

# PRAYER ALERT...

An initiative of the Prayer Forum of the British Isles & Ireland  
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## BRITISH ISLES & IRELAND

### ■ **FRIDAY FOCUS: 10 July 2009 - Hope for carers - Matthew 10:42**

There are currently 6 million carers in the UK who provide unpaid care by looking after ill, frail or disabled family members, partners and friends. ([www.carersuk.org](http://www.carersuk.org))

**Pray:** That carers will find the support they need both practically and financially and that they will feel appreciated for all they do. For wisdom for those that make decisions about care in our communities: the government, local health trusts, social services and other local council departments.

**More:** [http://worldprayer.org.uk/uploads/Friday\\_Focus\\_July\\_2009.doc](http://worldprayer.org.uk/uploads/Friday_Focus_July_2009.doc)

### ■ **Queen sends 'supportive' letters to leaders of church movement that has angered gay campaigners.**

She told the heads of the traditionalist group, formed in response to the liberal direction of some parts of the Anglican Communion, that she 'understood their concerns' about the future of the 80 million-strong global church. The Queen, who is the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, has also wished them well with Monday's launch in London of a new alliance of evangelical and Anglo-Catholic parishes in Britain and Ireland. Her intervention will surprise many because the group, called the Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, (<http://fca.net/>) is feared by some to be a divisive force and one of its senior figures was this weekend accused of being homophobic. As The Sunday Telegraph disclosed, the Bishop of Rochester, Dr Michael Nazir-Ali, called on homosexuals to repent. He said the Church of England must stick to the Biblical teaching that marriage should only be between a man and a woman. Link to Bishop Nazir-Ali story is as follows: (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/5744559/Change-and-repent-bishop-tells-gays.html>)

**Pray:** that this new movement will not become a further divisive force but they will be granted wisdom from the Lord on how they should respond. Pray also for our Queen.

**More:** <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/religion/5750361/Queen-sends-supportive-letters-to-leaders-of-church-movement-that-has-angered-gay-campaigners.html>

### ■ **'Do not say God bless' council sacks Christian**

A London council that bans staff from saying 'God bless' at work has sacked a Christian employee for discussing his faith. Duke Amachree, a homelessness prevention officer, was initially suspended for suggesting that a terminally ill woman look to God for help. After investigating the incident his employer, Wandsworth Council in London, has decided to dismiss him from his job. His solicitor, Michael Phillips, says during an investigation meeting Mr Amachree was told it is inappropriate to ever talk about God in the workplace and that he could be disciplined even if he said 'God bless' to clients. Andrea Minichiello Williams, director of the Christian Legal Centre, said: 'We are supporting Mr Amachree in this case because it is

absurd and unjust to think that any public body could be in a position to enforce a policy which means that you can't even say 'God Bless'.

**Pray:** for Mr Amachree and all people who find themselves constrained in living their faith in the name of political correctness. (Heb.13:15)

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/20090707/do-not-say-god-bless-council-sacks-christian/>

#### ■ Government minister praises role of faith in tackling poverty

Foreign office minister Ivan Lewis this week praised the role that faith organisations play in tackling poverty around the world. He was speaking at the opening of a Progressio photo exhibition in the House of Commons, where he was presented with messages from the British public calling for justice for crimes committed in poverty-stricken East Timor. Mr Lewis said it was 'incredibly important' to recognise the positive contribution that faith plays in solving some of the world's worst problems. He paid tribute to Catholic aid agency Progressio's campaign, 'East Timor: Who Cares?', and the powerful testimony of Zequito de Oliveira, an East Timorese, who spoke at the launch of losing members of his family in the violence, including his two younger brothers. 'We politicians must always remember with our heads and our hearts,' said Mr Lewis, adding that the British government would continue to work through the United Nations and the EU to support East Timor.

**Pray:** for the many faith organisations around the world that, by God's grace, support so many vulnerable people. (Jas.1:27)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/government.minister.praises.role.of.faith.in.tackling.poverty/23757.htm>

#### ■ Tories' new plan to shore up marriage

A new Conservative strategy to reverse family breakdown is expected to involve tax breaks for married couples and make divorce harder. The measures are recommended in a report by think-tank the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) which rejects the idea that marriage is just another 'lifestyle choice'. Instead, the authors say, it is of 'paramount importance to individuals, children, communities and our nation'. They put the cost of escalating family breakdown at up to £24 billion a year - equating to £820 for the average taxpayer. Melanie Phillips said 'the core reason for family breakdown is precisely the view that marriage is merely a 'relationship' for people to choose or not from a menu of alternative lifestyles. However, marriage is not a 'relationship' but a unique institution for safeguarding the upbringing of children. It has to be protected in turn by a web of law and custom, tradition and attitudes'. Deputy Labour leader Harriet Harman has dismissed the plans as 'lecturing'.

