramatically reduced as Christians emigrate to Middle Belt states to escape violent attacks but also to avoid discrimination in health, education and employment and the incessant pressure to convert to Islam.



- **DESTROYED CHURCH**

After Boko Haram attack

Photo: Church of the Brethren



- **DESTROYED VILLAGE**

After Fulani attack

Photo: National Helm

**In the Middle Belt states, Christian farmers face regular attacks by Fulani herdsmen, who are largely Muslim. During 2016, Fulani herdsmen have killed more people in Nigeria than Boko Haram has.** While there has always been some conflict between nomadic herders and settled farmers, the pattern of Fulani violence in the region – their use of military-grade weapons to drive Christians off the land and to occupy it; the destruction of Christian homes and churches; and their call for the imposition of Islamic law – is now being seen as ethnic cleansing of the Middle Belt.

# Under Attack in the Middle Belt

Nigerian Christians are increasingly under attack in the states of the Middle Belt. **On 9 July 2016, Eunice Elisha was stabbed and hacked to death by a band of six Islamists while she preached on the streets of the capital, Abuja.** The mother of seven children, she was a deaconess in the Redeemed Church of God, and was married to Pastor Olawale Elisha.



- **EUNICE ELISHA**

Killed while preaching

*Photo: Morning Star News*

Middle Belt Christians face deadly raids by armed Fulani nomadic herdsman who travel with large herds of cows and move in on settled communities of mainly Christian farmers. Long-running conflict over grazing land has worsened to the extent that the 2015 Global Terrorism Index reported "Fulani militants" as the fourth deadliest terrorist group in the world.

**In recent years, thousands of Christian have been killed and their properties looted and burned, including hundreds of church buildings.** Many farms have been destroyed, and some farmers are afraid to go out to farm because of the risk of being shot. Some church buildings are being used as camps from which Fulani militants carry out raids on Christian communities – often at night, when victims are asleep. It is suspected that the Fulani militants now have links with Boko Haram.



- **REV JOSEPH KURAH**

Killed while farming

*Photo: ECWA*

Since the spring, attacks by Fulani herdsman have left hundreds dead, and thousands have had to flee from their homes. In May, President Buhari – who is a Fulani – ordered a crackdown on the herdsman, declaring that his administration will not tolerate violence and ordering security officials to "secure all communities under attack by herdsman".

**On 30 June, Rev Joseph Kurah was murdered on his farm in Obi in the central state of Nasarawa by suspected Fulani herdsman,** who mutilated his body. He was a pastor in the Evangelical Church Winning All, and was regional chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria. Like Eunice Elisha, he leaves seven children.



Pray... for peace in the Middle Belt, and an end to Fulani attacks.

# Under Sharia in the North

**Northern Nigeria is predominantly Muslim and southern Nigeria is predominantly Christian, but there is a large Christian minority in the north.** Its members experience discrimination and violent attacks, mostly carried out by the Islamist terrorist group Boko Haram, which has its home in the northeast. It was founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, capital of Borno state, and began launching attacks in 2009 with the goal of turning Nigeria into an Islamic state under strict Sharia law. Since then, Boko Haram has killed more than 20,000 people, and at least 2.5 million have fled their homes. Thousands of churches have been destroyed.



- **MAP OF SHARIA STATES**

Shown in green

Map: Der Spiegel

**Boko Haram targets Christians, moderate Muslims, educational institutions, the police, the military and secular courts.**

While Christians are killed for their faith, Muslims are killed for reasons that include cooperating with the Nigerian military, working for the government and resistance to Boko Haram.

Since the year 1999, Sharia law has been in place in twelve of the northern states and parts of four others. Christians are supposed to be exempt from Sharia law, but are often forced to comply, and they fear its spread.

**Currently, the constitution limits Sharia courts of appeal in these states to civil law;** criminal matters appealed from Sharia common courts move into the government's non-Sharia appellate courts. However, Nigeria's National Assembly is considering a change to the constitution that would give Sharia courts of appeal authority to take criminal cases arising from lower Sharia courts.

**This proposed constitutional amendment has been condemned by a group of 14 Christian associations in Nigeria.** On 3 June, they held a press conference to highlight what they describe as “an Islamisation process”. The joint statement catalogues and condemns a wide range of government policies that the associations say amount to a gradual Islamisation of Nigeria, and states that the proposed constitutional amendment is “aimed at expanding the Islamic legal system across a Secular Nigeria State by the back door method using our law makers indirectly... We say NO.”



