



# PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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Donations

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## ■ British Isles & Ireland

- [\*\*FRIDAY FOCUS: 17th October - Hope for those we know - Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 4:7-11\*\*](#)
- [Human greed behind financial crisis, says Archbishop](#)
- [Jobless rise highest for 17 years](#)
- [British Airways worker seeks to overturn ruling on wearing cross](#)
- [Christians urge action against 'destructive' Embryology Bill](#)
- [Abortion plans for Northern Ireland abandoned due to peace process](#)
- [Majority says parents should have the opportunity to choose faith-based schools](#)
- **Europe**
- [EU: Threatens fresh sanctions against Mugabe](#)
- [EU 'resolute' on climate targets](#)

## ■ Worldwide

- [Iraq: Cry from Mosul](#)
- [Iraq: Cry from Baghdad for Nineveh](#)
- [Iraq: Prime Minister pledges to protect Christians](#)
- [India: Orissa](#)
- [India: Debate Hindutva Terror](#)
- [America: Pro-life an election issue](#)

## ■ Praise Reports

- [Global: Hundreds of thousands in solidarity for pro-life](#)
- [Congo: Courage of a survivor](#)

## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ **FRIDAY FOCUS: 17th October - Hope for those we know - Romans 13:8-10; 1 John 4:7-11**

God brings lots of people into our lives. Some we have a choice over – friends, others less choice - work colleagues and neighbours.

**Give thanks:** for all those God brings into my life.

**Pray:** a BLESSing for a work colleague, friend or neighbour; that the love of God would be displayed through me to them; for good relationships with work colleagues and neighbours.

**Consider:** building a friendship with a work colleague or neighbour who may be feeling isolated or lonely.

**More:** <http://www.worldprayer.org.uk/pagesys.cfm?PID=144>

### ■ **Human greed behind financial crisis, says Archbishop**

Dr Rowan Williams's attack came on the back of a major two-day dialogue between Muslim and Christian leaders. The meeting marked one year since 138 Muslim leaders and scholars sent the 'A Common Word Between Us and You' letter to the Pope and other Christian leaders, warning that world peace depended on Muslims and Christians being able to make peace with one another. When asked what he thought was behind the current economic turmoil, the Archbishop said: 'I was going to suggest Satan.' He continued: 'As religious leaders we want to say that the root problem is human greed which is not specific to any one nation, governing class or any one religion.' Dr Williams went further on Wednesday by suggesting that Christians and Muslims come together to explore a more just financial system. In the communiqué, the leaders urged people to live out the principles of 'love God' and 'love your neighbour' in the midst of the financial crisis.

**Pray:** that the message of the day be heard by all, that the love of money and self needs to be seriously addressed by all. (1Tim.6:2)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/human.greed.behind.financial.crisis.says.archbishop/21664.htm>

### ■ **Jobless rise highest for 17 years**

The number of people out of work in the UK soared in the three months to August by 164,000 compared to the previous quarter, the biggest rise for 17 years. The rise took the jobless total to 1.79 million and the rate to 5.7%, up from 5.2% in the previous quarter. The Office for National Statistics figures also showed the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance rose by 31,800 to 939,900 in September. Average annual earnings growth slowed to 3.4% in the three months to August - the weakest rate in five years and an indication that rising consumer inflation is feeding through to wage settlements. The government is to make an extra £100m available to re-train workers who lose their jobs as the economy slows. The BBC's business correspondent Martin Shankleman said some economists were predicting that unemployment

would rise to two million by Christmas. And at least one forecast, by Capital Economics, suggested it could reach three million by Christmas 2010.

**Pray:** for all those who will be challenged by this situation that they will turn to the Lord who will provide their needs. (Mt.6:25-34)

**More:** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7670800.stm>

#### ■ **British Airways worker seeks to overturn ruling on wearing cross**

A devout Christian today began an appeal against an employment tribunal ruling that British Airways did not discriminate when it asked her to conceal a necklace with a cross. Nadia Eweida is seeking to overturn a tribunal ruling in January this year which rejected her claim that she was a victim of religious discrimination. The employment appeal tribunal was told she was sent home from work on 20th September 2006 after she failed to reach a compromise with managers over a plain silver cross on a chain around her neck. The tribunal was told that Eweida, who was unpaid during this period, did not return to work until February of the following year following the airlines change in uniform policy. She had argued that while Muslims and Sikhs were allowed to wear hijabs and religious Kara bangles respectively, she as a Christian had been asked to remove her cross necklace or hide it from sight. (See Prayer Alert 4006 and 4106)

