



Prayer for the Persecuted Church for April 24, 2025

Prayer for the Persecuted Church: Our Best Practices

Our focus in this hour is on prayer for the global church, not ourselves or our local issues. We can talk and even pray for those other things after prayer meeting is over at 1:00 p.m.

We strive to start our prayers by 12:10.

We are blessed to have a growing number of praying people join us. Let's all offer short prayers throughout our prayer time, allowing time for everyone to pray out loud if they wish. We are blessed by prayers when we can hear them, but silent prayers from our people are as valued as spoken ones.

Thank you for praying for the persecuted church. Encourage friends to pray, too! NOTE: Prisoner prayer list moved to the last page.

from Voice of the Martyrs

Global Prayer Guide: QATAR

OVERVIEW:

Qatar had built a reputation for economic development and participation in the world economy, but most Arab countries severed diplomatic relations with the country in 2017, accusing it of supporting terrorist groups. The few Qatari believers living inside the country must use extreme caution when gathering for worship, while Christians who are not citizens must worship in a government-controlled compound that is closed to Qatari citizens. About 65 percent of the country's population is composed of foreign workers — mostly Filipinos, Indians and Lebanese — including many who are Christians. Foreign Christians in Qatar have been deported for evangelistic activities among native Qataris.

MAJOR RELIGION:

Nearly all Qatari nationals are Muslim, and most are Sunni Muslim. Foreign Christians working inside Qatar make up 6 percent of the country's population.

PERSECUTOR:

The government and the community persecute those who evangelize and those who leave Islam.

WHAT IT MEANS TO FOLLOW CHRIST IN QATAR

Converting to Christianity means losing everything, and the small number of Qatari believers must gather covertly for teaching or worship. Although sharing the gospel with Muslims is strictly forbidden, some Christians still take great risks to evangelize Qatari citizens.

ACCESS TO BIBLES:

Qataris can easily access the Bible through the internet, and some travel to Bahrain to purchase Bibles. It is not illegal to own a Bible, but Qataris take significant risks to own or distribute one.

VOM WORK:

VOM provides support to Christian converts from Islam.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

- *Praise God for Qatari Christians who faithfully share the gospel with Muslim neighbors.*
- *Qataris who own and distribute Bibles are at great risk. Pray for their protection.*
- *Pray that Christians in the large expatriate community will faithfully share the gospel with their Qatari neighbors.*
- *Becoming a Christian in Qatar is costly. Pray that new believers who suffer loss will find joy in the Lord.*

- *Pray that Qatari Christians will find fellowship and opportunities to worship regularly. From International Christian Concern*

From ICC

9 Chinese Christians Jailed, Fined for Distributing Bibles

04/17/2025 China — Nine Chinese Christians have received prison sentences and large fines for re-selling and distributing Bibles in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia. International Christian Concern (ICC) has followed this case for several years now. The Christians were found guilty of illegal business operations because even though the actual Bibles were legally published.

- *How to Pray: Pray for all unjust charges against this group to be dropped.*
- *Pray for Bibles to continue reaching the lost in China.*
- *Pray for revival within the Chinese government.*

54 Christians Killed Following Palm Sunday Service

04/16/2025 Nigeria — Following Palm Sunday celebrations on April 13, Islamic Fulani extremists slaughtered at least 54 Christians in the village of Zikke near Jos, Plateau state. Local leaders are calling the attack “a targeted act of genocide against the Christian community.” Eyewitnesses said the attack lasted more than an hour, leaving 103 households destroyed and the entire village displaced.

- *How to Pray: Pray for peace and comfort for those who lost loved ones.*
- *Pray for healing for all those who were injured.*
- *Pray for the attackers to encounter Christ and turn from their violence.*

U.S. Missionary Rescued in South Africa Following Shootout

04/16/2025 South Africa — Following an intense gun battle, South African police have rescued U.S. missionary and pastor Josh Sullivan from his kidnappers. His rescue comes less than a week after masked armed men took him hostage at gunpoint as he preached a sermon last Thursday at Fellowship Baptist Church in South Africa’s Eastern Cape province. Three suspects died in the ensuing shootout.

