



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

April 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.

Guatemala: Jailed human rights defender

Bernardo Caal Xol, 48, has been unfairly imprisoned for almost two and a half years for peacefully defending the rights of Indigenous Mayan Qeqchi communities affected by a hydroelectric project on the Cahabon River. The teacher and trade unionist was among leaders appointed by 56 communities to take legal action against the project, in particular the lack of prior and informed consultation with the indigenous peoples. He was detained in January 2018, accused of inciting alleged acts of violence and sentenced to more than seven years in prison - even though no evidence was provided to support these accusations.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Guatemalan attorney general to review Bernardo Caal Xol's casefile
- As no evidence has been provided of his alleged crime, that he should be released
- For those responsible for bringing the unfounded accusations to be held accountable

Vietnam: Jailed for blogging

Successful entrepreneur Tran Huynh Duy Thuc is serving a 16-year prison sentence for blogging about political and economic issues in Vietnam. He advocated for economic reform, better governance - and promoted education, democracy and respect for human rights. The sentence is to be followed by five years' house arrest. He was arrested in May 2009 and during his one-day trial in 2010, he declared he was tortured into making a confession.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Vietnamese authorities to reduce Tran Huynh Duy Thuc's sentence
- For them to allow prison visits by foreign diplomats and access to his family and medical care
- That the authorities will ensure he is held in conditions that comply with the UN standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners.

Nigeria: Death sentence for singer

Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, 22 has been sentenced to death by an Upper Shari'a Court in northern Nigeria for circulating an allegedly blasphemous song on WhatsApp. Religious leaders and other influential people are campaigning for the judgement to be carried out as soon as possible. The 22-year-old was arrested in March 2020 and his house was burned down by angry youths, causing his family to flee. He was not allowed legal representation before and during the trial but has been granted legal advice to prepare an appeal after human rights lawyers pressured the court to respect his fair trial rights.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the governor of Kano State not to sign Yahaya Sharif-Aminu's death certificate
- For the governor to release him immediately and unconditionally

Good News!

Pastor Steven Tendo, a 35-year-old pastor and asylum seeker, has been released from detention in the USA. He had been held since 2018, after fleeing from torture and other human rights abuses in Uganda. Amnesty activists lobbied on his behalf and he was freed on parole under the new US administration. He now awaits the adjudication of his asylum case.

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 keep this sheet to hand 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.