Pray... for protection and freedom for Christians in northern Nigeria.

# 218 Chibok Schoolgirls Still Missing



## • KIDNAPPED SCHOOLGIRLS

Abducted in April 2014

Photo: Boko Haram Video

Among the thousands of Nigerians kidnapped by Boko Haram, the most high-profile are the schoolgirls abducted in April 2014 from the Government Girls' Secondary School in Chibok, Borno state. Most were Christians. **Of the 276 girls kidnapped, 57 escaped and the remaining 219 were taken to the vast Sambisa Forest.** Boko Haram's leader offered to release the girls in return for jailed militants (a swap the government rejected) and announced that they had become Muslims and were married.

**Boko Haram has released several videos of the captives. The most recent, released on 14 August 2016, shows about fifty girls, one with a baby.** A masked gunman states that forty girls have been married and that some have died in air strikes, while others have life-threatening injuries. He says, "Release our people and we release your girls, otherwise they will never be released." One of the captives, Maida Yakubu, confirms that government jet fighters have killed some girls, and the video ends with footage of bodies lying on the ground.

**In May 2016, the vigilante Civilian Joint Task Force found one of the girls, Amina Ali (now 19), with a baby, in the Sambisa Forest.** Amina was apparently searching for firewood and escaped when the Nigerian army bombed the forest and the terrorists scattered. She said that six girls had died and the others were married to Boko Haram commanders and were still in the Forest, heavily guarded. She reported that some had suffered broken legs or been deafened by explosions.

After Amina's rescue, the Nigerian Air Force airlifted her to Maiduguri with her baby and her Boko Haram husband, Mohammed Hayatu, who had allegedly surrendered. She was transferred to the capital, Abuja, for what the government calls a "restoration process". Her mother Binta, who is staying with her, says Amina was forced to convert to Islam.



## • AMIMA ALI

Found in May

Photo: Sahara Reporters



Pray... for the release of all Boko Haram's hostages, and ask God to protect them and comfort their families.



# What's happened to Boko Haram?

During the past 18 months, the Nigerian army has retaken most of the territory held by Boko Haram in northeastern Nigeria, and has destroyed several militant camps in the Sambisa Forest. The army has freed over 1,000 kidnapped women and children, and has killed many members of Boko Haram.



• **BOKO HARAM FIGHTERS**

Photo: AFP

Two years ago, the insurgency peaked and Boko Haram overtook Islamic State as the world's deadliest terrorist group. A report by the Global Terrorism Index found that in 2014 Boko Haram killed 6,644 people, compared to 6,074 people killed by Islamic State.

In August 2014, Boko Haram's leader Abubakar Shekau declared an Islamic caliphate in the towns and villages it had seized around Maiduguri, capital of Borno State. It also took areas of Adamawa and Yobe states. In March 2015, Boko Haram pledged allegiance to Islamic State, calling itself Islamic State's "West African Province".

Former President Goodluck Jonathan was criticised for his failure to deal with Boko Haram, particularly the Chibok case. His successor President Muhammadu Buhari (elected in March 2015) said in his acceptance speech, *"I assure you that we will rid this nation of terror, and bring back peace and normalcy to all the affected areas."*

In Spring 2015, the army – supported by troops from Niger, Chad and Cameroon – began to push Boko Haram out of towns and villages in the north, including Gwoza, its main stronghold. In many of these settlements, infrastructure has been destroyed and farmers, unable to sow crops during the occupation, have nothing to harvest. As Boko Haram is pushed back in Nigeria, its militants increasingly attack adjoining regions of Niger, Chad and Cameroon.



• **ABU MUSAB AL-BARNAWI**

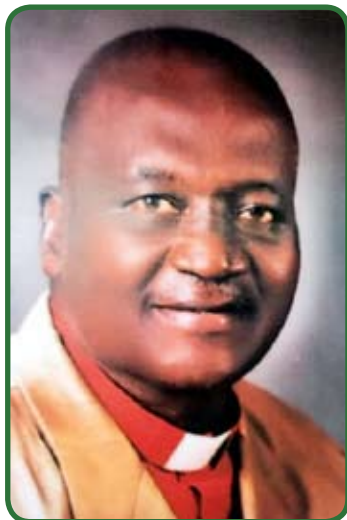
Photo: Boko Haram Video

A leadership struggle emerged in August 2016 when Islamic State announced that Abu Musab al-Barnawi had become leader of Boko Haram. He said that he would focus on booby-trapping churches and killing Christians. Days later, Abubakar Shekau appeared in a video saying that he was still in charge.