- *How to Pray: Pray for healing for the pastor and his family after this traumatic event.*
- *Praise God for his safe rescue.*
- *Pray for protection for those planting and leading churches in South Africa.*

3 Dead After Several Christian Children Poisoned

04/15/2025 Pakistan — Three children have died after unknown individuals gave several children from a Christian community in the Hafizabad district of Punjab, Pakistan, poisoned “sweets” on Monday. At least five other children remain in the hospital, two of them in critical condition. The children, who range in age from 7 to 10, suddenly became sick after consuming the food near their homes.

- *How to Pray: Pray for peace for the grieving families.*
- *Pray for the perpetrators to be held accountable.*
- *Pray for them to come to know the love of Christ.*

From Mission Eurasia’s Prayer Initiative

Please pray for a team of young ministry leaders who are serving teenagers in the city of Rishon LeZion, Israel. Several members of this team have been called to military service. Please pray for God’s strength,

creative ideas, and wisdom for this committed group of young leaders as they minister to the Next Generation.

Pray for the completion of a new training manual on vocational guidance for young leaders. This resource includes 12 training sessions designed to equip young leaders with the necessary skills to find balance between ministry, mission, and their personal calling in life.

Please pray for Alexey K., School Without Walls (SWW) national coordinator in the Muslim-majority country of Kazakhstan. Alexey's family is currently living in an apartment that belongs to the church, which is now the subject of a court case. Also, pray for his wife, Alisa, who is in her second month of rehabilitation after leg surgery and is beginning to walk. Please pray that the Lord would fully restore her health.

Please pray for Ukrainian refugees who are receiving help through our New Life Center in Poland. Each month, these refugees attend meetings that help them with their immigration status. Elderly refugees especially need this assistance as laws change frequently and many documents are only available online. Please pray for our ministry teams who work with these refugees, showing them Jesus' love and care. Pray that, through this ministry, many Ukrainian refugees would come to Christ.

Please pray for the expansion of SWW training centers in the Central Asian country of Kyrgyzstan. Also, pray for the SWW teachers and coordinators who play a vital role in training young leaders here. Finally, pray for the young leaders, that more and more people in this Muslim-majority nation would come to believe in Christ through their outreach ministries.

Open Doors Canada Prayer Calendar

Friday 25 | Sudan

The Sudan war has made it increasingly dangerous for Christians caught in the crossfire. Many believers have been forced to flee the violence and now live displaced from their homes. Ask God to remind them that wherever they are, He is with them. Continue to ask God for rescue and peace.

Saturday 26 | Nepal

Stand with Pastor Manoj Pokhrel. His church building was attacked by Hindu extremists. Pastor Manoj says that church members are being threatened and many have stopped coming.

Sunday 27 | Nigeria

Answered prayer! After six years, Nigerian nurse Alice Loksha is free from her extremist captors! You may remember Alice. She was kidnapped by Boko Haram faction ISWAP. Since 2018, we have been praying for Alice's homecoming and in October 2024, God answered that prayer. Please continue to pray for physical and spiritual healing for Alice and her child. In captivity, she was forced to marry two ISWAP commanders and gave birth to a son, who escaped alongside his mother.

Monday 28 | Laos

A workshop on the overview of the Bible and basic Bible interpretation will gather leaders and pastors from rural areas who lack biblical knowledge. Attendees will study the main themes and outline of the Bible, gaining a deeper understanding of the key messages. Please pray for our local partner to prepare the venue, materials, and training sessions efficiently. Pray for wisdom for the trainers and the safety of attendees during their travels, learning, and discussions.

Tuesday 29 | Bangladesh

Pray with Kulsum* for strength and resilience. Her family is under immense pressure to renounce their faith. Local Islamic leaders are trying to ban their children from attending school. Pray for this family's protection, asking God to keep them safe from the threats and pressure, and to also watch over their children during these difficult times.

