

# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

## SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2022

### INFORMATION FOR LEADING PRAYERS

Thank you for taking part in the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church – you and your church will be joining many churches in Ireland, Britain, USA, Canada and other countries in devoting time to praying for the persecuted. This information sheet offers suggestions as to how your prayers for our brothers and sisters in China (including Pastor Wang Yi, pictured in prison) can be incorporated into your time of worship. Please discuss with your church leader what would work best in your church.



### PREPARATION

View IDOP video at [www.churchinchains.ie](http://www.churchinchains.ie) and familiarise yourself with it (even if you don't plan to use the video, it would be helpful in your preparations to view it). The video features Bob Fu of China Aid (a Church in Chains partner organisation serving persecuted Chinese Christians) speaking about the situation of Christians in China and ends with three prayer points, which are also included on the bookmark. Arrange in advance with the person responsible for projection in your church to download the video. On Sunday 6 November, give bookmarks to people as they arrive or place on seats/pews (ask your church leader first).

### PRESENTATION

**The estimated time involved (introduction + video + prayer) is around 7 minutes.** Introduce the subject briefly: "Today is the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church". Explain that this year our prayers will focus on China where, under President Xi Jinping, Christians are suffering more persecution now than at any time since the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s.

Show the video (**approximately 3 minutes long**). If not using video, give a basic introduction to the situation in China – the following may be a helpful summary: The number of Christians in China has grown to an estimated 100 million. President Xi Jinping's government is trying to force all churches to register with government-controlled church organisations and operate under extremely restrictive regulations – the latest, introduced this year, is a ban on all online church activity without a permit. The best-known pastor in prison in China is Wang Yi, who leads Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, which had more than eight hundred members. Pastor Wang refuses to register the church and is serving a nine-year prison sentence.

### PRAYER

Use the following three prayer points (shared by our China partner Bob Fu) which are printed on the bookmark. Alternatively, you may wish to use the prayer that is also printed on the bookmark.

- 1. Pray for those who are persecuted, especially those in prison.** *That they may know God's presence and that other Christians are praying for them.*
- 2. Pray for the families of Christian prisoners.** *Often spouses and children of prisoners suffer hardship and also harassment by the authorities.*
- 3. Pray for the persecutors, that their hearts would be softened.** *President Xi Jinping and government officials want to totally control the church. Pray that, like Saul in the New Testament, they too will meet Jesus and be changed.*

Finish by encouraging people to find out more by visiting our website [www.churchinchains.ie](http://www.churchinchains.ie)

**INVOLVING OTHERS:** If your church encourages individuals to participate in prayer, the three prayer points could be covered by different people.



**CHURCH IN CHAINS**

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