Pray... for an end to the Boko Haram insurgency in Nigeria and neighbouring countries, and for the restoration of Christian communities in the northeast.

# The meaning of your name is



Rev Dr Soja Bewarang from Nigeria will be the guest speaker at the Church in Chains conference at the Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, Dublin on Saturday 10 September (more details on pages 16 and 17).

Rev Soja is an experienced church leader and is the Christian Association of Nigeria chairman of Plateau State in the Middle Belt of Nigeria. He previously served as president of the Church of Christ in Nations (an evangelical denomination founded in Nigeria). David Turner recently interviewed him about his life and work.

## How did you become a Christian?

My grandfather Bewarang Dimka was the chief of Ngas tribe [in Plateau state]. He became a Christian in 1907 when Anglican missionaries came with the gospel. My parents both suffered during an outbreak of meningitis when they were young children – my father had to have a hand amputated, while my mother was left deaf and dumb. Being the first born, I had to struggle to earn a living in order to pay my way into school as well as care for my family and the other four children. Though my parents were Christians and I was born into a Christian family, and my uncle was a pastor, it wasn't until I was aged 17 that I committed my life and received Jesus as my personal Lord and Saviour and was baptised the same year.

## How did you become a minister?

One day when I was 21, I went to a river side to pray and I asked God to show me His plan for my life. There and then I heard God calling me to continue the work my uncle was doing shepherding Gods' people. A short while later, my aunt called me and confirmed to me that the Lord revealed to her that I was going to be a minister. One day, the principal at my theological college called me to his office and asked "Why did your parents name you Soja [which means soldier]? Whatever reason today I tell you the meaning of your name is Serve Only Jesus Always."



# “Serve Only Jesus Always”

## What changes have you noticed in recent years in relations between Muslims and Christians?

There is more hostility between Muslims and Christians in recent years. Each is suspecting the other and truth is fast eroding. It is getting worse with the aggressive manner Boko Haram is going. Christians believe that Islam is continuing the jihadist crusade of its founding leader Usman Dan Fadio [who waged war to establish the Sokoto Caliphate in 1809]. Muslims fear the rate at which Christianity is advancing through church planting, schools, clinics, hospitals and social amenities.

## What is the greatest threat to the church in northern Nigeria?

There are two main threats – Boko Haram in the north and the activities of Fulani herdsmen in the Middle Belt states. Each day villages are razed, farm crops are eaten by cows and properties looted. Government policies are not favourable to Christians, with appointments and promotions seen to favour Muslims over Christians.

It is true that Boko Haram has been highly degraded but it will take a longer time, if at all, for it to be completely defeated. As long as the abducted Chibok girls remain in captivity, the issue of Boko Haram is yet to be concluded.

Most of the Middle Belt states are governed by Muslim Governors, with the President a Muslim and Fulani in positions of influence. All the security heads are Muslims. Therefore, the marauding Fulani herdsmen regularly attack Christian farms and villages almost with impunity.

## Have you noticed any differences since President Buhari's election?

I will say yes and no. President Buhari deserves commendation for the renewed zeal to fight to defeat Boko Haram and fight against corruption. He also deserves commendation for his attempts to diversify the economy of the country. However, Nigerians are yet to see the change his government promised during his election campaign and have not seen inclusiveness in appointments to juicy positions in his government.



• **PRESIDENT BUHARI**  
One year in power  
Photo: CNN

# HEY KIDS - LET'S



## Where is Nigeria?

Nigeria is a big country in west Africa, on the Gulf of Guinea. It's made up of 36 states with the capital, Abuja, in the middle. The surrounding countries are Benin, Niger, Chad and Cameroon. Its name comes from the Niger River, the third longest river



in Africa - it flows through several countries and out into the sea through the Niger Delta. Nigeria has a huge population of about 187 million people. The whole island of Ireland has only six and a half million people! Most Christians live in the south and most Muslims live in the north, with a mixture of both in the Middle Belt.