Wednesday 30 | India

North India is witnessing more than a hundred persecution incidents every month. As a result, conducting our trainings is becoming increasingly difficult. Please pray for our staff's safety and perseverance.

Thursday 1 | Nepal

New believers Shova and her husband Pradip quickly realized the truth of Jesus' words—they would, indeed, be hated for His name's sake. Family members, including their son, rejected them. Pray for God's intervention.

Barnabas Aid UK Prayer Diary

FRIDAY 25

Nearly nine tons of vital aid has been delivered to Christians living close to the frontline of war-ravaged Ukraine by Barnabas Aid. This latest shipment from our food project supplied around 1,500 believers with food and medical items. "Barnabas just keeps on sending," said our grateful project partner, who described the generosity of our supporters as "mind blowing."

- *Praise the Lord that, as the conflict has continued, He has enabled us to continue helping our brothers and sisters.*

SATURDAY 26

Praise God for the testimony of "Firuza," a Muslim-background believer and Bible translator in a Central Asian country who was wrongly imprisoned. Only the Quran was permitted in the prison, but miraculously after a time prison officials not only allowed Firuza to read the Bible for herself, but instructed that it should be read to the other prisoners. "After that I started to read the Bible for everyone," Firuza explains. "Many women asked me to give them the Bible so that they could read it personally."

- *Thank the Lord for this demonstration of the power of His Word, and pray that He will continue to bless the work of Firuza now that she has left prison.*

SUNDAY 27

- *Heavenly Father, we pray for the availability of Your Word throughout the world, especially in the countries whose governments try to suppress it.*
- *We lift before You Bible translators and pray for discernment in their painstaking labors.*
- *We ask that people groups without clear translations of the Scriptures in their own languages will soon have access to the Truth.*
- *We know that "Man shall not live on*

bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Please feed Your persecuted people with this spiritual food to strengthen them to endure. We ask in the Name of the Living Word, our Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 4:4; John 1:14)

MONDAY 28

A pastor who leads an independent house church in Vietnam's Central Highlands region was shot with a rubber bullet, in what he described as a warning attack. Pastor Y Hung Ayun, 62, was shot in the left knee while riding a motorcycle home one Sunday. Y Hung believes that the attack was a warning for him to stop his work as a house church pastor.

- *Pray that the Lord will give courage to our brother and other persecuted Vietnamese Christians, and protect them from further harm.*

TUESDAY 29

An Iranian pastor is at risk of being deported from Turkey (also known as Türkiye) back to his own country, where there are concerns he could face further imprisonment or even death. Mojtaba Ahmadi, a convert from Islam, fled persecution in Iran more than a decade ago after enduring torture and solitary confinement in an Iranian prison. He was arrested in Turkey in January 2024, and at the time of writing is still being held in an immigration center.

- *Pray that Pastor Mojtaba will be freed, and that he will not be forced to face further persecution in Iran.*

WEDNESDAY 30

"The love you have shown for our children is immeasurable." This was just one of many messages of thanks from impoverished pastors in rural India, after Barnabas funded the education of 114 children. These pastors struggle to make ends meet, facing opposition and ostracism from the local community. Many of their children had been unable to attend school because of discrimination.

- *Praise the Lord for this opportunity, and pray that these children will grow in their love and knowledge of the Savior (Colossians 1:10).*

From Open Doors USA

Myanmar | 11 April 2025

EASTER COMES TO MYANMAR'S CHRISTIANS: FINDING HOPE AMID RUINS

On Sunday, April 20, billions of Christians will celebrate Easter. In almost every nation and language, shouts of “He is risen” will ring out, rejoicing that Jesus has become the “firstfruits” of the resurrected (1 Corinthians 15:20).

But this Easter in Myanmar, Christians are worshiping among ruins—and in a climate of fear.

Last month’s devastating earthquakes in Myanmar have deeply impacted God’s people in the country. Open Doors’ local partners are reaching affected believers with vital aid and reminding them they are not alone—but the need is enormous, reinforcing the importance of your continued prayers and support.

“There are people helping us with food, so we’re not worried about meals. But I am concerned about the livelihoods of our church members, as many businesses and workplaces have shut down due to the earthquake.”

