

For a copy of the full newsletter please contact Dr Russell Blacker <c.v.r.blacker@btinternet.com>, who writes:

Dear Friends Colleagues and Supporters.

I hesitated to send out this March 2020 edition of the Caucus for the Persecuted Church Newsletter because, at this time of pandemic, there is a potential issue of *information-fatigue*. There is a Coronavirus theme to several of the reports and articles in this edition.

From hard-pressed Lombardy in Italy comes a moving report of an atheist doctor coming to faith in the context of treating dying patients, including a priest.

There are a number of important articles on China including a revelation by doctors working there who were forced to participate in the CCP cover-up. Meanwhile, persecution of all religious groups continues with children pressured to betray their religious relatives and neighbours. The **CSW report** - Repressed, Removed, Re-Educated: The stranglehold on religious life in China – is reproduced in full.

Refugees and Displaced people (of which there are now 72m worldwide) are especially vulnerable at this time. An article by the Norwegian Refugee Council lists 10 things you should know about coronavirus and refugees. NGOs who support refugees and persecuted minorities are under especial difficulty at this time and there are suggestions as to how we can support them.

In Turkey the body of an abducted Assyrian Christian Woman is found; her husband is still missing. There is an expose of the polemic that lies behind much of this persecution – and an appeal from 222 Ministries - “just when you thought it couldn’t get any worse”.

In Iraq the kidnapped French Christian charity workers are freed – and Aid to the Church in Need start a new project to restore the village of Batnaya.

Palestinian Christians continue to experience persecution such that there are vanishingly small numbers left in Gaza and elsewhere. Their plight is sidestepped by western Church leaders intent on condemning Israel.

From Pakistan, in an exact parallel to what happened to Asia Bibi, comes a tragic account of a Christian farm labourer beaten and tortured to death for washing at a Muslim-owned well. There are several articles on Christians who are also being held under the draconian Blasphemy Laws and a link to the excellent BBC documentary on the effect of these Laws on religious minorities in Pakistan.

In Kenya there is a crisis of education as Al-Shabaab continues to attack Christians schools and teachers and warns all Christians to leave north-eastern Kenya. Fearing for their lives, only 600 out of 4000 primary and secondary school teachers now remain in post.

From Nigeria where more Christians have been killed than in any other country a priest details six ways in which Christians face other forms of discrimination.

Do feel free to pass on this newsletter to friends and colleagues or use the material for presentations, fund-raising, prayer groups, and writing to your political representatives.

As before, if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter please reply with a simple 'No thank you'.

Kind regards – and Stay Safe!

Dr Russell Blacker and colleagues:

The Caucus for the Persecuted Church