

Pray for Christian Prisoners in Iran (February 2013)



SAEED ABEDINI is an Iranian-American pastor who was arrested in September 2012 during a visit to Iran where he had been working on building an orphanage. On Sunday 27 January, he was sentenced to eight years imprisonment by a court in Tehran for "attempting to undermine the Iranian government by planting house churches and spreading Christianity".

Saeed and his wife, Nagmeh, married in 2004, and moved to the USA in 2005 after Saeed was interrogated over his church activities. They live with their children Rebekkah (6) and Jacob (4) in Idaho.

YOUCEF NADARKHANI Youcef was conditionally released from prison again on 7 January. He had been re-arrested on Christmas Day to serve 45 days remaining from his three-year sentence. Youcef was released on condition that he report to the prison on 8 February to fill in final paperwork relating to his prison sentence.

Youcef was originally released in September 2012 upon acquittal of a charge of apostasy, having spent nearly three years in prison. During his period of freedom he was able to travel to London in November, to be a guest at Christian Solidarity Worldwide's National Conference.



MARYAM JALILI Maryam is serving a two and a half year sentence imposed in December 2011 for "membership of an illegal group". She was originally arrested on Christmas Eve 2009 when she and 14 other Christians gathered at a house church in Pakdasht for Christmas services.

Maryam was released on bail in March 2010 but was re-arrested in April 2011 and was sent back to Evin prison in Tehran, which is infamous for its harsh conditions. She spent time in solitary confinement before being transferred to a general cell. Maryam is married with two children.

BEHNAMEH IRANI There continue to be grave concerns for the health of Behnam, who has been denied surgery to stop internal bleeding. Friends fear that this is a deliberate policy of the Iranian government. Behnam has been in poor health since summer 2012, when he began vomiting blood. In early December, he was reported to be unable to speak.

Behnam became a Christian in 1992. Like Youcef Nadarkhani, he is a pastor in the Church of Iran. He is married to an Armenian Christian, Christine, and they have a daughter, Rebecca (10) and a son, Adriel (3).



FARSHID FATHI Farshid (33) is serving a six year sentence in Evin prison. He was arrested in December 2010 and later sentenced for engaging in propaganda against the Islamic Regime by helping to spread Christianity through contact with foreign Christian groups. At the trial, evidence was given that Farshid had Bibles printed in Farsi, had unlawfully distributed Bibles and possessed Christian literature.

Farshid has spent nearly a year in solitary confinement but is now in a general cell. A friend said that "*Farshid has becoming a shining beacon for Christ in prison, and is loved by his fellow inmates.*" Farshid and his wife Leila have two daughters, Rosana and Bardia.



CHURCH IN CHAINS

PO Box 10447, Glenageary, Co. Dublin, Ireland

T 01-282 5393 E info@churchinchains.ie W www.churchinchains.ie