MRS. AYE*, OPEN DOORS’ LOCAL PARTNER

The death toll from the disaster now stands at more than 3,500, with some 4,700 injured. Many are in desperate need of relief and assistance, while people remain trapped under debris.

Many countries—including China, India, Russia, South Korea, the US, and various international organizations—have provided support for affected areas. However, reports have surfaced of police and armed groups forcibly seizing relief supplies intended for victims in Sagaing. And it’s believed that the

military fired on a Chinese convoy delivering aid.

Meanwhile, the military continues to launch attacks as part of the ongoing civil war. On April 9, a military bombing raid killed more than 30 people in southern Chin State (which is majority Christian) and Sagaing division. Around 50 others, including elderly people and children, were wounded in the aerial strikes.

“A local believer told us that a Christian pastor and two elderly people were among the deceased,” says Daisy Htun*, an Open Doors’ local partner. “The bombing also destroyed a church and several homes in a village of Chin State.”

The level of need and anguish in Myanmar seems difficult to reconcile with the joy of Easter. It almost seems like the situation has more in common with Good Friday and Holy Saturday—a people in mourning, wondering where their Savior is.

And yet, through your gifts and prayers, God’s Easter hope is shining through.

‘They thanked us for our visit’

When the earthquake happened, Open Doors’ local partners were already present in the country to help persecuted believers and were positioned and equipped to reach many people immediately. Through your support, they were able to immediately leap into action.

“We are able to give aid like rice, drinking water, and mosquito nets to 80 families in need,” says Min Naing*, a local partner, following a recent distribution. “We will hand out solar lamps shortly, once they arrive.

“I visited our volunteer Brother Aung* and his family,” he continues. “They were very happy to see us and thanked us for our visit. They were actively helping their church members with restoration work.”

There is also good news for Lin* and her husband, Pastor Noah*, who were concerned for their unborn child’s welfare after Lin felt unwell following the earthquake. “I am encouraged by your visit and prayers,” she says. “The doctor told me that my child is safe. Thank you so much.”

Ongoing need—and ongoing hope

There are additional hindrances to reaching people. “We can’t say for sure if the military is blocking aid, but they have been announcing all aid should go through them,” Min Naing says. “There are some Christians whom we have heard are able to bring aid, but there were also several who were stopped by the military for reasons unclear to us now.”

Mary*, a local believer, adds: “All the relief agencies must ask official letters from the state government, which is very difficult. From Yangon to Mandalay, all the relief vehicles are being questioned and detained. It is very hard to reach the Christians in need.”

Even as local partners bring aid, the scale of devastation and recovery is clear to see. “The building’s wreckage damaged a neighbor’s roof,” says Zaw Lin, who spoke after visiting a partner’s church in central Myanmar. “The church leaders and pastor’s family are now concerned about repairing both their church and their neighbor’s property. The church will need to be checked by engineers to assess its structural safety for future use.

“We also visited Mrs. Aye*, another partner,” he continues. “Their church is old and developed cracks because of the earthquake, so they evacuated and set up a shed where believers could gather for fellowship.”

Mrs. Aye told Zaw Lin: “There are people helping us with food, so we’re not worried about meals. But I am concerned about the livelihoods of our church members, as many businesses and workplaces have shut down due to the earthquake.”

Meanwhile, damaged roads are hindering relief efforts, as is rainfall which also threatens to further spread diseases among those living in tents. But despite these challenges, local partners are committed to reaching the most vulnerable with practical and pastoral support.

Churches will still gather on Easter Sunday—in sheds, amidst rubble, or otherwise—to rejoice in the hope of the resurrection.

Thank you for the part you’re playing to bring aid and hope to our sisters and

brothers in Myanmar this Easter. The need is monumental, but as our local partners report, the practical support—and simply being present with them—is a lifeline to many, helping to meet urgent needs posed by this latest crisis. The hope of the resurrection is alive and well, showing that God’s faithfulness can pierce through even the most difficult circumstances.

