

PRAYER ALERT...

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BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Christians must be visible in the community

Britain's Christian community must provide a strong visible presence on the nation's streets during tough times', Street Pastors founder Les Isaac says. Street Pastors is an organisation that was launched in 2003 in response to London's growing gang culture and yobbish behaviour. More than 9,000 volunteers now patrol streets throughout the UK on a regular basis. 'We have been going out on the streets ever since the start of the riots, but we think as things are calming down, it's now even more important for us to be out and we want church leaders to stand alongside us.' Aside from calling Christians to go out on the streets, Rev Isaac is calling on the Church to pray strategically during these difficult times. 'I believe that young people have a major part to play in finding solutions for the problems with disaffected youth, and prayer will help to kick start the solution finding process.'

Pray: that the Christian community will make a strong, positive and prayerful response to the recent riots. (Jer.42:3)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.must.be.visible.in.the.community.says.street.pastors.founder/28441.htm>

■ Cameron must re-engage with Broken Society agenda

As Parliament reconvenes to discuss the riots, Christian charity CARE has called on the Prime Minister to re-engage with the Broken Society agenda, with its emphasis on tackling family breakdown and fatherlessness, which he promoted vigorously when in opposition. Dan Boucher, CARE's Director of Parliamentary Affairs, said, 'The reasons for the riots are complex. It is very unlikely that there is any one single explanation. A key element in the mix, however, is undoubtedly the place of the family and the role of fathers in particular in Britain in 2011. When in opposition, David Cameron spoke at great length about the Broken Society and about how a Conservative government would fix broken Britain. He was very clear that one of the key drivers of the Broken Britain phenomenon was family breakdown and fatherlessness and interestingly polling demonstrates that this resonated far more effectively with the public than his subsequent focus on the Big Society ever has.'

Pray: that our government would take the Broken Society and Big Society agendas and see how together they could help in the current situation. (Php.4:6)

More: <http://www.care.org.uk/public-affairs-news/cameron-must-re-engage-with-broken-society-agenda-and-crisis-of-fatherlessness-says-care-as-parliament-reconvenes>

■ Teenage girls regret having alcohol-fuelled sex

Binge drinking is leading many teenage girls to engage in risky sexual behaviour which they later come to regret, a new report has warned. Researchers have revealed that more than one in five 15 and 16-year-old girls who drink at least once a week has had drunken sex which they have later regretted. The report also revealed that more than 15 per cent of boys have similar regrets. The report, compiled by the Centre for Public Health at Liverpool John Moores University, said: 'Those binge drinking three or more times a week were over five times more likely than non-binge drinkers to have had sex they regretted following alcohol'. The report, which examined the drinking habits of 15 and 16-year-olds in North West England, was based on questionnaires filled in by nearly 10,000 teenagers.

Pray: that ways would be found to change the habits of our young people. (Ps.14:3)

More: http://www.christian.org.uk/news/study-teenage-girls-regret-having-alcohol-fuelled-sex/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+christianinstitute+%28The+Christian+Institute%29

❑ **Vogue's disturbing 'fashion' images of girl aged ten**

A top fashion magazine has sparked outrage by publishing images of a ten-year-old girl wearing heavy make-up and posing like an adult model. Paris Vogue's disturbing images of child model Thylane Blondeau have brought strong criticism from parents' groups and politicians. In a 15-page spread in the December/January issue, she is wearing heavy make-up and gold stilettos. Last week the Mothers' Union issued strong criticism of the pictures. 'We have grave concerns about the modelling agency which clearly does not know if it represents a child or an adult,' it said. 'Photo shoots requiring her, a ten-year-old girl, to dress in full make-up, teetering heels and a dress with a cleavage cut to the waist across her prepubescent body deny Miss Blondeau the right to be the child she is.' A summit called by Prime Minister David Cameron and the Mothers' Union to address the sexualisation of children in advertising and the media will be held in October.

Pray: for an end to the sexualisation of children by the fashion industry and in the media. (Ps.34:11)

More: <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/vogues-disturbing-fashion-images-of-girl-aged-ten/>

❑ **Christians plan Day of Prayer and protest over arms trade**

Christian communities throughout the UK are expected to take part in a Day of Prayer in the week that one of the world's largest arms fairs opens in London. The Day of Prayer, on Sunday 11 September, will take place on the tenth anniversary of the attacks on the Twin Towers and will enable Christians to reflect on the legacy of that day: war, inter-community tension, and an increasingly militarised approach to human security. The Day of Prayer is organised by the Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) Christian Network, a non-denominational group of Christians opposed to the arms trade. The Christian Network has produced a Day of Prayer Pack with suggestions for worship, including prayers, Bible readings, hymns and service sheets, plus background briefings on arms fairs and the UK's role in the arms trade. 'Christian peace activists play a vital role in CAAT's work,' said Anne-Marie O'Reilly, CAAT's Outreach Co-ordinator.

