

PRAYER ALERT...

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PRAISE REPORTS

■ Uganda & Haiti: Sponsored children elected into Parliament

Two former sponsored children of charity organization Compassion have been elected into the Parliaments of Uganda and Haiti. Beguens Theus from Haiti and Margaret Makhoha from Uganda both grew up in sheer poverty, but Christian sponsors gave them a chance to rise out of that desperate situation, get an education and (through a Leadership Development Programme) go to university. By God's grace and their own will and motivation they now reached this position of responsibility to serve their nations. 'Giving children a chance can make a huge difference,' says Martijn Moens, a spokesman of the charity organization in the Netherlands. 'More than others, these new members of Parliament understand the needs of the poor and are motivated to work towards structural change in their nation.' Compassion works in 26 developing nations and provides one-on-one sponsoring for 1.2 million children. The charity provides programmes in partnership with local churches.

Praise: God for the way He has blessed these young people. (Ps.37:5-6)

More: <http://www.joelnews.org/frontpage.htm>

■ 70,000 plus pray in Cairo

Last week more than 70,000 prayed all night in Cairo, but they weren't Muslims. The largest Christian event in Egypt for more than a millennium was held at St. Simeon the Tanner Coptic Orthodox Church in Mokattam, Cairo's largest 'garbage city'. An Egyptian Christian leader called it the beginning of a revival, even though there was no promotion for, or media coverage of the all-night event. Back in September 2009, during a prayer meeting in Egypt, the event's organizer prophesied that President Mubarak would receive 'no grace' in 2011; the Spirit further revealed that there would be bloodshed, persecution and the destruction of churches, but if God's people would hear His voice and repent, then He would hear their prayers. Fast forward to Oct. 9, 2011, when many Coptic Christians were killed in Cairo; in response, Christian leaders met for 3 days of prayer, after which they announced their intention of an all-night prayer event for all of Egypt.

Praise: God for the way He is calling His people to prayer in a place of need. (Ps.62:8)

More: <http://www.worthynews.com/11082-70000-plus-pray-in-cairo>

BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

■ Christian 'targeted' by Islamic extremists

A Christian worker has launched a landmark legal action after she lost her job when she blew the whistle on what she says was a campaign of 'race hate' by fundamentalist Muslims. Nohad Halawi, who worked at Heathrow Airport, is suing her former employers for unfair dismissal, claiming that she and other Christian staff at the airport were victims of systematic

harassment because of their religion. She claims that she was told that she would go to Hell for her religion, that Jews were responsible for the September 11th terror attacks and that a friend was reduced to tears having been bullied for wearing a cross. Mrs Halawi worked in the duty-free section as a perfume saleswoman of the airport for 13 years but was dismissed in July. Her case is being supported by the Christian Legal Centre, who say it raises important legal issues and also questions over whether Muslims and Christians are treated differently by employers.

Pray: for Mrs Halawi and for her case when it comes before the tribunal. (Ps.11:7)

More: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/8917675/Christian-worker-loses-her-job-after-being-targeted-by-Islamic-extremists.html>

■ Prime Minister rebuts Dawkins' faith school attack

David Cameron said atheist campaigner Richard Dawkins 'just doesn't really get it' on the issue of faith schools. The Prime Minister made the comments as he answered questions from well-known figures for a Guardian newspaper article. Prof Dawkins asked the Prime Minister: 'Why do you support faith schools for children who are too young to have chosen their faith?'. Mr Cameron responded: 'I support faith schools on the basis of the proof that over the years they've been good schools. Why? Because the organisation that's backing the school – the church or the mosque or the synagogue – is part of the community. It brings a sense of community and a sense of responsibility and the backing of an institution to a school. The church was providing good schools long before the state ever got involved, and we should respect the fact that it's not just the state that can provide education – other bodies, too'.

Pray: that the Prime Minister's comments would bring reason to Prof Dawkins' comments. (Dt.32:2)

More: http://www.christian.org.uk/news/prime-minister-rebuts-dawkins-faith-school-attack/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+christianinstitute+%28The+Christian+Institute%29

■ Olympic Park Prayer Walk

You are invited to join Christians from East London on the first Saturday of 2012 in a Prayer Walk of the Olympic Park. Saturday 7th January 2012 10.00am - 12.00 midday. The whole route is approximately 1.5 miles and it is expected that the prayer walk will take between one and a half to two hours, with stops for prayer at key points. Members of the More than Gold Prayer Team and others will be leading in prayer for the Olympics, Paralympics and the main Olympic site. No need to book - just turn up! Full details of where to meet, transport and parking can be found on the 'More' link. For those who are unable to attend please join them in prayer wherever you are.'