## What's happening in Northern Nigeria?

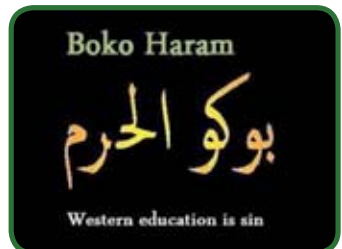


Although most Christians live in the south, many Christians live among the Muslims of the north. They are at risk of attack by a terrorist group called Boko Haram, especially in Borno and other states in the northeast. Boko Haram terrorists want to get rid of Christians and also want to get rid of Muslims who don't agree with their aims. Many

Christians have had to leave their homes and flee to safer areas of Nigeria. They are called "displaced" people. Many of them are living in camps while they wait until it's safe to go home.

## What is Boko Haram?

Boko Haram aims to overthrow the Nigerian government and force everyone to follow strict Sharia (Islamic law). It began in 2002 in Borno state. In 2009 it started a campaign of violence. Since then, Boko Haram has killed about 20,000 people (Christians and Muslims) and forced two and a half million Nigerians to flee their homes. It has destroyed thousands of church buildings and hundreds of schools. Boko Haram believes boys should only go to Islamic schools, and girls shouldn't go to school at all. In the last 18 months, the Nigerian army has managed to push Boko Haram out of many towns and villages in the northeast.



# PRAY FOR NIGERIA

## What happened to the Chibok girls?



Boko Haram has kidnapped many Nigerians to use as slaves, wives or fighters. The most famous victims are the 276 teenagers kidnapped from the Government Girls' Secondary School in Borno state in April 2014. They were taken away in trucks and hidden in the huge Sambisa Forest. Most were Christians, but Boko Haram's leader said they've become Muslims and have been married. In May 2016, soldiers found one of the girls, Amina Ali, in the forest - she escaped while searching for firewood. Amina is now 19 and has a baby. She says six of the girls have died but the rest are still with Boko Haram in the Sambisa Forest.

## Who are the Fulani?

Fulani cattle herders are nomads who travel around looking for grass to graze their herds. In Nigeria's Middle Belt there has been lots of trouble over grazing land between Fulani herdsmen (mostly Muslims) and settled farmers (mostly Christians). The herdsmen send their cattle to graze in the farmers' fields and they eat the crops. In recent years, Fulani herdsmen have been attacking Christians,



trying to force them off their land. Thousands of Christians have been killed and their homes and churches burned. Nigeria's President, Muhammadu Buhari, is a Fulani and has lots of cattle, but he has promised to end the violence.

## A prayer for Nigeria

Dear God,

Please bless Christians in northern Nigeria and keep them safe from attack. We pray for an end to Boko Haram's violence. We ask that displaced Christians might be able to return home and live in peace. Please protect everyone who has been kidnapped by Boko Haram - may they be released soon. We ask you to bless Christians in the Middle Belt and to end the Fulani attacks. Please heal all Nigerians who have been injured by Boko Haram or the Fulani, and comfort those whose loved ones have been killed.

Amen

# Letters from a Chinese Prison



**Yang Hua**, pastor of Huoshi Church in Guiyang, in southern Guizhou province, was detained in December 2015 and formally arrested in January for “divulging state secrets”. He was threatened and tortured during interrogation in March and April, and is expected to go on trial soon.

Two letters that Yang Hua sent to his wife, Wang Hongwu, have recently emerged. **In the first letter, he wrote about family matters including advice about their two sons, Mu'en and Xiangen.** He also wrote: *“It must be the result of everyone's prayers that my lower back pain is no longer an issue. I sleep soundly at night. Don't worry. I've adjusted to other aspects of life well.*

*“You shouldn't be too anxious. It is best to remain peaceful and wait for God. God is omniscient. I believe that he never makes a mistake. If it is convenient, please send me a (recent) picture of you and our sons. Let's pray and leave other things to God. Thank you for investing everything in this family. I am grateful for what God has given me; let's carry the cross and hasten down the road to heaven, until the day we meet the Lord.”*



