



AMNESTY

ELY CITY GROUP

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

May 2024

“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 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.

Egypt: Activist still unjustly jailed

Egyptian-British activist Alaa Abdel Fattah has spent 52 months arbitrarily detained simply for exercising his human rights. Following Alaa's arrest in 2019, he was later convicted on bogus charges and sentenced to five years imprisonment following a grossly unfair trial in reprisal for his activism and human rights work. Alaa, who has spent most of the past decade behind bars, was subjected to a litany of human rights violations including prolonged arbitrary detention, unfair trial, torture and other ill-treatment, and periodic bans on family visits. Egyptian authorities continue to deny him access to consular visits from UK officials.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Egyptian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Alaa
- Pending his release, for Alaa to be allowed regular access to his lawyers and family, and adequate health care
- For Alaa to be granted a consular visit without delay, and for the British government to make good on their promise to 'resolve this case'.

Turkey: Women prosecuted for peaceful protests

On 25 May the Saturday Mothers plan to hold their 1000th vigil in Istanbul's Galatasaray Square. The Mothers, other relatives and their supporters have been holding a weekly peaceful vigil since 1995 protesting the enforced disappearance of their loved ones in the 1980s and 1990s, and demanding justice. Time and again they have been met with brutal crackdowns and even prosecutions.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the authorities to allow the Saturday Mothers to return to Galatasaray Square without restriction
- For the Turkish government to investigate the forced disappearances
- For the Turkish authorities to allow people to take part in peaceful protests without restriction or harassment.

USA: Woman on death row likely to be innocent

In April a district judge who had previously presided over Melissa Lucio's capital murder case recommended that the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals overturn her 2008 conviction. Prosecutors claimed she had beaten her toddler to death, although Melissa said that she had fallen down some stairs and then deteriorated in the days after the incident. One of her children confirmed this at the time. The district attorney's office has now admitted that prosecutors withheld crucial evidence from her defence, including interviews with her other children and a Child Protection Services report that would have supported her.

Please hold in mind or pray:

- For the Court of Criminals Appeals to endorse the state judge's recommendation that her conviction be overturned
- For Melissa to be allowed to come home to her family after 17 years on death row
- For the United States to abolish the death penalty.

Good news

On 19 April Italian prosecutors dropped the case against the crew of rescue ship *Iuventa* on the grounds that no crime was committed. The volunteers had been accused of aiding and abetting illegal immigration in 2017. The *Iuventa* has saved more than 14,000 lives, including children. The crew have endured almost seven years of court proceedings, their ship has been left to decay and they have been forced to stop helping those in distress.

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. Our next two meetings will be held from 7pm on 7 May and 4 June in St Peter's House, Broad Street, Ely, CB7 4AH. Anyone interested in attending to find out more or join our group would be very welcome.

On 14 May at 7.00pm in the Methodist Church Hall, Chapel Street, Ely CB6 1AD we will be holding the last in our 2024 Amnesty Talks series. Our speaker will be Ruth Jamieson who will discuss the protection of civilians in armed conflict.