

PRAYER FOR PEACE, FOR AND WITH PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

in the Middle East and in all the world



1. Milad Makeen Zaky
2. Abanub Ayad Atiya
3. Maged Solaiman Shehata
4. Yusuf Shukry Yunan
5. Kirolos Shokry Fawzy
6. Bishoy Astafanus Kamel
7. Somaily Astafanus Kamel
8. Malak Ibrahim Sinweet
9. Tawadros Yusuf Tawadros
10. Girgis Milad Sinweet
11. Mina Fayeze Aziz
12. Hany Abdelmesih Salib
13. Bishoy Adel Khalaf
14. Samuel Alham Wilson
15. Worker from Awr village
16. Ezat Bishri Naseef
17. Loqa Nagaty
18. Gaber Munir Adly
19. Esam Badir Samir
20. Malak Farag Abram
21. Sameh Salah Faruq

Icon of the Coptic Church after the execution of the Egyptian Coptic Christians in Libya

AFTER THE EXECUTION OF THE COPTIC CHRISTIANS

Mgr. Anba Antonios Aziz Mina, Catholic Coptic Bishop of Giuzeh in Egypt said: “The video which shows their execution has been built up as a chilling film, with the intent of arousing terror. Yet, in that diabolic production of false show and blood thirsty horror, one notices that some martyrs, at the moment of their barbaric execution, repeat ‘Lord Jesus Christ’. The name of Jesus was the last word which came out of their lips. Just like the first martyrs during their passion, they entrusted themselves to Him who was to welcome them soon after. And so they celebrated their victory, that victory which no executioner could rob them of. That name, whispered at the very last minute, is like the seal on their martyrdom”.

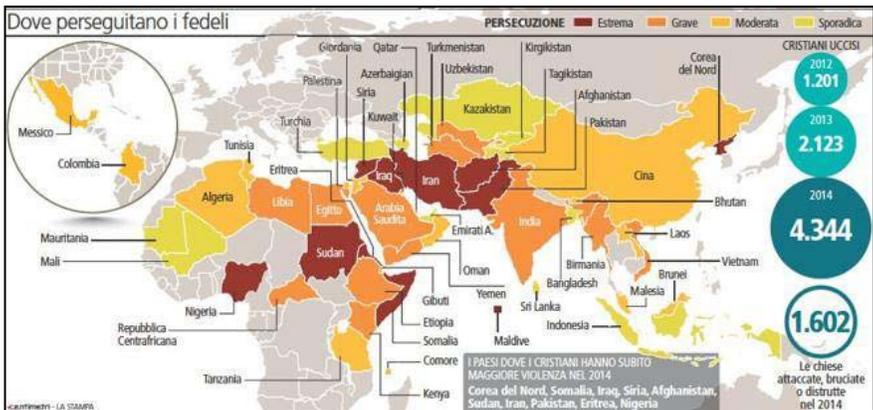
Fides, 17 February 2015

TAIZE *Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo*

WORLD WATCH LIST 2015 PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

Let us look at the first 25 countries

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 North Korea | 13 Libya |
| 2 Somalia | 14 Yemen |
| 3 Iraq | 15 Uzbekistan |
| 4 Syria | 16 Vietnam |
| 5 Afghanistan | 17 Centrafricana Republic |
| 6 Sudan | 18 Qatar |
| 7 Iran | 19 Kenya |
| 8 Pakistan | 20 Turkmenistan |
| 9 Eritrea | 21 India |
| 10 Nigeria | 22 Etiopia |
| 11 Maldive | 23 Egypt |
| 12 Saudi Arabia | 24 Djiboutii |
| | 25 Myanmar |



MARTYRS' HYMN (Caldean Church Iraq)

Praise the Lord, you just: holy martyrs, pray for peace so that we may joyfully celebrate your memory.

Praise is due to the just: the martyrs who yearned to see Christ obtained wings through the sword and flew to heaven.

Sing admirably in harmony: In their love, the martyrs say to Christ: "For you we die every day."

Seek the Lord and be strong: O martyrs, ask for mercy for the world so that it may find refuge in the strength of your bones.

The Lord helps those who turn to Him: Let us invoke the martyrs and find refuge in them, that they may intercede for us.

Like a fortified city: You are defended from your persecutors in time of affliction.

Now and for ever: May the prayers of the martyrs be a refuge for us to chase away the assaults of the evil one.

(...)

Fix your gaze on Him and put your trust in Him: the martyrs saw the Son crucified on the tree, they bowed their head in front of the sword and were crowned.

Hear me, o Lord, and answer me: The cross of our Lord was stained with blood. The martyrs saw it and bowed their heads.

He divided the sea to let them pass: For martyrs, the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is a bridge and the just crossed it to reach the place where there is no fear.

More precious than gold and precious stones: The martyrs are like pearls, their images are embedded in the king's crown.

TAIZE Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo

Psalm 142 (141)

*Ant. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord
(Rm 14,8)*

I cry aloud with my voice to the Lord;
I make supplication with my voice to the Lord.
I pour out my complaint before Him;
I declare my trouble before Him.

When my spirit was overwhelmed within me,
you knew my path.
in the way where I walk
they have hidden a trap for me.

Look to the right and see;
for there is no one who regards me;
there is no escape for me;
no one cares for my soul.

I cried out to You, O Lord;
I said, «You are my refuge,
my portion in the land of the living!»