Pray: that Christians would unite against the evil of this trade and seek a Godly solution. (Mic.4:3)

More: <http://www.eklesia.co.uk/node/15242>

❑ **The Methodists' handwritten Bible goes live online**

The complete Methodists' Handwritten Bible, created by tens of thousands of people across Britain and Northern Ireland, is now online. The Handwritten Bible contains 7,000 pages of text and illustrations transcribed by people from every part of Britain and further afield. More than 30,000 volunteers joined in from across communities - including prisons, schools, colleges, libraries, nursing homes, airports and shopping centres - to copy the whole of the NRSV translation of the Bible after Methodists voted to transcribe the Scripture at their Conference in Portsmouth last year. Since the first volume went live on the Deepening Discipleship website last month, the Handwritten Bible has been viewed more than 1,000 times. Most of those readers who accessed the site were from within the UK, but there have been visitors from 76 other countries, including the United States, Malaysia, Australia and South Africa.

Pray: that this special Bible will touch the hearts of its readers in a powerful way. (1Ti.4:13)

More: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openogod.newsDetail&newsid=524>

❑ **Young Christians texting their faith**

There's hardly a young person out there without a mobile phone and the HOPE movement is tapping into their technological dexterity with a new campaign encouraging young people to text about their faith. Textify was recently launched by Hope Revolution, the youth arm of HOPE, at the Redeemed Christian Church of God's Festival of Life in Manchester. As part of the campaign, hundreds of young people will use their mobile phones and social networks to begin conversations about Jesus. The campaign takes 1 Peter 3:15 as its inspiration, encouraging young people to use Textify as a way to 'always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have'. Textify challenges young Christians to spend a week praying for three friends and then text them each a question or 'God-thought' as a conversation starter.

Pray: that the message of the Gospel would be spread in every way possible. (Ac.15:31)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/young.christians.texting.their.faith/28432.htm>

EUROPE

❑ **Spain: World youth day**

Around a million young Catholics from all around the world are streaming into Madrid for five days of prayers, processions and learning. World Youth Day opened Tuesday night with a multilingual Mass in Madrid's Plaza de Cibeles. The youths were welcomed by the Archbishop of Madrid who told them they were part of the generation of Pope Benedict XVI. He said, 'Your place in life has its own characteristics. Your problems and circumstances have changed. Don't be afraid of being a saint, let Christ live in your heart. Respond to Him with a 'yes' that's full of excitement and generosity of life.' President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity said, 'You have come to say aloud to the whole world, and in particular to Europe which is showing signs of being very lost, your unwavering 'yes'. Yes, faith is possible.'

Pray: for the 4,000 pilgrims to rediscover and strengthen their faith and then be encouragers to their brothers and sisters across Europe. (Ps.24:7)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/world.youth.day.gets.underway.in.madrid/28451.htm>

❑ **Turkey: Eviction fears in working-class neighbourhood**

The June 12 election signalled a political change heralding the start of evictions within the central working-class Istanbul neighbourhood of Tarlabasi; to make way for an ambitious project to beautify the city. Continual evictions leave residents

who will not or cannot move for financial or other reasons fearful. Bahattin Argis said, 'I am living in absolute uncertainty, despite being a house owner I face the possibility of being thrown out of my own house at any moment!' The municipality claims imminent domain over buildings slated for destruction, even though the confiscated property is being sold to a private contractor. Mine Erel bought her home in 1977 and worries about the safety of living in a semi-demolished neighbourhood. A lawyer for about 100 plaintiffs calls the situation 'a humanitarian drama.' Amnesty International urged the municipality to stop the neighbourhood's forced evictions saying, forced evictions disproportionately affect those most in need of protection and violates the rights of these groups.