Pray: for all those who are coming together to pray that God would guide their prayers. (Ps.25:5)

More: <http://prayerforum.org/news/national/olympic-park-prayer-walk/>

■ Act now on problem gambling

A substantial increase in problem gambling in the last four years is unacceptable and needs urgent action, a group of national churches told parliament last week. On Tuesday, 22 November, the Salvation Army, Quaker Action on Alcohol and Drugs, the Methodist Church, the Evangelical Alliance and CARE (Christian Action, Research and Education) gave evidence to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee inquiry into gambling. In their contribution to a parliamentary inquiry on gambling, church groups will tell the select committee that the government must take action on child gambling, the clustering of betting shops and funding independent research, education and treatment. The 2010 prevalence study showed that the number of problem gamblers in the UK has jumped by 50 per cent to around 450,000 since 2007. James North, public issues policy adviser for the Methodist Church in Britain, commented: 'The figures speak for themselves: problem gambling is on the rise. But the government seems determined to liberalise gambling laws.'

Pray: for all those affected by gambling and for the Government to take a more realistic view of the problem. (Ec.5:10)

More: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.newsDetail&newsid=545>

■ CMS looks for next leader

The Church Mission Society has begun its search for a new Executive Director. It is asking supporters to pray as it seeks a successor to current leader the Rev Canon Tim Dakin, who has been appointed as the next Bishop of Winchester. The recruitment process for Community Leader and Executive Director is being overseen by Martyn Snow, Vice-chair of Trustees. The agency, founded in 1799, is looking for 'an extraordinary individual' who is 'a spiritually mature, committed Christian, passionate about mission and prayer, who can be a compelling role model for the evangelical ideals, ethos and values of CMS'. Mr Snow said the appointment panel had received lots of feedback from supporters about the role. 'I am therefore writing to ask for your continued prayers for the process,' he wrote in a message to supporters. Christians are being invited to pray each Friday at noon until the new appointment is made.

Pray: for God to raise up the right person for this important post (Nu.16:5)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.co.uk/article/cms.looks.for.next.leader/28948.htm>

■ The welfare state must be preserved

In an open letter published in the Observer on Sunday, 18 bishops ask for amendments to the Welfare Reform Bill now going through Parliament. The letter says that as a result of the proposed cap on benefits, an estimated 210,000 children may be pushed into 'severe poverty' and another 80,000 made homeless. The bishops write: 'Such an impact is profoundly unjust.' The letter follows reports that millions of benefit claimants are likely to lose between £50 to £100 each next year if the historic link between the rate of inflation and welfare payments is broken. This hits the youngest in families on the breadline the hardest. As the bishops write, they 'have no voice'. In a time of austerity, the Observer believes it is a valid exercise to prioritise which aspects of universalism to retain but it is essential that the principle itself continues to dominate the shape of our welfare state.

Pray: that the government would consider the needs of the young plus the elderly and not emphasise one over the other. (Ph.4:19)

More: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/nov/20/observer-editorial-preserve-welfare-state?newsfeed=true>

■ Armed Forces 'Notifying' and 'Visiting' Officers

The Casualty Notifying Officer is the person, usually from the regiment, who tells the next of kin of the death of or injury to a soldier. A Visiting Officer is also appointed from the regiment to offer practical help and support during this difficult time and give guidance and advice when necessary. This officer will explain what help is available and can be contacted as often as needed. Many of these officers are young Lieutenants and Captains and although trained for this particular role some could be involved for a long time, 12 months or more.

Pray: for these officers in this extremely difficult role. Pray for God to give them wisdom beyond their years and sensitivity and compassion in handling the bereaved. (Pr.3:13)

More: http://www.veterans-uk.info/pdfs/publications/misc/death_in_service.pdf

EUROPE

■ Christians' future in secular Europe

Christians have been told they must find a framework for promoting their beliefs if they are to confront the challenge of aggressive secularisation and the erosion of Christian values across all spheres of life. Opening the Beyond Individualism conference on Friday, Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali said it was 'amazing' that a Christian nurse in Britain today could be suspended for offering to pray for a patient, when it was Christians who had set in place many of the institutions and public services now taken for granted. He warned that the Christian values inherent in Europe's heritage have been eroded by a process of 'aggressive secularisation' that Christians must understand if they are to challenge it. While politicians offer 'thin' values like respect and tolerance, the bishop said such 'political mantras' were 'not enough for society to be cohesive'.

