



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER 2013

Information for leading prayers

OUTLINE FOR 5 MINUTES

PREPARATION Download PowerPoint from www.churchinchains.ie and familiarise yourself with its content. Read the Bookmark with Prayer Points.

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER Distribute Bookmarks to people as they arrive or place on seats/pews.

INTRODUCTION Introduce the subject (*Today is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church*) and mention that churches all over Ireland and Britain will be taking time in their worship services today to spend some time praying together for the persecuted church. State that Christians face persecution (including restrictions, attacks and imprisonment) in over 50 countries around the world.

Explain that today's prayers will be focused on persecuted Christians in Egypt and Syria, where Christian communities have been targeted for destruction.

PRESENTATION and PRAYER Run the PowerPoint show – 22 slides (approximately 2 minutes long, or 4 minutes if using commentary overleaf). Pause at 11 (Pray for Egypt) and pray using one or more of the Prayer Points on the Egypt side of the bookmark. In the same way, pause at 21 (Pray for Syria) and pray for Syria. Encourage people to take their bookmarks home and show final slide. The PowerPoint is self-explanatory and may be shown without spoken commentary but a suggested commentary is printed overleaf, which you may like to use.

OUTLINE FOR MORE THAN 5 MINUTES

PREPARATION – as above but also read through suggested Bible Reading (John 15v18 – 16v4)

SUNDAY 3 NOVEMBER Distribute Bookmarks to people as they arrive or place on seats/pews.

INTRODUCTION – as above

BIBLE READING: John 15v18 – 16v4 (the warning of the Lord Jesus to the disciples to expect persecution). Emphasise the direct link that Egypt & Syria have with Jesus: Egypt was a place of refuge for the baby Lord Jesus; parts of Syria are some of the last remaining places on earth where Aramaic (the language that Jesus spoke) is still spoken.

PRESENTATION and PRAYER Run the PowerPoint show and pause as follows:

PAUSE at 11 (Pray for Egypt) – Pray using the three Prayer Points on the bookmark

PAUSE at 21 (Pray for Syria) – Pray using the three Prayer Points on the bookmark

You may wish to invite at least one other person to participate in prayer. At end of session, encourage people to take their bookmarks home and show final slide. The PowerPoint is self-explanatory and may be shown without spoken commentary but a suggested commentary is printed overleaf, which you may like to use.



CHURCH IN CHAINS

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NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	SUGGESTED COMMENTARY
1	Today is IDOP	Churches all over Ireland and Britain will be giving time today in worship services to pray for persecuted Christians
2	World Map	Christians face varying degrees of persecution in over 50 countries, which are coloured green on the map
3	X – Targeted	During this year, Christians living in Egypt and Syria have been specifically targeted for attack
4	Egypt Map	Egypt has been in political turmoil for almost three years, with protests on the streets on many occasions
5	Egypt Protests	The first mass peaceful protests united the people against the dictatorial rule of Hosni Mubarak
6	Mohammed Morsi	Mohammed Morsi was elected in 2012 but his rule was increasingly seen as moving towards an Islamist state
7	General al-Sisi	The military takeover had wide support in Egypt but was resisted by supporters of President Morsi
8	Anti-Christian graffiti	Christians were blamed for his removal – and graffiti began to appear on Christian homes and businesses
9	Church on fire	The pro-Morsi supporters then carried out their threat to burn churches in co-ordinated attacks on 14 August
10	Burnt Bibles	Churches, convents and Bible Society bookshops were all attacked and burned to the ground
11	PRAY FOR EGYPT	PAUSE FOR PRAYER
12	Syria Map	Syria was a relatively safe place for Christians for many years, though evangelism among Muslims was banned
13	Bashar al-Assad	President Bashar al-Assad, like his father before him, was accused of severe repression of any opposition
14	Syria Protests	The first protests in Syria in 2011 were peaceful and full of hope for freedom and an end to repression
15	Syrian Army Troops	However, when the Syrian Army brutally crushed protests, the mood began to change
16	Syrian Rebels	Protest turned to armed rebellion and over 100,000 people have died in the brutal conflict
17	Islamist Rebels	Many of the rebel groups are now fighting for an Islamist state and have targeted Christian towns and villages
18	Destroyed church interior	Many church buildings have been destroyed
19	Maaloula Village	In September, rebels attacked Maaloula village, which has 17 churches and is on a UNESCO heritage list
20	Woman Crying	Three Christians in Maaloula were killed because they refused the demands of the rebels to convert to Islam
21	PRAY FOR SYRIA	PAUSE FOR PRAYER
22	Sign up for mag	Encourage people to bring bookmarks home and sign up for magazine