Give heed to my cry,
for I am brought very low;
deliver me from my persecutors,
for they are too strong for me.

Bring my soul out of prison,
so that I may give thanks to Your name;
the righteous will surround me,
for You will deal bountifully with me.”

FROM THE FIRST LETTER BY PETER (4,12-16)

Brothers and sisters, do not be surprised that a trial by fire is occurring among you, as if something strange were happening to you. But rejoice to the extent that you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that when his glory is revealed you may also rejoice exultantly. If you are insulted for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let no one among you be made to suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as an intriguer. But whoever is made to suffer as a **Christian** should not be ashamed but glorify God because of the name, rather give glory to God.

COMMENTARY

SILENCE

TAIZE Misericordias Domini in aeternum cantabo

FROM THE LETTER BY POPE FRANCIS TO CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST - 21 December 2014

Dear brothers and sisters who courageously bear witness to Jesus in the land blessed by the Lord, our consolation and our hope is Christ himself. I encourage you, then, to remain close to him, like branches on the vine, in the certainty that no tribulation, distress or persecution can separate us from him (cf. *Rom 8:35*). May the trials which you are presently enduring strengthen the faith and the fidelity of each and all of you! I pray that you will be able to experience a fraternal communion modelled on that of the first community of Jerusalem. The unity willed by our Lord is more necessary than ever at these difficult times; it is a gift from God, who appeals to our freedom and awaits our response. May the word of God, the sacraments, prayer and fellowship nourish and continually renew your communities.

The situation in which you are living is a powerful summons to holiness of life, as saints and martyrs of every Christian community have attested. I think with affection and veneration of the pastors and faithful who have lately been killed, often merely for the fact that they were Christians. I think also of those who have been kidnapped, including several Orthodox bishops and priests of various rites. May they soon return, safe and sound, to their homes and communities! I ask God to grant that all this suffering united to the Lord's cross will bring about much good for the Church and for all the peoples in the Middle East.

POPE FRANCIS

FROM THE BENEDICTION URBI ET ORBI Holy Easter

5 April 2015

We ask Jesus, the Victor over death, to lighten the sufferings of our many brothers and sisters who are persecuted for his name, and of all those who suffer injustice as a result of ongoing conflicts and violence. There are so many of them!

We ask for peace, above all, for beloved Syria and Iraq, that the roar of arms may cease and that peaceful relations may be restored among the various groups which make up those beloved countries. May the international community not stand by before the immense humanitarian tragedy unfolding in these countries and the drama of the numerous refugees.

We pray for peace for all the peoples of the Holy Land. May the culture of encounter grow between Israelis and Palestinians and the peace process be resumed, in order to end years of suffering and division.

We implore peace for Libya, that the present absurd bloodshed and all barbarous acts of violence may cease, and that all concerned for the future of the country may work to favour reconciliation and to build a fraternal society respectful of the dignity of the person. For Yemen too we express our hope for the growth of a common desire for peace, for the good of the entire people.

At the same time, in hope we entrust to the merciful Lord the framework recently agreed to in Lausanne, that it may be a definitive step toward a more secure and fraternal world.

We ask the risen Lord for the gift of peace for Nigeria, South Sudan and for the various areas of Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. May constant prayer rise up from all people of goodwill for those who lost their lives – for those killed last Thursday at Garissa University College in Kenya –, for all who have been kidnapped, and for those forced to abandon their homes and their dear ones.

May the Lord's resurrection bring light to beloved Ukraine, especially to those who have endured the violence of the conflict of recent months. May the country rediscover peace and hope thanks to the commitment of all interested parties.

We ask for peace and freedom for the many men and women subject to old and new forms of enslavement on the part of criminal individuals and groups. Peace and liberty for the victims of drug dealers, who are often allied with the powers who ought to defend peace and harmony in the human family. And we ask peace for this world subjected to arms dealers, who profit from the blood of men and women.

TESTIMONY

Either with a person from a country in conflict

Or with a video

Or by reading a relevant text

OUR FATHER IN THE CALDEAN LITURGY

o Our Father

Our invisible Father who are in heaven
Hallowed be your Name in us
because you have sanctified us
through your Holy Spirit.
May your kingdom come on us,
the promised kingdom to those who love your love.
May your strength and your benevolence
rest on your servants
here in mystery and there in your mercy.
From your inexhaustible table
feed our poverty
and concede us the remission of our sins
because you know our weakness.
We ask you:
save those whom you have moulded
and free them from the evil which tries to find whom to devour.
Yours is the kingdom
and the power and the glory, o Lord:
do not deprive the saints of your goodness.

PRAYER TO OUR LADY OF THE WALL – Bethlehem

Mother of Jesus, Mary

We turn to You asking for peace for this land,
blessed by God's promises and faithfulness
but torn apart by man's fear and harshness.

Painful wound, this wall mortifies your children's dignity
and destroys the future in the heart of the women and men
who turn their gaze upon it: come to our aid, Virgin of Hope!
You who have crossed the streets of Palestine lovingly looking after the
Son of the Most High in your womb,
console in your arms your sons who weep for the victims of injustice and
hatred.

Dawn of salvation, Mary, Pentecost woman, teach us
how to be docile to the voice of the Holy Spirit and how to believe firmly
that the power of forgiveness can disarm revenge and break up
hardened hearts.

May faith in your son Jesus, Lord of history, be our strength.
Queen of Peace, pray for us!

Betlemme
Belén
Bethlehem



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