Pray: that the Church will take its rightful place in Europe and not give way to aggressive secularism. (Ep.3:16)

More: <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.contemplate.their.future.in.secular.europe/28950.htm>

■ EU urged to take control of Kosovo problem

Sweden has said the EU should put pressure on Pristina to improve relations with Serbs in north Kosovo following three months of escalating violence. Foreign minister Carl Bildt sent a letter to EU institutions on 17 November after visiting the Serb-controlled town of north Mitrovica, which he described as 'more tense and more divided today than it has been for a very long time.' The letter - seen by EUobserver - says the European External Action Service and the European Commission should 'launch a structured dialogue with Pristina on the issue of the north.' He added: 'While we must be firm in rejecting any notion of partition, we should also be realistic enough to admit that there will be no easy solution to overcoming an existing division that is currently growing stronger and more hostile by the day.' For its part, the commission has invited Pristina to put forward a 'comprehensive agenda' to pacify the region.

Pray: that there would be a breakthrough leading to peace and reconciliation. (Ps.85:8)

More: <http://euobserver.com/15/114422>

WORLDWIDE

■ South Asia: Thousands seek God's forgiveness

'I am Kallayya, a 45 year old man. I fell from a tree 5 years ago and had been bedridden after injuring my spinal cord. Doctors said I would never walk again. I was brought to the Crusades and laid on the floor of a nearby building. God touched me through the preaching of His Word. I am completely healed and am able to go to the fields for work.'

Thousands received Christ in South Asia in two days of Gospel Crusades last month. People learnt the simple and profound truth that God loves them and desires an eternal relationship with them. The crusades produced 3,420 decisions to follow Jesus! In a land where human sacrifice still takes place and Christians are martyred for their faith, believers are fully dependent on God as their source. Continue to pray for the people of south Asia as further Crusades are held across South Asia.

Pray: for more of God's anointed teaching, healing and deliverance in every region where people have not yet heard His message. (Mt.24:14)

More: <http://www.evangelisminternational.us/ei-news/india/>

■ Iran: UK embassy stormed – diplomats evacuated

Iranian students stormed the UK embassy in Tehran chanting 'Down with Britain, down with America, down with Israel' and 'Students are awake and hate Britain,' reflecting official anger at Britain's decision to cut all relations with Iran's financial sector as part of new sanctions in co-ordination with the US and Canada. Protesters petrol-bombed the embassy, brought down the flag and destroyed classified documents. Foreign secretary William Hague said, 'all staff and diplomats of the embassy are accounted for' adding 'Iran faces 'serious consequences,' calling the storming a grave breach of the Vienna Convention on diplomats' rights. On Wednesday an outraged British Foreign & Commonwealth Office updated its travel advice for British nationals in Iran, advising British citizens to 'stay indoors, keep a low profile and await further advice.' Britain is also evacuating its diplomatic staff from Tehran.

Pray: for God to hide and protect British citizens in Iran, also for Him to intervene where visas and work/study permits are needed for His work to continue to grow. (Mk.10:28-30)

More: <http://rt.com/news/iranian-students-occupy-uk-embassy-481/>

■ Israel: Missiles hit suspected Lebanon rocket sites

The Lebanese national news Agency said the Israeli rockets caused material damage when they exploded in the southern Lebanese town of Ayta Shaab on Tuesday. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. 'We know that a rocket

was fired from the region of Rmeish and we are investigating,' said a Lebanese army spokesman. The attack followed the Israeli army report that at least two Lebanese rockets landed on Israeli soil. Major-General Alberto Cuevas, commander of the United Nations peacekeeping force in Lebanon said the attack was clearly aimed at undermining stability in the area. Israel and Lebanon live under an uneasy UN-brokered truce after the 2006 war between the Israeli army and Iranian-backed Lebanese Shia militant group Hezbollah.