**Pray:** for renewed and wide-ranging support for marriage and the family. (Heb.13:4a)

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/20090706/tories-new-plan-to-shore-up-marriage/>

#### ■ Failed £6m project sees teen pregnancy increase

A Government-backed project designed to curb teenage pregnancies has seen them more than double, it emerged today. The Young People's Development Programme (YPDP) tried to reduce conceptions, drug abuse and truancy among vulnerable young people, at a cost of £2,500 each. But at the end of the scheme there were more teenage pregnancies among the youngsters who had taken part than among a comparable group who hadn't. The project included giving teenagers sex education and advice about contraception. A total of 16 per cent of those on the YPDP became pregnant compared with just six per cent in the comparison group A. Department of Health spokesman said: 'This pilot was based on a successful American programme. It did not appear to reduce teenage pregnancy so we will not be taking it any further.'

**Pray:** that as these results are studied it would lead to a clear understanding that this was not the correct way forward. (Pr.2:12)

**More:** <http://www.christian.org.uk/news/20090708/failed-6m-project-sees-teen-pregnancy-increase/>

#### ■ Church calls on all to repent of climate change sin

The Methodist Church is urging Christians to repent of the sins that contribute to climate change. A report received by the annual Methodist Conference in Wolverhampton today encourages people to acknowledge their complicity in systems that exploit creation and prey on the powerless. But the Church also wants to empower Christians to make positive lifestyle changes, in line with the report's title, Hope in God's Future. Revd David Gamble, the President of the Conference, said, 'The first step in making a difference is the recognition of what we've done wrong so far. But we can't just stop there. We must not be beholden to economic growth at the expense of our world and the lives of those who are most vulnerable. 'In the face of climate change, do we give up and treat it as a lost cause? No. We are people of faith. We can turn the tide if we commit ourselves to acting together to make our planet a safer space. So the report challenges the Church to tackle the issue head on, committing itself to significant action over the coming years.'

**Pray:** that we recognise the responsibilities of stewardship of the Earth entrusted to us by God. (Gen.1:26-30)

**More:** <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=openetogod.newsDetail&newsid=359>

## EUROPE

#### ■ G8 leaders accused of doing 'Italian Job' on developing world

World Vision has accused G8 leaders meeting in Italy this week of failing to honour aid pledges to the world's poorest countries. The aid agency is disappointed with the progress made towards fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals to halve extreme global poverty by 2015. It is particularly concerned over efforts to meet the goal to reduce avoidable child deaths from killer diseases by two-thirds. World Vision says the G8 need to more than triple aid on primary health care to \$15 billion a year if they are to meet the MDGs. World Vision UK's head of Public Affairs, Patrick Watt, said the Italian Government was using national economic problems 'as an alibi for its total failure to honour its aid pledges' to the world's

poorest countries, while the other G8 countries and France in particular were 'taking their cue from this dismal abdication of responsibility'. 'The real Italian Job of the G8 is to demonstrate that it is more than a 'self preservation society'.'

**Pray:** for the world leaders that they will consider those less fortunate and honour their pledges. (Pr.14:31)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/g8.leaders.accused.of.doing.italian.job.on.developing.world/23762.htm>

#### ■ **Better relations between US and Russia could be a positive for the Church**

President Obama, earlier this week, was in Russia pursuing a series of meetings with Prime Minister Vladimir Putin and President Dmitry Medvedev. The focus of the engagements has been to warm relations between the two countries, and to partner together in a united goal of nuclear disarmament. Indeed, by Tuesday both presidents had announced a new treaty that would 'call for the mutual reduction of Russian and US nuclear warheads,' according to the Christian Post report. Leaving behind the political implications of the treaty, the idea of a more friendly relationship for Russia and the US may, in turn, help Russian Christians who had worried about a return to 'Soviet-era persecution.'