**Pray:** for Nadia and all those who are making a stand for their faith. (Heb.4:14)

**More:** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2008/oct/14/britishairways-religion>

#### ■ **Christians urge action against 'destructive' Embryology Bill**

Pro-life Christian groups are appealing to Christians to pray and take action to stop legislation that will liberalise the abortion law and give the green light to the creation of animal-human hybrid embryos. The House of Commons will vote on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology (HFE) Bill on October 22 after it passed a second reading in May by 340 votes to 78. Pro-life groups are concerned over provisions in the Bill that remove 'the need for a father' for children born as a result of IVF treatment, and allow the creation of human-animal hybrid embryos for the purposes of research and 'saviour siblings' to help treat seriously ill brothers and sisters. 'This Bill is one of the most destructive pieces of legislation that we will see in our lifetime. It is anti-life, anti-family and anti-God,' said Andrea Minichiello Williams, director of Christian Concern for our Nation. 'It will liberalise abortion law unless we pray and act to stop it. Will you do so? Each person's contribution counts!' (See Prayer Alert 3908,1708)

**Pray:** that the Parliament will seek God's wisdom as they reconsider the HFE Bill before making it law. (Pr.2:6)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.urge.action.against.destructive.embryology.bill/21632.htm>

#### ■ **Abortion plans for Northern Ireland abandoned due to peace process**

Pro-choice Labour MPs had been preparing to table an amendment to the Embryology Bill that would allow terminations in Northern Ireland, the only part of Britain where the procedure remains illegal. They have scrapped the move after being privately warned by ministers that with the Stormont executive close to collapse, it could tip the province's politicians into withdrawing from negotiations. The MPs still plan to push ahead with separate plans to make access to abortion easier in the rest of the country by removing the requirement for two doctors' signatures and allowing nurses to carry out early-stage terminations, however. But they face determined opposition from pro-life MPs, backed by church groups, when the Bill is debated in the Commons next Wednesday. Conservative MP Mark Pritchard said the decision not to legalise abortion in Northern Ireland was a 'welcome U-turn' but added: 'The decision appears to be more about extending the political life of the Prime Minister - rather than the Government extending the lives of the unborn.'

**Pray:** that the people of NI will be listened to and not have this proposed law imposed upon them. (See item above & Prayer Alert 3708 & 3008)

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/northernireland/3197471/Abortion-plans-for-Northern-Ireland-abandoned-due-to-peace-process.html>

#### ■ **Majority says parents should have the opportunity to choose faith-based schools**

The majority of the population – including those who do not see themselves as Christian – agree that parents should be able to choose a state-run school for their child based on their own religious, moral or philosophical considerations, a major survey released today has found. Two-thirds of parents (with children under 18) hold this opinion, consistent with the spirit of plurality in education which is protected by the European Convention on Human Rights. Over six in ten of the population as a whole agrees, underlining the broad-based support for the concept of state schools run with a particular ethos at their core. In the survey of more than 1,000 adults across Great Britain – similar to one conducted at the same time in 2007 – respondents were asked whether they thought church schools were different to other types of state school. The majority (65%) felt that Church of England schools are not the same in a number of positive ways, basically a broad and balanced education in a non divisive way.

**Pray:** that the importance and recognition of the benefits of faith schools will continue to grow. (Dt.32:2)

**More:** <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/news/pr7808.html>

## EUROPE

#### ■ **EU: Threatens fresh sanctions against Mugabe**

The European Union (EU) on Monday threatened fresh sanctions against President Robert Mugabe if he pushes ahead to form a new government in defiance of a power-sharing agreement with the MDC. The EU criticised Mugabe in a joint statement for saying they were ready to consider additional measures against the southern African nation's government. Mugabe at the weekend allocated the key ministries of defence, home and foreign affairs, information, local government

and provisionally finance to his ruling ZANU PF before conclusion of negotiations with the opposition MDC party. Reacting to what he described as Mugabe's 'attempted power grab' British foreign minister David Miliband said it was critical to send out a clear signal to the Zimbabwean leader that the EU will not work with a government formed outside the power-sharing agreement. The EU has also said the way the power-sharing agreement is implemented will determine whether it will provide support to efforts to rebuild Zimbabwe's battered economy.

