

VOM-USA Prayer Update for December 14, 2012

The Voice of the Martyrs USA: www.persecution.com

ALGERIA—Algerian Christian Awaits Court Ruling

Source: VOM Sources

2 Corinthians 3:12

An Algerian Christian facing five years in prison for evangelistic work awaits a court decision on his appeal. Karim Siaghi, a Christian convert from Islam, was sentenced in May 2011 to five years in prison and fined 200,000 Algerian dinars, or about \$2,500, even though prosecutors presented no evidence or witnesses to testify against him. A judge heard Karim's appeal in November but has not yet made a ruling. In the meantime, the police commissioner has reportedly continued to investigate Karim's case and has found two witnesses to testify against him. Pray that Karim will receive a favorable ruling, and pray for continued strength and boldness for all Algerian believers.

KYRGYZSTAN—Christian Worker Forgives Attackers

Source: VOM Sources

John 15:5

A Christian worker in Kyrgyzstan, Narsbek Sydykov, recently had the opportunity to share his faith and to forgive the men who attacked him during an aid distribution. While the men were on trial for assaulting Narsbek, one of them asked him for forgiveness. Narsbek told the man he was already forgiven. Then, during the court proceedings, Narsbek had the opportunity to tell the judge he was a follower of Jesus and that he had forgiven everyone involved in the incident, including those who beat him badly enough to send him to the hospital. Afterward, the attacker who had asked Narsbek for forgiveness returned to thank him. "I told him, 'Give thanks to God, because God has forgiven you,'" Narsbek said. Please pray that Narsbek's ministry will bear much fruit.

NIGERIA—Christians Killed in Village Raids

Source: Release International

1 Corinthians 12:12

Suspected Islamists attacked two villages in Borno state on Dec. 1, killing at least 10 villagers and burning four churches. The attackers, thought to be members of the Islamist group Boko Haram, went from house to house in a predominantly Christian

area of Chibok on Saturday evening, killing nine Christians and one Muslim man. They also attacked 20 homes and a church in Chibok. The same night, extremists burned three churches and several other buildings in Gamboru Ngala village, near the border with Cameroon. Several police officers were killed in the second attack. State officials met with community leaders and senior church leaders on Monday, Dec. 3, to discuss how best to help them. Pray for those affected by these recent attacks, and pray that Nigerian Christians will support their persecuted brothers and sisters in Nigeria.

INDIA—VOM Project

Pray for the widows and other victims of the 2008 religious violence in Kandhamal, Odisha (Orissa) state, India. VOM has been helping replace and repair homes damaged in the riot.

VOM-USA Prayer Update for January 4, 2013

As we begin a new year, we want to begin with a reminder from the life of The Voice of the Martyr's founder, Pastor Richard Wurmbrand.

Sabina Wurmbrand reached over and pinched her husband's arm. "Richard," she said fiercely, "stand up and wash away this shame from the face of Christ. They are spitting on his face!"

"If I do so," Richard Wurmbrand answered, looking intently at his wife, "you will lose your husband."

Her eyes bore into his. "I don't want a coward for a husband."

They sat in a Romanian national congress on religion shortly after Communist soldiers had stormed their country. The assembled Christian pastors, priests, and ministers of all denominations stood, one by one, and spouted praise to Joseph Stalin and to the new Communist leadership, who had put thousands of Christians in prison.

As Richard stood to speak, many were thrilled to see that this well-known pastor would join their cause. But instead of praising the Communists, he praised Jesus Christ as the only path to salvation. "Our first loyalty," he told the gathering, "should be to God, not to Communist leaders." The gathering was broadcast live across Romania, and thousands across the country heard Richard's challenge.

Realizing the damage Richard was doing, Communist officials rushed the stage. Richard escaped out the back door but was a hunted man from then on. He would later spend fourteen years in prison.

Most of us will probably never be challenged to make our stand for Christ in front of an entire nation. But we are all called to make a stand for him wherever we are each day. It is not the size of the witnessing audience but the sincerity of our stand that matters. Our lives may not depend on what we say. But our jobs may depend on our decision to voice our convictions. It may mean

losing a relationship. It may even mean estrangement from our families. In any case, it is far better to endure the consequences of our convictions than to regret their noticeable absence. When and where will you seize the opportunity to take a stand for Christ today?

NIGERIA—Another Deadly Christmas for Christians

Source: Release International

2 Samuel 22:3

At least 12 Christians were killed in Christmas Eve church attacks in northern Nigeria, and 15 others were murdered in their sleep on Dec. 28. Boko Haram militants are suspected in both cases. On Christmas Eve, gunmen opened fire during a time of prayer at the Church of Christ in Nations in Jiri village, Yobe province, killing five worshipers and the pastor. The attackers also set the church on fire, and several other Christians were seriously injured. On the same night, a deacon and five other Christians were killed at the First Baptist Church in Maiduguri, Borno state. Four days later, attackers invaded the homes of Christians in Musari, outside Maiduguri, and slit the throats of 15 Christians during the early morning hours. A number of Christians had moved to the Musari area to flee violence in Maiduguri. This is the third consecutive year that Christians in the north have been violently attacked during the Christmas season. Churches in northern Nigeria were nearly empty on Christmas day.

PHILIPPINES—VOM Vehicle Struck by Bomb

Source: VOM Sources

Psalms 5:11

A VOM worker narrowly escaped injury on Dec. 26 when a roadside bomb exploded directly in front of his vehicle. The windshield and rear window were busted and the right side of the vehicle received damage, but the VOM worker and passengers were unharmed. A motorcycle taxi driver in front of the VOM truck was killed in the blast. The bombing is thought to be related to ongoing violence by Muslim separatists in the Philippines. “Praise God for his protection,” wrote the worker. The Moro Islamic Liberation Front on the island of Mindanao recently signed an agreement with the Philippine government in which the MILF was granted autonomy over more of the island. However, the agreement has not stopped the violence. Christians are specifically targeted by the MILF and other Muslim extremists that seek to rid the region of non-Muslims.

INDONESIA—Mob Attacks Christmas Procession

Source: Jakarta Globe

Micah 6:8

A long-beleaguered church in Indonesia faced harassment once again during their Christmas services. As members of the Filadelfia Batak Christian Protestant Church

(FBCP) walked toward their church property during a Christmas Eve procession prior to the service, a mob pelted them with eggs and other items. The FBCP's church property was confiscated and sealed by local authorities several months ago, but the Supreme Court ordered authorities to stop sealing off the property. Local officials have ignored the order. When the church again tried to meet on Christmas day, attackers hurled excrement and bags of urine at the congregation.

PAKISTAN

VOM Project

During the Christmas holiday, an evangelist in Pakistan was accused of blasphemy. Because of the seriousness of the charge, he was forced to flee the country for a short time. In the past, such charges have led to lengthy trials, imprisonments or both. Please pray for him and his family.