



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

January 2021

“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.

Pakistan: Human rights worker disappeared

Idris Khattak was a dedicated human rights researcher, investigating forced disappearances in Pakistan for organisations like Amnesty International. In November 2019 he was disappeared. A witness describes his car being intercepted and a black sack being thrown over his face. His daughter Talia began campaigning for his whereabouts. In June Pakistan authorities admitted he was in their custody but they would not reveal where he was. In November his daughter was finally allowed to meet him for 20 minutes. He has not been allowed to see a lawyer. The authorities say they are charging him in a military court under the Official Secrets Act. If convicted, he could face a long prison sentence or even a death sentence.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the authorities to release Idris unless there is sufficient and credible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognised crime
- For the authorities to grant Idris access to a lawyer and regular access to his family
- For the Pakistan authorities to stop forced abductions by the security forces.

Italy: Volunteer rescuers face 20 years in prison

Three years ago, Italian authorities seized the rescue ship *Iuventa* and began criminal investigations into the volunteer crew who had helped rescue over 14,000 people from drowning in the Central Mediterranean. Now they could face charges of 'people smuggling', which carries a sentence of up to 20 years. *"We are raising our voices on behalf of those less privileged, who continue to die every day as they try to reach safety. We could no longer stand by and watch people disappearing in the Mediterranean mass grave. It was, is and will remain the task of us all to save human lives wherever possible, to offer protection to those who need it, to treat everyone with dignity."*

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Italian authorities to drop these baseless investigations immediately
- For those who had the courage to take action but have now spent three years in limbo awaiting a criminal trial
- For all those who risk dangerous sea voyages in search of safety and a new life.

Bahrain: Jailed opposition leader denied adequate health care

Hassan Mushaima was among 14 opposition activists who were arrested in March and April 2011 during the Bahrain uprising. Most were held incommunicado for weeks and many have alleged they were tortured during their first days of detention. Some first saw their lawyers during questioning by the military prosecutor ahead of the trial, while others were only allowed to see them during the first court hearing in May 2011, which was the first time any of the activists had seen their families since their arrest. On 22 June, a military court sentenced them to between two years and life in prison on charges including 'setting up terror groups to topple the royal regime and change the constitution'. Hassan (aged 72) is a diabetic and former cancer patient and suffers from other chronic illnesses. He has been rushed to hospital and returned to prison twice in the last two months.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the authorities to release Hassan Mushaima immediately, as he is a prisoner of conscience convicted solely for exercising his rights to peaceful freedom of expression and assembly
- For the authorities to provide him with urgent access to adequate healthcare, including prescribed medication and regular check-ups.

Good news!

Australian citizen Sadam Abudusalamu went to China in 2016 to marry his girlfriend. He returned to Australia for work while Nadila Wumaier waited for her spouse visa. She gave birth later the same year but he was not allowed to visit China and her passport was confiscated. After a three-year campaign by Human Rights organisations Sadam was finally reunited with his wife and met his son in Sydney on 11 December. Both are members of China's persecuted Uyghur minority.

Sources for cases: Amnesty International

'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.amnestyelycity.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.