**In the second letter, he wrote:** *“I want to share what I've received with you. God has given me a year of rest after 23 years of hard work... This is a good place to rest, where I am cut off from the rest of the world and brought closer to God... I want to thank God for using this special method to give this special gift to our household. Let us accept and enjoy it with a thankful heart.”* Though no official date for the trial has been announced, Yang's lawyer believes it will be held soon. He told Yang's wife in mid-August that Yang was doing well in detention: *“He told us not to worry about him. He is concerned that we get too worried about his wellbeing. He would feel more at peace if we're not too worried for him.”* Throughout his detention, the authorities have refused to let Yang see his family. (*China Aid*)

## More restrictions in Zhejiang

Government officials in Zhejiang province (where over 1,800 crosses have been removed from church buildings) have tightened controls on churches, including requiring some churches to submit all their income to local government scrutiny and allow government officials to speak at church services.

# Bishoy Armia Boulos returns to Islam

**On 30 July, following two and a half years' detention, Christian convert Bishoy Armia Boulos (34) posted a video on YouTube announcing that he had returned to Islam.** He had been released from prison on bail on 23 July, on condition that he return to live with his parents. (When he became a Christian in 1998 they turned him in to the government and said he should die for leaving Islam.)



The video included the Shahadah (the Islamic confession of faith) and was posted under his original Muslim name, Mohammed Hegazy. His lawyer Karam Ghobrial, noting that his statement seemed scripted, said he believed Bishoy made the video because he was a terrified and broken man. *"I personally think he recorded this video to get out,"* he said. The fact that Bishoy said he wasn't speaking under duress but at the same time would no longer speak to media has aroused concern among human rights activists in Egypt that he may have been coerced or threatened into making the statement.

**At the end of June, a judge ordered Bishoy's release, but he spent over three weeks being transferred between prisons and police cells across Egypt, with no explanation.** The last time Karam Ghobrial saw him, he was at breaking point. The lawyer said: *"It broke my heart to see him crying at the police station that day. I couldn't do anything to help him. He'd lost hope in life and was thinking about suicide."*



Bishoy, who is a journalist, had been in prison since December 2013, when he was arrested while documenting the persecution of Christians in Upper Egypt. He should have been released in December 2014 after serving a one-year sentence but remained in prison, where he was beaten and pressurised to recant his Christian faith.

**Bishoy featured in Church in Chains' 2015 Lent Prayer Project. He was well known as the first Egyptian to try (unsuccessfully) to change the religion on his ID card from Muslim to Christian, in a case begun in 2007.**

There is no news of his wife Christine and their two children, who have asylum in Europe. Although the Egyptian constitution guarantees freedom of expression and belief, security agents from the Ministry of the Interior routinely harass and arrest converts who have left Islam. (*Morning Star News*)



## Maryam Zargaran ends Hunger Strike

On 31 July, Iranian Christian prisoner Maryam Zargaran ended her second hunger strike this summer after prison authorities promised a fairer handling of her case. Her family said that Maryam had told them the authorities had given her some positive promises which eventually convinced her to break her hunger strike.

Earlier in July, an Iranian court refused to release Maryam despite a medical report from prison officials confirming the seriousness of her condition, which was partly due to her hunger strike but also due to the non-treatment of long-standing health problems including anaemia, diabetes, high cholesterol, lumbar disc disease, arthritis and osteoporosis. The court's decision came at the request of the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence.



**Maryam first went on hunger strike in May, protesting at the refusal of desperately-needed medical treatment.** After much international publicity when she became critically ill, she was transferred to hospital on 6 June on deposit of a bond of 350 million toman (€105,000). Her mother, Zahra Pour-Nouhi Langroudi, said: "We are happy they gave her furlough, but that's not why my daughter went on a hunger strike. We want her to be free... We don't know why she was sentenced to four years in prison in the first place."



**On 19 June, the court ordered Maryam to return to prison.** As she was not well enough, her mother went to the court in Tehran to seek an extension of the medical leave but it was refused despite the doctor's strong advice that Maryam follow through with her complete treatment. Instead the court threatened to retain the money submitted as a bond. On 27 June, members of Maryam's

family escorted her back to Evin Prison.

Maryam has served nearly three years of a four-year sentence in Evin Prison in Tehran. A Christian convert from Islam, she is a house church member and was involved in Pastor Saeed Abedini's orphanage project. (Mohabat News)



## A Christian Presence in Northern Iraq

Two years have passed since Islamic State militants swept through northern Iraq in 2014 forcing over 100,000 Christians to flee from their homes. Most of these Christians fled to Iraqi Kurdistan (less than 100km away). Some have left for a new life in the West but the majority remain, waiting to see what the future holds.