**Pray:** that world pressure will bring Mugabe back to the original agreement.

**More:** [http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=15804:eu-threatens-fresh-sanctions-against-mugabe&catid=31:top%20zimbabwe%20stories&Itemid=66](http://www.thezimbabwean.co.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=15804:eu-threatens-fresh-sanctions-against-mugabe&catid=31:top%20zimbabwe%20stories&Itemid=66)

#### ■ EU 'resolute' on climate targets

EU leaders will maintain their targets and timetable for tackling climate change, despite objections from some nations, the French president has said. At a summit in Brussels, Nicolas Sarkozy said 'solutions' would be found for those that had expressed concerns. Some countries have threatened to block a deal agreed last year for EU-wide cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, citing the economic slowdown. The financial crisis has prompted some countries such as Poland and Italy to argue that they cannot afford to enforce tough emissions targets on their industrial sector. Mr Sarkozy, whose country holds the EU's rotating presidency, said: 'The climate package is so important that we cannot simply drop it, under the pretext of a financial crisis.' However, the BBC's Oana Lungescu, in Brussels, says a finalised agreement by December looks like a tall order, amid darkening prospects for Europe's economy.

**Pray:** for the EU leaders that they will not let go of the climate issues amid the current financial situation. (Jas.12:5)

**More:** <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/7673684.stm>

## WORLDWIDE

#### ■ Iraq: Cry from Mosul

A Christian satellite TV station that broadcasts into the Middle East and North Africa is receiving urgent text messages from Iraqi believers requesting immediate and sustained prayer as persecution in the northern city of Mosul continues. According to published reports, at least seven Iraqi Christians have been killed in recent days and as many as 3,000 Iraqi Christians have fled the Mosul due to severe pressure from extremists. Other reports have stated that Christian homes have been bombed and leaflets passed around threatening Christians with death unless they convert to Islam or pay a 'jizya' tax that marks them as second-class citizens. Iraqi Christians have been text messaging SAT-7 requesting urgent prayer. One wrote 'Please pray for Christians in Iraq because they are killing all the Christians that are walking in Mosul.' Another text said: 'In the name of Jesus pray for Christians in Nineveh province. We're under the weight of killings and displacement.'

**Pray:** that many would hear and join the cry for Iraqi Christians and for God in His mercy to break the historically tribal stronghold that Satan has on the region. (Nah.1:7)

**More:** <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2008/s08100094.htm>

#### ■ Iraq: Cry from Baghdad for Nineveh

This office has received an email part of which reports, 'We thought it could not get worse and it has. Last year in Dura south of Baghdad Christians were persecuted, killed and massacred, fleeing Baghdad to the safety of Nineveh. The place they fled to is the heart of the Christian community. In recent days it all went wrong. The Christians have again been targeted, killed and massacred in Nineveh. Last Sunday in Church I asked our people how many of them were from Nineveh and about 80% said they were The homeland of hundreds of our people. Our churchwarden's nephew and father had just been shot dead outside their house in Nineveh. Yesterday I was phoned by a church members who had heard that their family home in Nineveh had been totally blown up. There were now 7 people without a home in need of help. All these people need help.'

**Pray:** for God to minister his justice and mercy to the longest standing Christian society in the world. (Jdg.4:11)

#### ■ Iraq: Prime Minister pledges to protect Christians

BBC News reported that Mosul's provincial governor said hundreds of Christian families had fled the city in the past week to seek refuge in outlying villages. (see above articles) Pope Benedict XVI, speaking at the Vatican, condemned the bloodshed, saying, 'I urge the perpetrators of violence to renounce these acts and join with their brothers and sisters to work together in building a civilization of love.' The report stated that after talks with Christian Iraqi officials the Shia prime minister said, 'We will take immediate action to resolve the problems and difficulties faced by Christians in Mosul.' Police have checkpoints at Mosul's churches and are patrolling the streets on foot. A major operation by security forces aimed at displacing insurgents has been under way for months in Mosul which is considered by US and Iraqi commanders as the last urban stronghold of al-Qaeda in Iraq. A Baghdad reporter says, 'Unlike similar campaigns in Baghdad and Basra, the situation in Mosul seems to be getting worse.'

**Pray:** for God's Holy Spirit to direct and work through all the decisions made by government and police. (Prov.21:1,2)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=5906](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=5906)

#### ■ India: Orissa

Click the more button for a video of Christians under attack in India.

