



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

August 2022

“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

Once again, a special time has been set aside in Bishop Alcock’s Chapel between the two morning services on the first Sunday of each month from 9.00am to 10.15am. Here we can hold in mind or pray for the people whose cases are highlighted for the current month. This meditation is open to those of all faiths and none.

Brazil: Environmental defenders murdered

Environmental and indigenous peoples' rights defenders Bruno Pereira, 41, and Dom Phillips, 57, were reported missing in June. About a fortnight later, their bodies were found in a remote part of the Amazon rainforest in western Brazil, home to thousands of indigenous peoples. Experts and indigenous peoples say the area is a hotbed of criminality, which includes poachers, illegal gold-miners and loggers, as well as a growing number of drug-traffickers, with little government oversight. Dom, a British journalist, and Bruno, who was advising and guiding him, were investigating clashes between indigenous peoples, criminal gangs and government agents. Jair Bolsonaro's Brazilian government is known for its dismantling of environmental protections and its offensives against the rights of indigenous peoples. One suspect has confessed to the killing and arrest warrants have been issued against two others.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips' families and the indigenous peoples of Brazil
- For the Brazilian authorities to ensure there is a fair and just investigation into what happened to the men and why
- For the Brazilian government to ensure that human rights defenders, civil servants and journalists can carry out their work in freedom and security

Belarus: Jailed for criticising Ukraine war

In February, Danuta Pyarednya reposted a text criticising Belarus' ruler Alyaksandr Lukashenka and Russia's Vladimir Putin for waging war on Ukraine. The 20-year-old was promptly expelled from Kulyashou Mahiliou State University, where she was a top student. Now she has been sentenced to six and a half years in a penal colony for "harming the national interests of Belarus" and "insulting the president". Lukashenka is a key ally of Putin and since Russia invaded Ukraine more than 1,000 people have been detained in Belarus for their anti-war views.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Danuta in her captivity and for her family
- For Danuta and all those jailed for peacefully expressing their opinions or speaking out against the war to be released immediately and charges against them dropped
- For the Belarusian authorities to cease clamping down on all dissent

Hong Kong: 'Grandma Wong' jailed

A prominent Hong Kong activist has been jailed for 32 weeks for taking part in anti-government protests in 2019. Alexandra Wong, nicknamed Grandma Wong, initially denied the charges but pleaded guilty on the first day of her trial. She was regularly seen at the protests three years ago, usually waving a British union flag. Prosecutors accused her of shouting "offensive words" at an unlawful assembly and said the protests caused "disruption to social order". Alexandra disappeared halfway through the 2019 protests. When she re-emerged in October 2020, she said she had been detained in Shenzhen in mainland China and forced to renounce her activism. Her jailing comes a day after the Hong Kong authorities jailed a veteran activist and terminal cancer patient for nine months for his attempt to protest against the Beijing Olympics by holding a coffin and signs saying, "Democracy and human rights are above the Winter Olympics".

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For Alexandra Wong and all the Hong Kong activists jailed for wishing to live in a democratic Hong Kong
- For Hong Kong to repeal its controversial national security law, which critics say have silenced all dissent against China's increasing control over the city
- For the return of freedom of expression and freedom to protest to Hong Kong

Good news!

A Russian feminist and LGBT activist has been acquitted of controversial "pornography" charges. Yulia Tsvetkova, 29, is known for her body-positive drawings of the female anatomy on her blog the Vagina Monologues. She was accused of distributing pornography and "LGBT pornography" in 2019. The case prompted nationwide protests in solidarity, which in turn saw dozens of people detained. Most cases that go to court in Russia end in conviction. In June, the Kremlin added her to its growing list of "foreign agents", which includes activists, journalists and non-governmental organisations. The authorities have 10 days to appeal the acquittal.

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

Our monthly planning meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month. We are now meeting cautiously in person. The next two meetings will be held from 7pm on 2nd August and 6th September in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

Rocking for Amnesty Returns! Amnesty International Ely City Group and Haddenham Art Centre are delighted to announce that, following last year's successful concert, there will be another relaxed afternoon of country/rock in the gardens of Haddenham Arts Centre on Saturday 13 August from 3.00pm until 6.30.

The café will be open and has a fully licensed bar. You can book a cream tea in advance direct from Haddenham Arts Centre or bring your own picnic (no glasses or bottles please). Advance adult tickets are £12 and accompanied under 16s £6. On the gate, if available, £15 adult/£8 under 16s.

Tickets are available from HAC, Burrows Newsagents and <http://www.wegottickets.com/event/549691>.