**In June 2016, Malcolm MacLeod of Steadfast Global, a Scottish charity that brings aid to Iraqi Christian refugees, travelled to Dohuk in Iraqi Kurdistan to attend an unprecedented gathering of over 30 Christian leaders.** The historic meeting was called out of a sense of the great need for a more robust and co-ordinated response from the local churches, governing/political authorities and NGOs.

The meeting was successful in forming agreement on a new initiative to provide protection, housing and employment to enable Christians to continue to live in the region. After the meeting, Malcolm said, *"We are delighted to share that a number of highly significant decisions were made which, if fully implemented, will lead to a significant improvement in the situations of many Christian refugees in the Kurdistan region and potentially beyond."*



**The meeting approved a pilot project which will see an initial 100 homes being constructed for the most vulnerable Christian refugee families.** Detailed plans for the pilot project, including the selection of suitable sites, are to be discussed at a meeting in Dohuk in October, which Malcolm MacLeod plans to attend. Funding for the project is going to be raised by several international Christian organisations and will be managed and supervised stringently with input from local co-ordinators and international donors. It is hoped that building work will begin in spring 2017.

**Church in Chains supports this initiative and has sent €5,000 to Steadfast Global in support of the pilot project.**

# Come to the Conference

This year, our Annual Conference is being held at a new venue – the Clarion Hotel in Liffey Valley in Dublin (close to Junction 7 on the M50). We hope to see you there.



## GETTING THERE

**From North or South:** Join the M50. Leave at Junction 7 (Signed Sligo/Westport/Galway), continuing on N4 for 1km. Leave N4 at Junction 2, where hotel will be visible on left.

**From West:** Join the N4 Eastbound. Leave N4 at Junction 2 (Signed Fonthill/Liffey Valley). After crossing under bridge, hotel will be visible on left.

Visit <http://www.clarionhotelliffeyvalley.com/location.htm> for precise directions from where you live.



**BUSES** from Dublin city centre:  
25, 25a, 25b, 66, 66a, 66b and 67.



**PARKING** Free parking in hotel car park for all delegates. When entering, take ticket at automatic barrier and exchange it at conference registration desk for pre-paid exit ticket.



**STAYING IN HOTEL** Overnight accommodation is available at the hotel on Friday and Saturday nights at the special rate of €109 per room B&B (€99 for single occupancy). To book, phone 01- 625 8000 quoting Church in Chains conference.



**EATING** Complimentary tea and biscuits from 10.30am, and at the end of conference. Lunch will be from 12.45 – 2.00 and sandwiches or a hot meal may be ordered in advance at registration.



**CHILDREN** A programme for primary school children will be run by a team from OM Ireland adjacent to the conference suite.  
**NOTE: This must be booked in advance (use Response Form).**

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If you plan to attend, it would be very helpful if you could let us know (use Response Form).

# CHURCH IN CHAINS CONFERENCE

Sat 10 September

11am – 4pm

Clarion Hotel,  
Liffey Valley, Dublin



**Rev Dr Soja  
Bewarang (Nigeria)**

Rev Soja is an experienced church leader and will speak about Christians in northern and central Nigeria living under constant threat of attack

**ALL WELCOME – ADMISSION FREE**

Children's Programme (book in advance)

*Info: [www.churchinchains.ie](http://www.churchinchains.ie) or 01-282 5393*

# Autumn Events

**Saturday 24 September**

**Corcaghan Gospel Concert**



The annual Gospel Concert in aid of the Persecuted Church will be held at Corcaghan Community Centre, Co. Monaghan on Saturday 24 September at 8pm.

The concert of Christian music will feature **Lorraine Vance** (pictured), the **Ballybay Country Gospel Group**, **Phil Nally** and **Gordon Quinn**. Come along for a great night of music; the evening will also include a Church in Chains presentation.

Admission is free – a collection will be taken in aid of a project to support persecuted Christians. Previous concerts have raised funds for projects to support persecuted Christians in China, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and Pakistan.

Further details from Cecil or Iris Deering (049-555 2484).

