



# NEWS

29 JUN  
2022

PRAY FOR UKRAINE  
PRAY FOR PEACE

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or items for future issues to*

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## PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

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*This replaces our usual format for this week. Pat wrote this report and is one of our Justice and Peace Group members.*

*I also sent a letter to the Tablet and I note there is mention of the ministerial conference in this latest issue.*

*Pat sent her report to Catholic South West monthly paper and a brief mention was included in the current issue.*

*Two of group members each had a Eucharist service (Mass) offered for Persecuted Christians.*

*And notice was given out at church this weekend and included in the bulletin re Pat's report and the Ministerial Conference.*

*So may we all be thinking of and praying for Persecuted Christians and the International Ministerial Conference hosted by July 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*Mary Bradley*

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### **Truro Conference 'The Rise of Global Christian Persecution' Appeal for Prayer**

4 Members of St Mary's parish recently attended a conference on global persecution which was held at Truro Methodist Church. We listened to seven excellent speakers representing aid and advocacy organisations from Aid to the Church in Need, to Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Release International, and Humanitarian Aid and Relief Trust. The aim of the conference was to highlight the plight of 360 people million for whom discrimination and persecution is a daily experience

The conference ran from 10am – 4.30pm. To give a full account of what we heard and learnt is not possible here. However, I would like to share these words from Fiona Bruce MP who is the Prime Minister's Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and ask for **your prayers** for our sisters and brothers around the world for whom suffering is a daily experience:

“Open Doors (a non-denominational Mission) supporting persecuted Christians in the world, estimate 360 million Christians in the world today in 76 countries suffer high or very high levels of persecution or discrimination for their faith. And of course, persecution not only affects Christians but those of all faiths and none. The research centre Pew assesses that 83% of the world's population live in countries with high or very high restrictions on religion and yet the issue is profoundly under recognized and under addressed compared with many other global concerns. Yet, as our Prime Minister, Boris Johnson MP, has said in the House of Commons “*We all know that wherever freedom of belief is under attack, other human rights are under attack as well.*”

Right across the world today people are losing their jobs, education, homes, livelihoods, families, freedom, access to justice and even life itself, simply on account of what they believe. People are being discriminated against, marginalised, beaten, threatened, tortured, and

killed - too often by their own authoritarian governments, the very governments with a duty to protect their freedom of religion or belief. No one should face discrimination, hatred or violence simply because of what they believe, and yet in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, millions do. Freedom of religion or belief is important, not least because it is important in itself, giving individuals a sense of worth, purpose and identity, but also because it is so closely connected with other rights such as the right to life, privacy, assembly and expression - as well as bringing social, economic and cultural rights.”

We are all members of one body in Christ and many of our sisters and brothers are suffering, **please pray for them.**

Your prayers are needed too for a special conference taking place **5-6 July 2022.** The UK is hosting an International Ministerial Conference to promote Freedom of Religion or Belief for all. This conference will bring together representatives from governments, civil society, and faith leaders from around the world. In chairing this conference Fiona Bruce MP will have the privilege of chairing a growing Alliance of 36 countries, who are working together to champion Freedom of religion and Belief and to challenge its abuses across the world.

One of the questions I took away from the conference was: “What more can we do?” I am sure there are many answers to that question but there is one thing we can all do **now** and that is pray. How powerful would it be if we all prayed every day from now and throughout the International conference 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> July that all those taking part will be guided by the Holy Spirit. And wouldn't it be wonderful if our prayer for our persecuted brothers and sisters became an important part of our prayer each day.

#### **Please pray for the Conference decisions**

- **That positive decisions will be put into place re the worldwide persecution of Christians and also those who have specific beliefs that cause others to persecute them.**
- **That freedom of thought, word and belief will be acknowledged in reality as a basic human right for all**
- **That there will be a worldwide effort to bring relief to the many who are being persecuted, imprisoned and tortured purely because of their beliefs.**
- **That the United Kingdom will lead the world as an example of a nation where Freedom of belief is known to be a basic human right.**

*Pat Fitzpatrick*