**Pray:** God for this improvement in relations between these nations. (Ps.34:14)

**More:** [http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display\\_art.html?ID=6918](http://www.breakingchristiannews.com/articles/display_art.html?ID=6918)

## WORLDWIDE

#### ■ **India: Massive Church planting results in persecution**

Just one mission agency alone has almost 4,000 church planters on the waiting list for training to enable them to go and do whatever God tells them to do, However a backlash reaction to the sudden growth of the church has prompted anti-conversion laws in seven states. Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Arunachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh are giving indirect support to militant groups and resulting in ongoing violence against Christians. Even in states where such laws are not written, they are acted on by the local authorities. Often the church planter's lives will be threatened; they'll get beaten up; they'll be warned to leave: 'Don't come back here again or we'll kill you.' This is quite a common form of intimidation, and the high success of the church planters is really attributed to the work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in India.

**Pray:** for more of the power of God to continue in India and all the dark places where the great commission needs to be fulfilled. (Ac.1:8)

**More:** <http://www.ucb.co.uk/index.cfm?itemid=225#1825>

#### ■ **China: Troops flood riot-hit Urumqi**

Chinese officials have launched a sweeping crackdown in an effort to keep a lid on ethnic clashes. They have deployed thousands of troops in Urumqi, capital of the far western Xinjiang region in an effort to restore calm between the city's ethnic Uighurs and Han Chinese. Clashes between the groups have paralysed the city since Sunday when a street protest by Uighur demonstrators turned into some of the bloodiest ethnic violence seen in China in years. Chinese officials say the violence has left more than 150 people dead and around a thousand injured. More than 1,000 people are reported to have been arrested and on Wednesday. Most Uighur follow a folk Islam mixed with superstition. Today, although almost all Uighur confess to be Muslims few are aware of the time in history when the majority of Uighur were Christians.

**Pray:** for God to use this situation to bring home His prodigals from this generation of lost sons and daughters. (Lk.15:10)

**More:** <http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia-pacific/2009/07/2009792415951927.html>

#### ■ **Indonesia: Dioceses step up fight against human trafficking**

Eight dioceses in Indonesia's Nusa Tenggara-Bali region have joined hands to fight human trafficking. Representatives met recently in Hokeng on Flores Island an overwhelmingly Catholic area that has supplied migrant workers to East Malaysia for decades. These people are easy prey for traffickers according to sources. The meeting decided to set up a network to cooperate across the region. 'We will organize regular meetings among diocesan commissions for justice and peace under the coordination of the bishops' commissions for justice and peace, and pastoral care of migrants and itinerants,' said a meeting statement. Advocacy teams will also be established in each diocese. UNICEF says 100,000 women and children are trafficked each year for sexual and labour exploitation to places such as Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore, Japan, Hong Kong and the Middle East.

**Pray:** for God to anoint this project with wisdom, power and resources to enable effective removal of all trafficking from the region. (Ps.133)

**More:** <http://www.ucanews.com/2009/07/09/dioceses-step-up-fight-against-human-trafficking/>

#### ■ **America: Christians and Muslims must build bridges**

Evangelical mega-church pastor Rick Warren has defended his address to a Muslim convention on Saturday by arguing that Christians can only evangelise those who are their friends, not their enemies. The popular pastor and author of The Purpose-Driven Life was one of the guest speakers at the 46th annual Islamic Society of North America convention last weekend. Jesus said, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners,' Warren added if you want to have a Christ-like ministry, you have to associate with the people Jesus did - unbelievers!

**Pray:** for many westerners to have God's heart for the lost, regardless of ethnic origins and to use the gifts he has given to enable the lost to be reached. (1Cor.12:7)

**More:** <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/christians.and.muslims.must.build.bridges.says.warren/23754.htm>

#### ■ **Egypt: Two clashes shake Coptic community**

Separate cases of sectarian violence in two villages erupted in Egypt last week shaking the country's Coptic Christian community as Muslims attacked their homes and security forces imposed curfews in an effort to maintain peace. In the village of Kafr El Barbari north of Cairo, Muslim villagers mourning the death of 18-year-old University student killed by a Coptic grocer, attacked Christian homes. During post-funeral violence 25 people were injured as hundreds of angry Muslims attacked Coptic homes. Some sources claimed that those who attacked the Christian houses were Muslims from surrounding villages. Reports varied on extent of damage to houses. Many of the 1,000 Christian Copts who live in the village of 4,000 inhabitants fled or remained indoors out of fear that tensions may escalate. A non-profit organization that visited Kafr El Barbari on Sunday reported that it was unable to make contact with Christians. For rumours that led to violence click the more button below.