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**Sunday 20 November**

**International Day of Prayer**

**The International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP)** will be marked on Sunday 20 November. Churches all over Ireland and Britain will devote time during their services on that day to pray for the Persecuted Church.

The focus in Ireland will be on **Pakistan**, and we will be praying for Asia Bibi and other Christians who are victims of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. We will also pray against the threat of violent attacks on churches by Muslim extremists.

**Church in Chains will provide three resources for IDOP:**

**Bookmark with Prayer Points** for each person in church

**Information Sheet** for those leading prayers

**PowerPoint** slide presentation (approximately two minutes)

**Please ask your church leader to mark this date in your church diary NOW** and tick the box on the enclosed response form to order these resources (available from mid-October).

# Help Victims of Persecution in Nigeria

The Stefanos Foundation was established in association with the Christian Association of Nigeria to offer practical support to the many Christian victims of persecution in the northern and Middle Belt regions of Nigeria.

## One of the main areas that Stefanos works in is trauma counselling workshops

– helping hundreds of traumatised Christians who have witnessed untold horrors in their homes and communities. Workshops, attended by 30 – 70 victims, are held in safe environments where Christians are given many opportunities to share their stories, to listen to the Bible and to be prayed for. A couple whose daughter was kidnapped by Boko Haram spoke of how the workshop had helped them: *"Thank you for giving us this platform to come and carry our pains to God, and to share what has happened to us. Please pray for our families – we still have hope that we will see our daughters one day."*



## Stefanos has re-roofed many burnt buildings and homes belonging to Christians living in villages in crisis areas.

It has also supplied emergency tents to be used by families in such situations. In the immediate aftermath of terrorist attacks on Christian villages, Stefanos distributes relief materials to meet immediate and urgent needs of food, clothing, medicine and temporary accommodation.

**Stefanos also advocates for Christians in situations of persecution**, by involving government and local authorities. It has represented many Christians, securing fairer treatment for them in their communities, and has been instrumental in resolving conflicts that could otherwise have escalated.

**Please give, as you are able, to support our brothers and sisters in Nigeria.** Your gift will be used, without any deduction, in the ways described above.

## Two Ways to Give

1. Use the Response Form to send your gift by post (cheque or postal money order)
2. Donate online via PayPal (visit our website [www.churchinchains.ie](http://www.churchinchains.ie))



# CHURCH IN CHAINS

AN IRISH VOICE FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

An independent Irish charity  
that encourages prayer  
and action in support of  
persecuted Christians worldwide.

## PRAYER NETWORK

**DUBLIN CITY** First Friday night of the month at Grace Bible Fellowship, Pearse St.  
Contact David Turner 01-282 5393

**MIDLANDS REGION** Rotates between Athlone, Ballinasloe, Banagher, Birr, Longford,  
Mullingar, Roscommon, Tullamore. Contact Seán Ó Cluaid 090-647 5410

**CORWILLIS** Olive Sturgeon 047 55137

**DUNDALK** Kevin Marley 085 7405004

**GALWAY** Frank McMurray 091 755 360

**GREYSTONES** Miriam Beattie 01 687 3183

**WESTPORT** Roy Rohu 098 27110

**WEXFORD** Mary Gill 053 9144795

## TRUSTEES

Pamela Coulter

David Franklin (Chair)

Norah Lynch (Secretary)

Davood Mahmoodnezhad

Jim McGing

Keith Talbot (Treasurer)

## PANEL OF REFERENCE

Bishop Ken Clarke

Pastor Vincent Gannon

Rev Nigel Mackey

## GIVING

Church in Chains is entirely supported by voluntary donations.

Gifts are used to pay for all the necessary expenses, including salaries, associated with our campaigning work and to distribute grants to overseas partners in China, Eritrea, India, Iran, Iraq, Mexico, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Syria and Turkey.

Cheques etc should be made payable to Church in Chains.

**Bank Details: IBAN** : IE22 IPBS 9906 1020 1759 05

**BIC** : IPBSIE2D

Details about standing orders, legacies and tax-efficient giving available on request.

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Church in Chains is a member of  
Aontas, Evangelical Alliance Ireland,  
The Wheel and the Department of  
Foreign Affairs and Trade NGO Standing  
Committee on Human Rights.

Registered charity in Ireland (CHY 15443).

*Church in Chains* magazine is published  
four times a year and is edited by  
David Turner and Virginia Chipperfield.