Pray: for the Roma, Kurdish and other internally displaced persons (groups) living in Tarlabasi to be respected by the government and landlords. (Pr.14:21)

More: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64005>

WORLDWIDE

■ Gaza Strip: Air strikes

One person has been killed and five wounded in Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip according to Palestinian medical sources. The first raid early on Tuesday, targeted Zeitun, east of Gaza City and injured three men involved in firing rockets at the southern town of Bersheba in Israel. One of them later died. The warplanes also targeted two Hamas training camps, one east of Gaza City and another west of Khan Younis city. A tunnel beneath Gaza's border with Egypt and four other targets in the Gaza Strip were hit. Direct hits were confirmed. After several months of calm there has been an increase in the number of rockets fired at southern Israel from the Gaza Strip followed by Israeli air force reprisals.

Pray: for God's protection over those trying to live peacefully and for His intervention when lives are threatened. (Lev.26:3-6)

More: <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/08/201181603944669562.html>

■ Syria: Iranian snipers used against Palestinians

Security forces ordered residents of a Palestinian refugee camp of 10,000+ to go to a soccer stadium because armed forces intended flattening the area where many have lived since 1948. Cell phone networks were cut as they flocked towards the stadium where their IDs were confiscated. 'Iranian snipers have been deployed' a former member of the secret police confirmed on condition of anonymity, adding that during the past two months Iranian troops were fighting for Assad, (confirming other reports of Syria turning to its closest ally to help end protests directed at the Assad family) On Wednesday an unverified report by Aljazeera stated, 'Syria's interior ministry confirmed security forces completed a four-day assault on al-Ramel al-Janoubi, which houses a Palestinian refugee camp. The area 'is recovering and the citizens are practicing their normal life that was spoiled by the acts of the terrorist groups that has left at least 36 people dead.'

Pray: for God to protect citizens caught in the chaos and for peaceful international intervention to end the mayhem. (Job.5:20-21)

More: <http://www.smh.com.au/world/syria-brings-in-iranian-snipers-to-quell-protests-20110816-1iw8q.html>

■ India: Anti-corruption movement

On Tuesday the government attempted to prevent a political crisis by arresting an anti-corruption activist, but parliament walked out and demonstrations broke out across the country. Police put Anna Hazare, 73, under house arrest as he began a hunger strike against widespread corruption. He peacefully defied them and was arrested for 'breach of peace.' Hazare has gained enormous national support as the public face of 'fighting corruption in India' after a spate of corruption scandals involving government officials and allies in telecommunications, defence and sporting events amounting to tens of billions of dollars. Protests erupted in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and other cities around the country. 1,000's were detained in Delhi as hunger strikes, marches, motorcycle rallies and sit-ins broke out nationally. On Wednesday Prime Minister Manmohan Singh accused the fasting activist of trying to circumvent democracy by demanding Parliament pass a reform bill he supports. See: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/8705904/Indian-prime-minister-Manmohan-Singh-blasts-hunger-striker.html>

Pray: for better healthcare, education, good quality food and other necessities of life to replace cronyisms in affairs of state and corporations. (Ex.23:6)

More: <http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-india-activist-demonstrations-20110816,0,7075648.story?track=rss>

■ Iran: Islamic republic's concern about imports of the Bible

It seems that the large volume of Christian Bibles entering Iran is the greatest concern to the Iranian government. (Praise God!) Doctor Majid Abhari, advisor to the social issues committee of the Iranian parliament announced the seizure of 6,500 Holy Bibles in transit across north-west of Iran. He said, 'These missionaries with reliance on huge money and propaganda are trying to deviate our youth. With regard to the activities of these Christian missionaries to deceive youngsters they have begun a massive campaign spending large sums on false propaganda for deviating the public.' The seized gospels were made with the best paper in pocket size. He summarized, 'The important point is that all religions are strengthening their power to confront Islam otherwise what does this huge number of Bibles mean?'

Pray: for God to continue to build His Church through preaching the word with signs and wonders following across Iran. (Mt.16:18-19)

More: http://www.mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2606:islamic-republics-concern-about-imports-of-the-bible&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279

■ Mexico/El Salvador/Guatemala: Drugs trade

Salvadorian President Mauricio Funes has voiced concerns over recruitment of the most feared Central America gangs by Mexico's brutal Zetas drug cartel to work for them. In the country's poorest neighbourhoods young people are recruited as foot soldiers by drug cartels in charge of extortion, kidnapping and killing. See:

<http://english.aljazeera.net/video/americas/2011/08/201181653013468164.html> Elite Guatemalan troops are also taking sides in Mexican drugs wars. The special operations unit, 'The Kaibiles' strike fear in those who remember the ruthless methods of this elite US-trained group infamous for their role in killing civilians during Guatemala's civil war. Their mission had changed to help fight drug trafficking, but now they have been recruited by Mexico's Zetas drug gang and being used to train the Zetas in the art of military warfare and the use of explosives.

