

A bike pilgrimage on behalf of persecuted Christians, May-June, 2022. North Foreland point (Kents's most easterly point) to Land's End and then return to North Foreland point.

FROM: Robert de Berry, 27 Cossor Rd, Pewsey, SN9 5HX
TEL: 01672 562907 robertdeberry42@gmail.com

I am a retired vicar of 77 and am starting to plan for a bike pilgrimage on behalf of persecuted Christians, to take place between mid-May and mid-June 2022. I know this is a long way ahead, so this is just tentative planning. Between the two same months in 2017, a group of us did a similar pilgrimage from CAPE WRATH in the far north-west of Scotland, travelled south through Derbyshire's HOPE VALLEY and ended up on the Sussex coast at PEACEHAVEN, so the strap line for it all was **WRATH, HOPE, PEACE**. We were hosted for times of prayer in 34 churches; their own members joining us. Local Christians generously gave us hospitality. The cyclists raised sponsorship of £60,000 which was given to **Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)** and **Release International**. CSW works in advocacy and political lobbying on behalf of those persecuted for their faith; it has access to the EU and our own houses of parliament as well as recognised status with the UN. Its researches and deep awareness of the plight of so many suffering Christians gives it a tremendous authority with governments and agencies for justice.



RELEASE raises money and prayer for persecuted Christians, so, for example, money might go to supporting a pastor's wife and family because he has been imprisoned or to Christians whose properties have been burnt. As I write today, Algeria's largest church (Makouda), built to host 1100 worshippers in Tizzy Ouzo, is about to be closed -that brings a total of twelve churches closed this year. This, despite the fact, as pointed out by the Algerian Protestant Church, that all these churches have been registered and comply with the law. Sadly, what is happening in Algeria is happening to millions of Christians who live in climates hostile to the Christian gospel and in some countries, such as northern Nigeria and Korea, it is much worse. At last, our government is taking seriously the persecution of Christians, many of whom live in countries supported by our foreign aid. Jeremy Hunt, when foreign secretary, commissioned the bishop of Truro to submit a report based on information provided by RELEASE and others.

While I am fit and blessed with good health, I have felt the Lord calling me to do one more bike pilgrimage -this time from the tip of Kent to the tip of Cornwall, making the ride in both directions by different routes -North Foreland Point to Land's End and return.

From churches and Christians along our route, we will be looking for help -not with sponsorship, which the cyclists themselves will raise, but in two particulars: first with accommodation for our cyclists -evening meal, bed and breakfast and second, a hall or church to which we can invite Christians for prayer. To inform our prayer, we would show DVDs from CSW and Release. We would also love to recruit Christian cyclists from your area, who could join our pilgrimage for as much or as little as they can manage.

So, this is just an introduction to the plans I have for 2022, and with your help and encouragement they can be fulfilled. Of course, you will have questions, so please feel that you can direct them my way. So far, I have five cyclists wanting to do the whole journey of about 900 miles. There will be more. I am also recruiting car drivers as back-up support. Although our own attentions will focus on information provided for by CSW and Release, there are other excellent and informative Christian charities working for our tenacious brothers and sisters, who suffer so much: particularly **Barnabas Fund** and **Open Doors**.

Our intention is to be pilgrims -people on a journey of prayer. Suffering Christians would echo Paul's prayer from prison, when he wrote: "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. Pray for us, too, so that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains".

If you can aid and abet and pray with us, that would be marvellous. Thankyou so much for receiving this. It comes with full backing from Release and CSW,

In Christ, *Robert*

May the Lord cause you to flourish, both you and your children. May you be blessed by the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth, Psalm 115 verses 14-15.

