

PRAY FOR PRISONERS

Sunday 24th December

Dr Kiflu Gebremeskel has been in prison in Eritrea since May 2004. We pray that Dr Kiflu would be filled with courage, hope and joy from above this Christmas.

CHRISTMAS DAY (Monday 25th December)

Eritrean Orthodox priest **Gebremedhin Gebregioris** (pictured) has been in prison since 2004. We pray that he would experience Emmanuel today - God with him - as he spends another Christmas behind bars.



ST STEPHEN'S DAY (Tuesday 26th December)

Pastor and anaesthetist **Meron Gebreselasie** has been in prison in Eritrea since 2004. We pray for perseverance and good health for Meron.

Wednesday 27th December

Mussie Ezaz, an evangelist and youth leader, has been in an Eritrean prison since 2008. We ask God to provide for Mussie and bless his wife **Frewrini** and their three sons, **Yoel, Hananiel** and **Basaliel**.

Thursday 28th December

Shaguffa Kiran has been in prison in Pakistan since July 2021 on a blasphemy charge. We pray strength and hope for her, her husband **Rafique** and their four children. Please Lord may her trial be heard soon and may she be acquitted!

Friday 29th December

Zafar Bhatti has been in jail in Pakistan since 2012 and is under sentence of death. We pray that his appeal would be heard soon and would be successful so that Zafar would be freed and reunited with his wife **Nawab**.

Saturday 30th December

Ashfaq Masih has been in prison in Pakistan since 2017 and on death row since July 2022. We ask the Lord to strengthen Ashfaq in his inner being in this dark place and to bless his wife **Nabeela** and their nine-year-old daughter.

Sunday 31st December

Y Pum Bya is a church leader who has been serving a 14-year prison sentence in Vietnam since 2019. We ask the Lord to protect his body, spirit and mind and provide for Y Pum Bya's wife **H'Bleng Nie** and their seven children.

————— Thank you for praying with us and blessings for 2024! —————



CHURCH IN CHAINS

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Church in Chains Prayer Diary



December 2023

*"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests." Luke 2:14*

PRAY FOR NEWS AND EVENTS

Friday 1st December

We thank God that we can meet tonight online to pray together for the needs of the persecuted church. Thank you for Your promise that You will be in our midst!

Saturday 2nd December

Iranian Christian converts **Ayoob Poor-Rezazadeh, Ahmad Sarparast** and **Morteza Mashoodkari** have been permitted to serve the remainder of their sentences outside prison on condition that they report back daily to work at an adjacent factory. We pray for strength for them in this new phase of their lives.

Sunday 3rd December

Today as we celebrate the first Sunday in Advent, please pray for peace and protection for the persecuted church during Christmas celebrations.

Monday 4th December

We pray for hope for Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu (China). The authorities in China continue to harass Early Rain leaders and members.

Tuesday 5th December

We thank God that while 2023 was a challenging year for Church in Chains staff, He sustained us in our personal and work lives. We pray for blessing for all our faithful supporters, who are a constant source of encouragement to us.

Wednesday 6th December

Today is the last official date to post Christmas cards to Christian prisoners in China, Iran and Pakistan. We pray that **Pastor Zhang Shaojie, Anooshavan Avedian** and **Shaguffa Kiran** would receive the cards that are sent and be greatly encouraged in their faith.

Thursday 7th December

Praise God that **Shaukat Masih** and his wife **Kiran Shaukat** were granted bail and released in October after spending a month in prison in Pakistan on a blasphemy charge. Please pray for safety and provision for them and their three children (aged 13, 9 and 7), two of whom have disabilities.

PRAY FOR NIGERIA

Friday 8th December

Many of the 100 million Christians living in Nigeria face extreme and violent persecution. Several terror groups want to eliminate the presence of Christianity in the Middle Belt region and the Muslim-majority north and are attacking Christians with increasing impunity. We pray for protection and peace for the Christians living in these regions.

Saturday 9th December

More Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria (by Islamic militants and armed bandits) than in the rest of the world combined. Today we pray for comfort and healing for all the bereaved Christian families across the country.



Sunday 10th December

The Nigerian government under **President Bola Tinubu** denies that religious persecution is taking place. We pray that the government would start protecting Christian communities and find lasting solutions for the deepening security crisis.

Monday 11th December

Praise God for the safe return home of **Treasure Ayuba** (14) who had been held hostage by suspected Fulani militants for over two years. He is the last of 140 boys kidnapped from Bethel Baptist High School in Kaduna state to return home.

Tuesday 12th December

20-year-old **Leah Sharibu** has been held captive by militants from Boko Haram faction Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) for five and a half years. We continue to pray for the miracle of release or rescue for Leah and her babies.

Wednesday 13th December

Pray for our partner **Stefanos Foundation** as it gathers information and supports those who have suffered violent attacks. Pray for wisdom for **Mark Lipdo** (Director) and all his team. Pray for provision for their work and for protection on all Stefanos staff as they travel to dangerous areas to bring aid.

Thursday 14th December

Praise God for a Convert Centre recently re-opened by Stefanos Foundation with the support of Church in Chains. The centre will give shelter and discipleship training for a six month period to fifty Christian converts and their families.

Friday 15th December

We ask the Lord to intervene to stop the daily evil and brutal attacks on our Nigerian brothers and sisters. We pray that the hearts of the members of Boko Haram, ISWAP and Fulani herdsmen would be turned from hatred to love.

PRAY FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

Saturday 16th December

In the coming week we want to focus our prayers on our brothers and sisters who live in the region where Jesus was born and spent his earthly life. Since the 7 October Hamas attacks on Israel, the region has been engulfed in the most deadly conflict since 1948. We pray for a just and lasting peace.

Sunday 17th December

Pray for those who are terrified, mourning and suffering in Israel and Gaza. We ask God to save them from despair and bring them hope.

Monday 18th December

We pray for safety for Gaza's tiny Christian community of around 1,100 Christians who have been seeking shelter from ongoing aerial bombardment. We also pray that the only Christian hospital, Al-Ahli Hospital (supported by the Church of Ireland Diocese of Dublin and Glendalough), will be able to continue to function.



Tuesday 19th December

"Our role as Christians is to be salt and light, tools in the hands of God to give out love and to tear down walls between us and others. That's our faith: to be like Christ during difficult circumstances," says Elias El-Najjar, from the Palestinian Bible Society. Pray that Christians throughout the region may live in this way.

Wednesday 20th December

Our hearts are breaking at the devastation, loss of life and suffering that we have been seeing. We look to you Jesus as our Saviour and the hope of the world. We pray for Your will be done all across the Middle East and for Your peace to reign!

Thursday 21st December

Pray for the continuing work of Middle East Christian broadcaster SAT-7. One viewer responded to a special programme about the conflict: *"It is different from anything else we are seeing. It is transmitting life amidst all this death."*

Friday 22nd December

Today we pray for the church in Egypt, the largest Christian community in the Middle East. We pray that it would continue to grow, shine brightly and draw many people to Jesus, even in the midst of persecution.

Saturday 23rd December

The peace of Egypt plays a crucial role in the stability of the region. Following the presidential election, scheduled for earlier in December, we pray that the new (or re-elected) president would act to protect Christians.