**Pray:** without ceasing for our brothers and sisters under attack. Pray also that more media give this situation coverage. (Pr.30:5)

**More:** [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/7670747.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/7670747.stm)

### ■ India: Debate Hindutva Terror

The Indian Government's National Integration Council was called together Tuesday in New Delhi to address the issues related to anti-Christian violence in the country. The All India Christian Council (AICC), the New Delhi Archbishop, and several Christian leaders raised their voices against anti-Christian violence in Orissa, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, which has now spread to other states. The leaders made a joint statement, which they submitted to Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India and honourable members of National Interrelation Council. The statement brought 'greetings from a community traumatized and struggling for its existence,' and raised the need for solutions to be discussed that are, 'unshackled by political whips and other agendas' to the incendiary issues. The Christian leaders stressed, 'We know to our pain that for all practical purposes, Kandhamal district in Orissa seems not to be a part of India, as police and paramilitary could not enter it for weeks;' and 'The threat is posed to the very idea of India, as Jawaharlal Nehru would have said, to the Writ of the Constitution.

**Pray:** that the government will take effectual action against the ethnic cleansing of Orissa.

**More:** <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2008/s08100093.htm>

### ■ America: Pro-life an election issue

TV and radio advertisements began to be aired this week in key battleground states to counter recent claims by a pro-Obama Christian group that the Illinois senator is the most pro-life candidate out of the two major presidential contenders. Family Research Council Action PAC announced it was launching a \$100,000 TV and radio ad campaign to 'educate voters' on Sen. Barack Obama's promise to make the 'radical' Freedom of Choice Act his top priority as president. The act will overturn federal and state limitations on abortion the group warned. It would make partial-birth abortion legal again, repeal all parental notice laws on abortion, and provide unlimited tax funding of abortion, said Action PAC president. But the Christian website [www.prolifeproobama.com](http://www.prolifeproobama.com) reports, 'After 35 years a new approach is needed. Senator Barack Obama's strengthening of support for prenatal care, health care, maternity leave, and adoption will drastically reduce the numbers of abortions. Studies confirm it.'

**Pray:** for God to reveal all deception in electioneering strategies and for Christian values to be adhered to and not used as 'vote catchers'. (Pr.19:9 & 21)

**More:** <http://www.christianpost.com/article/20081015/new-ad-campaign-exposes-obama-s-abortion-views.htm>

## PRAISE REPORTS

### ■ Global: Hundreds of thousands in solidarity for pro-life

'This is one of the most powerful and influential stands I've ever been called to be a part of,' said an American student. Stand True, will hold its fifth annual Pro-life Day of Silent Solidarity on Tuesday, Oct. 21. Hundreds of thousands of students will be taking a vow of silence to stand in solidarity with their brothers and sisters who are permanently silenced by abortion. Last year students from 19 countries participated and the growth this year is exponential. 'The students are speaking loud and clear, they want an end to legalized child killing' said Bryan Kemper, president of Stand True Ministries. 'We are getting thousands of e-mails, comments and internet messages from students thanking us for giving them a peaceful way to stand up and be counted.' Students will not only remain silent but will also wear red armbands and/or red duct tape on their mouths, and distribute educational flyers to anyone who asks why they are silent.

**Praise:** God for the moral stand taken by youth and ask Him to bring His laws for life into government legislations. (Is.33:22a)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=5896](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=5896)

### ■ Congo: Courage of a survivor

Zawadi is a survivor of East Congo violence and told her awful story to a Radio 4 reporter, sharing how she was forced to hang her own baby after watching rebel soldiers butcher dozens of people in front of her, including her brother and two oldest children. The BBC reporter had no idea that the plight of a young mother in eastern Congo would have such an effect on so many listeners. Offers of help, letters packed full of cash, parcels with presents for Zawadi and her daughter Reponse. One woman gave a cheque for £10,000 to the charity Medecins Sans Frontiers, who help the thousands of victims of sexual violence in eastern Congo. Another donated £2,000 to assist people in Zawadi's position. But what amazed the BBC most was the sheer number of people who gave whatever they could afford. Consequently Reponse's school fees, Zawadi's rent for three years have been paid and she has been able to set up a small shop which will allow her to pay her own way in the future.

**Praise:** God that people's hearts soften when they are alerted to needs. (Pr.11:24)

**More:** [http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid\\_7657000/7657461.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_7657000/7657461.stm)

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