



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

**Remembering those experiencing injustice,
A time for contemplation.....**

October 2020

“Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners. And those who are ill-treated as if you yourselves were suffering.” Hebrews: 13:3

A special time is usually set aside in Bishop Alcock’s Chapel on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00 - 10.15am. Here we hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month.

Though we cannot gather in person due to present circumstances, we invite you to remember the cases here and any others for whom you have a particular concern.

BRAZIL: Justice for murdered human rights defenders

Brazil is one of the deadliest countries for human rights defenders, according to Front Line Defenders, and perpetrators are rarely brought to justice. Marielle Franco dedicated her life to defending the rights of women, black, LGBTI and other marginalised people in Rio de Janeiro. The city councillor, who grew up in a favela, also denounced police abuses and extrajudicial killings. On 14 March 2018, Marielle and her driver Anderson Pedro Gomes, were shot dead driving home after a public meeting. A year later, two former police officers were arrested on suspicion of the killings, but so far those who ordered the murders have not been identified.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Brazilian attorney general to ensure there is an immediate and independent investigation into identifying those involved in Marielle and Anderson's killings
- For those responsible to be brought to justice through a free and fair trial

EGYPT: Teen tortured into "confession"

Aser Mohammed was 14 when he was arrested and forcibly disappeared for 35 days in January 2016, during which time he was given electric shocks and suspended by his limbs. He "confessed" to crimes including membership of a terrorist group and attacking a hotel. He says he did not commit any of the offences. Aser was prosecuted, detained and sentenced alongside adults – international law requires children deprived of their liberty to be held separately from adults and treated humanely. He was sentenced to 10 years in prison in October 2019. His appeal is due to be heard by the Court of Cassation in Cairo.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Aser to be immediately released, protected from torture and other ill-treatment
 - For Aser to be allowed access to his family, lawyer and medical treatment
- For an impartial investigation to be held into his disappearance, allegations of torture and other ill-treatment and for those responsible to be brought to justice

JAPAN: Decades on death row

Matsumoto Kenji has been on death row for more than two decades after being convicted of two separate robberies and murders. He has a longstanding intellectual disability, allegedly because of mercury poisoning, and a low IQ. The court authorities ruled him mentally competent enough to make a “confession” and be sentenced to death. His lawyers say Matsumoto cannot understand or participate in his legal case. He now uses a wheelchair and suffers from a delusional disorder. Under the Japanese system, prisoners are typically executed with just a few hours’ notice – some with none at all. Their families are usually not told until afterwards. Japan has carried out 39 executions since 2012.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the authorities to commute Matsumoto Kenji’s death sentence – and all other death sentences
- For better treatment of death row inmates, including ending solitary confinement
- For a moratorium on executions and for the Japanese authorities to promote a debate on the subject

Good news!

Kurdish Iranian writer, journalist and film-maker Behrouz Boochani was held on a remote Pacific island by the Australian authorities for six years after fleeing Iran. He has now been granted asylum in New Zealand. He tweeted: “I salute the people of New Zealand for rejecting the policies of hate and division.”

Sources for cases: Amnesty International UK, BBC

I pray for all of us, oppressor and friend, that together we may succeed in building a better world, through human understanding and love, and that in doing so we may reduce the pain and suffering of all sentient beings.'

Dalai Lama XIV

"To clasp one's hands in prayer is the beginning of an uprising against the disorder of the world."

Please take this sheet away with you and use it in prayer or meditation, and any action you feel and find possible.

Your local Amnesty group can be contacted at

www.amnestyelcity.org.uk

ELY AMNESTY NEWS

All of our forthcoming events and regular meetings have been postponed or cancelled until further notice due to the Coronavirus / COVID-19 outbreak.

If you are interested in what we normally do, or would like to find out ways that you can continue to support Amnesty from home, then please feel free to get in touch with us through the above website.