**Pray:** against this increasing tension due to Islamic elements seeing a benefit to dissension. (Jude 1:2)

**More:** <http://www.compassdirect.org/en/display.php?page=breaking&lang=en&length=long&idelement=6007>

#### ■ **Gaza: Al Qaeda members trained in Gaza**

An Egyptian newspaper reported this week that several European members of an al Qaeda cell received training and financing in Gaza. Cairo's al Masri al Youm newspaper reported Egyptian police busted the cell which included three Belgians, a man from France and one from the U.K and seven Arabs. Authorities said the cell was planning to attack Israeli targets in Egypt. They also discovered 'shocking evidence of the massive degree of al Qaeda activity in both Gaza and Egypt.' CBN News Middle East Bureau Chief Chris Mitchell and CBN News Terrorism Analyst Erick Stakelbeck gave their insight on the possible link between al Qaeda and Gaza. Click more for their comments.

**Pray:** continually for God to drive out Satan's hold on this region and release His Kingdom purposes. (Ps.2:7-9)

**More:** <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2009/July/Paper-Al-Qaeda-Members-Trained-in-Gaza/>

#### ■ **Philippines: Bomb outside a church in Cotabato**

Five people were killed and 45 people were wounded in a bomb explosion outside a church Monday morning in Cotabato on the island of Mindanao in the Southern Philippines. The toll is provisional. The army suspects the attack to be the work of the rebel Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), but some of their leaders deny any responsibility. The bomb, outside the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, detonated as Archbishop Orlando Quevedo led Sunday celebrations. Archbishop Quevedo has refused to make suppositions. He has limited himself to describing the attack as 'not only a crime, but a sacrilege. Let us all pray for the conversion of the bombers. Violence does not lead anywhere.' Army officials have pointed the finger at MILF, a group that for years has been fighting for independence in Mindanao, but which in recent years had decided to open a process of dialogue with the government. Some of the MILF leaders have denied any involvement in the attack.

**Pray:** for the families who where involved in this atrocity and pray that God's angels would transform the perpetrators. (Heb.1:14)

**More:** <http://www.asianews.it/index.php?l=en&art=15696&size=A>

## PRAISE REPORTS

#### ■ **Assisted suicide bill defeated**

Tuesday evening's attempts to change the law on assisted suicide were unsuccessful. Lord Falconer's amendment 173 - which sought to make it legal for people to assist seriously ill friends or relatives travel abroad to access assisted suicide - was defeated after a long and impassioned debate by 194 votes to 141, a good majority of 53. A second amendment from Lord Alderdice, which sought to make it legal to help a seriously ill person commit suicide in this country, was withdrawn. Commenting on the news Dan Boucher, CARE's Director of Parliamentary Affairs said: 'Although no doubt put forward with the best of intentions, the proposed liberalisation of the law would have inevitably created pressures for vulnerable sick people - who think they are a burden to their families - to end their lives. The Lord's rejection of these ill-conceived proposals makes Britain a far more humane society than would otherwise be the case.'

**Praise:** God for this answer to prayer over this emotive subject. (Is.38:10)

**More:** [http://www.care.org.uk/Articles/157803/CARE/Stay\\_Informed/Public\\_Affairs\\_News/Assisted\\_suicide\\_amendments.aspx](http://www.care.org.uk/Articles/157803/CARE/Stay_Informed/Public_Affairs_News/Assisted_suicide_amendments.aspx)

#### ■ **BREAKING NEWS: Victory in House of Lords for free speech**

A petition with over 20,000 signatures was delivered on Tuesday in response to attempts to legalise assistance with suicide (see above) and the Government's plans to effectively gag Christians from openly explaining Biblical teaching on sexual conduct. Yesterday - Praise God! Peers voted for free speech protection by 186 votes to 133. This victory is of fundamental importance to Christians and to all who wish to discuss or criticise homosexual conduct freely, without the fear of 7 years' imprisonment. Despite this victory today, bear in mind that free speech continues to hang in the balance, as the House of Commons still has to agree to it.

**More:** <http://www.ccfon.org/view.php?id=786>

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