*Names changed for security reasons

From ICC

India’s Supreme Court Hears Complaints on Anti-Conversion Laws

4/21/2025 India (International Christian Concern) — On April 16, India’s Supreme Court heard an appeal for urgent relief against the misuse of the country’s anti-conversion laws to target minority communities.

The court received several petitions challenging India’s anti-conversion laws, which are in place in several states. A group of lawyers led by the advocacy group Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP) challenged the 2024 amendment to the Uttar Pradesh anti-conversion law that enables third-party complaints and harsher penalties.

The hearing on the anti-conversion petitions occurred based on an application for an early hearing of the matters pending since December 2020 and another application seeking interim relief challenging such laws passed in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Himachal Pradesh, as well as amended pleas to include similar laws passed in Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, and Karnataka.

These petitions were filed from December 2020 through February 2021. The CJP stated on its website that it has filed these pleas challenging the anti-conversion laws as they impinge on the privacy, freedoms, and autonomy of adults.

The hearing on April 16 formed part of a larger challenge to the constitutionality of anti-conversion laws, with CJP asserting that

such laws violate individuals' freedom of choice and the right to choose their religion.

The interim application filed by CJP is aimed at emphasizing how the practice of the law during at least the past four years has resulted in widespread misuse, to further enhance the original argument on constitutionality of the statutes.

The CJP has contended that these laws, although allegedly framed to prevent forced conversions, are being weaponized by Hindu radical organizations and state authorities to discriminate and falsely accuse Christians and members of other religious minorities and create a climate of fear.

One key concern highlighted in the interim application is the pattern of abuse by Hindu radical groups, who use the laws to initiate false complaints and pressure law enforcement to act against individual Christians and their communities, often without credible evidence.

In several cases, these complaints are lodged by third parties with vested interests, such as organizations or individuals aligned with Hindu nationalism, rather than the individuals or families affected by the alleged conversions.

The application further argues that the laws do not provide adequate safeguards against misuse, with one of the major concerns being the tendency of state authorities to act on complaints without conducting any preliminary investigation. This has led to arbitrary arrests, detentions, and the imposition of social and legal stigma on the accused, particularly Christians and others from minority communities.

Pray for imprisoned or kidnapped Christians

CHRISTIANS IN PRISON: This list is only a sample: CAMBODIA: Theary Seng; CHINA: Wan Changchun, Lian Xue Liang, Lian Chang Nian, Fu Juan, Li Jie, Hang Xiaodong, Yan Hwa, Goa Zhisheng, Wang Yi; Hao Zhiwei, Zhang Shaojie, Li Juncai, Lian Xu Liang; ERITREA: Mussia Ezas, Dr. Kifly Gebremeskel, Kidane Weldou, Haile Nayzgi; INDIA: Sarju Prasad, Pastor Sawan; IRAN: See list at end of prayer sheet; KAZAKHSTAN: Pastor Maximov; NORTH KOREA: Zhang Wen Shi PAKISTAN: Zafar Bhatti; VIETNAM: Nguyen Nang Tinh, Nguyen Trung Ton

KIDNAPPED VICTIMS: Raymond Koh, Gilbert Biswas, Leah Sharibu, Sarah Atef, Joshua Hilmya & wife Ruth Sitepu, Hormoz Diril.

Imprisoned Christians in Iran from last week: Amirali Minaei, Nasser Navard Gol-Tapeh, Nerges Nasri, Somayeh Rajabi, Joseph Shahbazian, Ghazal Marzban, Javad Amini, Tumaj Aryankia, Mehdi (Yasser) Akbari, Anooshavan Avedian--released; Jahangir Alikhani, Hamed Malamiri, Gholam Eshaghi, Mozhdeh (Mojdeh) Fallahi, Nasrollah Mousavi, Bijan Gholizadeh, Hamid Afzali, Iman Salehi, Zohrab Shahbazi, Yasin Mousavi, Esmail Narimanpour, Farrokh Kakai, Abdolrsa (Matthias) Ali-Haghnejad, Mina Khajavi Ghomi, Lalh Sa'ari.