



IDOP 2008 Concert of Prayer

The following are guidelines to encourage you and your church to pray for the persecuted church, in connection with this year's International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. Consider printing copies of this for each participant, or using this material for an overhead projector or PowerPoint presentation. The information is divided into slides, for convenient use in overhead or PowerPoint presentations.

Slide 1 – **IDOP CANADA** (logo)

Slide 2 – **Pray for the Persecutors** (logo)

Slide 3 – **“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.... Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.”** Romans 12:14, 19 NIV

Slide 4 – **“On the contrary:**

‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:20, 21 NIV

Slide 5 – *The Power of Intercession*

“Then he continued, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.” Daniel 10:12 NIV

Slide 6 – *The Reason for Intercession*

“And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.” Romans 8:27 NIV

Slide 7 – **Intercession for Persecuted Christians: The Four Focus Nations**

Eritrea in East Africa

India in South Asia

The Maldives in South Asia

North Korea in East Asia



Slide 8 – Eritrea—Background

Eritrea has a transitional government that claims to be committed to a democratic system. Currently it is a one-party state governed by President Isaias Afwerki. Half of the population are Tigrinya-speaking Christians, the other half are Muslims. Eritrea is dependent on subsistence agriculture, and most of the country's natural resources have been depleted. Years of war and repeated droughts have left the country in distress. There is a massive food shortage.

Slide 9 – Eritrea—Persecution

The government declares that persecution does not exist, despite reports otherwise. Eritrean authorities recently began a campaign of open persecution against evangelical Christians. It began as a government-led rejection of most non-Orthodox Christian communities. In May 2002, the government announced that all churches other than Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran were to be closed immediately. More than 2,000 Christians are now imprisoned in Eritrea, where they face deplorable conditions—some in shipping containers—without official charges or access to judicial process.

Slide 10 – Eritrea—Please Pray

- Pray that the government will stop the campaign against evangelicals, get rid of legal restrictions on establishing churches, and allow freedom of religion for all.
- Ask God to change the hearts of those in power so they will rule with justice for the good of all Eritreans.
- Pray for Christians who are imprisoned, that they will remain firm in their faith, and courageous witnesses for Jesus Christ.

Slide 11 – India—Background

India has tremendous racial, ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity. It is the most populous functioning democracy in the world. Though the majority of the people are Hindu, India is a secular nation with constitutional freedom for all religions. The secular National Congress Party has upheld this freedom at the national level, but several states are tightening anti-conversion laws.

Slide 12 – India—Persecution

Persecution in the 1990s refined the Church, focused its vision and brought a greater unity of purpose than ever before. It has pushed the person of Jesus and the existence of the Church to centre stage, and has also not shown militant Hinduism in a favourable light. In India, seven states now have anti-conversion laws which are being increasingly used by Hindu ultra-nationalists to harass Christians. Reports of threats against pastors, false arrests, beatings and even murder have been increasing, now averaging one incident every three days.



ROMANS 12:9-21

PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTORS

IDOP
Canada

Join with Christians all across Canada for the
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

Slide 13 – **India—Please Pray**

- Pray that India's political leaders will continue to uphold the constitution by maintaining religious freedom and protecting religious and ethnic minorities, and that they may resist growing pressures to pass discriminatory 'anti-conversion' laws.
- Pray that God will work in the hearts and lives of India's state and national leaders, and draw them closer to Him.
- Pray that those who turn to Christ will stay firm in their faith despite opposition from family and others, and find the means to have their needs met.

Slide 14 – **The Maldives —Background**

This 800-km-long string of 1,200 islands in the Indian Ocean is one of the least evangelized nations on earth. All citizens must be Sunni Muslims and the government denies the existence of any other religion in the country. Shariah law is observed. The President and all members of parliament are Muslims.

Slide 15 – **The Maldives —Persecution**

In 1998, all known Christian foreigners were expelled from the country, and all known Maldivian Christians were arrested. International pressure brought about their release, but they remain under strict surveillance. The government is intolerant towards non-Muslims. No churches can be opened, though foreigners are allowed to practise their religion in private as long as they do not encourage citizens to participate.

Slide 16 – **The Maldives —Please Pray**

- Pray for protection and safety for Christians living in the Maldives.
- Pray that those Christians who live there will be wise and yet bold in the way they share the Gospel of Christ with those around them.
- Ask God to grant the authorities a miraculous revelation of Jesus, work in their hearts and draw them closer to Him.
- Pray that democratic reforms will take effect and that religious freedoms will come as a result.

Slide 17 – **North Korea—Background**

North Korea has been described as one of the most repressive and isolated nations in the world. The nation is governed under a state religion called "Juche," and citizens are required to worship their dead leader, the "Eternal President" Kim Il Sung, and his son, the current dictator Kim Jong Il. Current estimates are that 200,000 North Koreans (many of whom are believed to be Christians) are currently languishing in North Korea's prison camps.



Slide 18 – North Korea —Persecution

Since Christianity first came to Korea in 1777, the followers have been persecuted. When the Communists took control, there were about 300,000 Christians. Now between 50,000 and 70,000 Christians are suffering in prison camps, many undergoing torture, some facing death. Kim Jong Il sees Christianity as one of his greatest threats. Therefore, many suspected Christians and their families are taken away to suffer brutal consequences. Routine punishments include starvation, severe beatings, sexual assault, verbal abuse, sleep deprivation, water torture, and execution.

Slide 19 – North Korea —Please Pray

- Pray fervently for what remains of the church in North Korea. Pray that Christians living in North Korea would stand firm during relentless persecution.
- Pray for strength for prisoners of faith. Pray that those who have been arrested, tortured and put in labour camps will know God's presence, His love and peace.
- Ask God to reveal Himself in miraculous ways to Kim Jong-Il and the North Korean government, and graciously transform their hearts, so that they might embrace Christ as Lord, find peace with God and take steps to reform this nation.

Slide 20 – Thank you for praying for our brothers and sisters of the Persecuted Church.