Pray: for more of God's supernatural intervention, equipping the church and authorities with all they need to heal broken communities. (2 Chr.7:14)

More: <http://english.aljazeera.net/video/americas/2011/08/201181554013410344.html>

■ **Afghanistan: UN urges anti-drug measures**

Afghanistan is the world's leading producer of opium and heroin. The head of the United Nations anti-drugs agency called for strengthening border controls to boost security, and lowering demand in so-called 'consumer countries.' Trafficking in Afghan opiates generated \$61 billion in illicit funds in 2009 out of \$68 billion for the global illicit opiate trade. 16.5 million people annually abuse opiates worldwide. Heroin takes the bulk of the market, with 12 to 13 million people consuming 375 tons of heroin per year. Strengthening border controls between Afghanistan and Pakistan's Baluchistan province, more monitoring and searching shipping containers in airports, seaports and dry ports, while fostering intelligence sharing between ports and law enforcement authorities in key countries and regions were recommended. Also heroin-consuming countries should providing more treatment, care and support for drug users to kick the habit, and also to prevent drug use.

Pray: for nations to implement a wise, strategic united stand against this demonic disease that causes death, criminality and loss of identity for billions of people. (Pr.3:13-14)

More: <http://feeds.bignewsnetwork.com/?sid=827889>

■ **Iraq: Another insurgent blast ravages Church**

Kirkuk is 155 miles north of Baghdad where 10,000 Christians live. On Monday Aug 15th a bomb severely damaged the Syrian Orthodox Church in a second round of attacks against the city's Christian community in two weeks. The bombing was amid a wave of violence across 17 cities in Iraq that claimed about 70 lives in one day. No Christians were killed in the attack against the church. Police announced higher protective measures for Kirkuk's churches, according to Alsumaria Iraqi Satellite TV Network. On Aug 2nd insurgents targeted three churches in the city. (See Prayer Alert 3211) A priest at the Mar Afram church said Monday's attack was the third and most devastating one against his church in the last five years. According to Open Doors, there are 300,000 to 350,000 Christians left in Iraq, down from 1.2 million before the 2003 US-led military operation in the country. The US government plans to withdraw its troops from Iraq by the end of 2011.

Pray: for God to touch the lives of families affected by the recent attack and for fear to be removed. (Ps.23:4)

More: http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/iraq/article_116306.html

PRAISE REPORTS

■ **Dutch student raises thousands for London riot victim**

An Internet appeal started by Björn Conradi, a Dutch student from Den Bosch, has raised over 35,000 pounds (about 40,000 euros) for an elderly London barber whose shop was destroyed in last week's riots. 'The door was smashed in and they even nicked my chairs,' said Aaron Biber, who had been working at his Tottenham salon for over 40 years before he found it ransacked and destroyed on 10 August. 'I will probably have to close because I haven't got insurance and I can't afford the repairs.' Conradi was touched by Biber's story and launched the charity website Keep Aaron Cutting. The total funds were raised from donors all over the world in the span of just three days. The result is much more than Biber needs to restore his salon. Speaking to Dutch newspaper Brabants Dagblad, Conradi said he hopes to see the extra money shared with other businesses in the area affected by the violence.

Praise: God for the compassionate heart of Björn and others who were inspired. (1Pet.3:8)

More: <http://www.rnw.nl/english/bulletin/dutch-student-raises-thousands-london-riot-victim>

■ **Catholic nurses use Equality Act to protect their pro-life beliefs**

Two Roman Catholic nurses have won the right not to work in an abortion clinic after they accused the NHS of breaching equality laws. The case is believed to be the first in which the Equality Act has been used successfully to defend a 'pro-life' position as a philosophical belief and could have implications for other Christian medical staff. The nurses were moved from their normal nursing duties at a London hospital to work once a week at an abortion clinic. When the nurses discovered that they were participating in abortions they objected but were told by managers that they must continue with the work. One hospital manager allegedly told the pair: 'What would happen if we allowed all the Christian nurses to refuse?' The case marks a rare example of equality laws being used to protect the rights of Christians. Previously judges have been criticised for interpreting equality and human rights legislation in ways that allegedly 'marginalise' religious beliefs.

Praise: that this is a turning point and that the Equality Act will, in future, protect the rights of Christians. (Dt.12:28)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/8698042/Catholic-nurses-use-Equality-Act-to-protect-their-pro-life-beliefs.html>

PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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