Pray: that the exchange of fire will not lead to a wider conflict. (Ps.147:14)

More: <http://uk.ibtimes.com/articles/258047/20111129/israeli-missiles-hit-suspected-lebanon-rocket-sites.htm>

■ **Somalia: Suicide bombing in Mogadishu**

A suicide bomber killed at least five people on Wednesday when he detonated explosives outside a government military base. This is the latest in a series of attacks in violence-ridden Mogadishu. The attacker detonated his explosives after being approached by security forces. The city is regularly targeted by the Somali insurgent group al-Shabab. On Monday, a series of blasts killed at least six people including two people at a hospital for women and children. In recent months, Somali forces backed by African Union troops forced al-Shabab from Mogadishu, but the insurgents have continued to wage guerrilla-style warfare in the capital. The US State Department says it is 'extremely concerned' about al-Shabab's announcement to ban 16 international aid organizations' accusing them of promoting secularism, immorality and what it describes as 'the degrading values of democracy in an Islamic country.' The UN agencies have been removed from regions where nearly 250,000 people are at risk of starvation and need emergency assistance.

Pray: for life saving aid groups to return and for Kenyan troops and Somalia's transitional government to win the battle against al-Shabab. (Ps.17:8-9)

More: <http://blogs.voanews.com/breaking-news/2011/11/30/five-dead-in-suicide-bombing-in-mogadishu/>

■ **Nigeria: Christians still being murdered**

Muslim herdsmen and soldiers killed at least 45 ethnic Berom Christians in Plateau state in the past week. Smaller attacks beginning on Nov. 20th over allegations by Fulani Muslims of cattle theft preceded an attack on a church on Nov. 23rd killing four Christians, and an assault the next day left 35 Christians dead. Thousands of Christians are fleeing because they have no guns with which to fight back against aggressive Muslims with guns. Nearly all Christians have fled to Jos or have left Plateau state. In Thursday's attack the Fulani Muslims were shouting 'Allahu Akbar' (God is greater). Alhaji Kasimu is one of leaders of the Muslim community in Barkin Ladi responsible for arming Muslims to attack Christians.

Pray: for the thousands of displaced Christians to know God's provision and protection and for security agencies to take the necessary steps to check violence. (Ps.71:1-4)

More: http://www.compassdirect.org/english/country/nigeria/article_123658.html

■ **Egypt: Elections from 28th November - 10th March 2012**

Egyptian Christians request our prayers for Parliamentary elections within the current context of protest, violence and lack of security. Christians are concerned that the pattern of protest and violent response is nurturing an environment of indifference towards violence, including sectarian violence. Christians continue to be a vulnerable group, disproportionately affected by the lack of security in Egypt, fearing the current climate of intimidation, violence and instability could lead to fewer Christians voting, which would impact their representation in Parliament. Also Christians are concerned that if some parties achieve power they intend to restrict freedom of expression and the religious freedom of minority communities. Although most parties have pledged to fight against sectarianism and discrimination, Christians fear that some parties, likely to have significant representation, would not honour such pledges. Please pray that the elections which are undertaken in stages on 10 March next year, will be conducted in a peaceful environment, in a fair manner, and that all Egyptians, including Christians, will have confidence in the process.

Pray: for an end to violence and for all political parties to uphold current commitments on freedoms of belief and expression. (Pr.2:20-22)

More: http://www.meconcern.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=464:egypt-concerns-of-christians-ahead-of-election

■ **India: Pastor arrested for baptising seven Muslims**

Kashmir region's grand mufti used a video from YouTube showing Rev Khanna baptising seven young Muslim men and women to have the Reverend arrested. The video was linked by other online platforms provoking an avalanche of verbal attacks against the clergyman. In early November the grand mufti summoned Rev Khanna of All Saints Church to appear before a Sharia Court accused of converting Muslims in exchange for money. The grand mufti called the police who then arrested him and later arrested the seven men and women who were in the video. According to witnesses, police beat the seven in order to testify against the pastor. The Jammu Christian Federation called on the government to release the pastor since administering the baptism on consenting adults is his prerogative. 'The rights of Christians are being sacrificed on the altar of political expediency and convenience,' said the Global Council of Indian Christians.

Pray: for Indian Christians to continue to be entitled to minority rights and that Sharia Courts would not enforce laws on Christians. (Pr.3:27)

More: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Kashmir-pastor-arrested-for-baptising-seven-Muslims-23237.html>

PRAYER FORUM OF THE BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

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