

Winter 2009

# remember

# Connect & Encourage

Be a voice for the voiceless  
[www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)



CHRISTIAN  
SOLIDARITY  
WORLDWIDE  
VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS

# SPREAD HOPE

*A displaced Burmese man is encouraged by your cards, reminding him that the world has not forgotten him. So far, nearly 400 e-cards have been sent to CSW's partners in Burma, who then print the cards and distribute them to people, like this man, who desperately need to know that they are not alone.*



Included in **Connect & Encourage** are the names and addresses of some of the individuals for whom we work as well as the contact details for some of our partner organisations.

Many of the individuals on the following pages face daily persecution; some of them are victims of violence. All of them need encouragement.

Using this resource, you have the opportunity to stand in solidarity with them in a very special way – by sending them cards and letters of encouragement. Receiving a personal letter reminds them that someone, somewhere cares about their suffering.



We have included some frequently asked questions on the next page, but if you have any additional questions or concerns when using this resource, please contact the CSW office at [admin@csw.org.uk](mailto:admin@csw.org.uk) or by calling 0845 456 5464.

## IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN WRITING TO THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR THEIR FAITH:

- Do not include any political comment or criticism in your cards and letters.
- If you receive letters requesting financial help in response to a card or letter that you have sent, always ask CSW about these requests before acting on them.
- Follow carefully any advice given for a particular individual or country.

# FAQs

## Is it ok to include Christian greetings and scripture verses?

Most of the individuals included in this resource are Christians, and it is fine to insert appropriate scripture verses and Christian greetings such as “God bless you” or “May the peace of God be with you”. Writing relevant Bible references is useful for those who are unable to read English so they can look up verses of encouragement and hope in their own language.

However, some of the individuals are not Christians – we have indicated this next to their names. Please be sensitive to this when writing to them.

## What if I can't write in the individual's language?

It's fine to write in English. Even if the person receiving your card is unable to read English, getting a card can still bring them hope and encouragement by reminding them that they are not forgotten.

However, if you can write in the language of the person – even if it is just a phrase or two – please do so! They will appreciate your effort.

## Will my letters actually reach individuals who are in prison?

Although some letters may be intercepted, most will reach their destination. Even if the letter doesn't reach a prisoner, it can still have a powerful effect by reminding governments that a prisoner's case is not going unnoticed by the rest of the world.

## Is it safe to include my name and address on my cards?

As long as you are happy to receive a reply, including your contact details isn't a problem. In fact, a pen pal relationship with someone who is persecuted for their faith can be extremely enlightening and inspiring! However, you may receive letters requesting financial help. Always contact CSW regarding these requests before you respond to them.

## Do my cards and letters actually make a difference?

Yes! So many individuals included in **Connect & Encourage** have contacted us to thank us and to tell us how blessed they were by the cards and letters they received.

Here are just a few of them:

*“I can assure you that your card fulfilled the purpose for which it was sent. I was overjoyed, comforted, encouraged and felt loved”.*  
Prisoner, Egypt

*“...we are so grateful for your concern and the love and solidarity you have shown to us. This is proof that the Church of the Lord is one and we are all part of the Body of Christ, when one member hurts the others hurt too. You laugh with those who laugh and you cry with those who cry.”*  
Reverend Roberto Rodriguez and family, Cuba

*“My family and I will be eternally grateful and indebted to the people of God who from all continents sent us letters and cards expressing support and solidarity with our suffering. I am absolutely convinced that in those moments when I most needed renewed strength, it was those hundreds of prayers which reached the cell where I was imprisoned”.*  
Pastor Carlos Lamelas, former prisoner, Cuba

# BURMA



## Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

As the democratically elected leader of Burma, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has spent fourteen of the last nineteen years under house arrest. In August 2009 Aung San Suu Kyi was found guilty of breaking the terms of her house arrest and sentenced to a further eighteen months under house arrest.

**NB:** : Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is not a Christian, so please be sensitive to this in your cards.

Aung San Suu Kyi is one of the 2,100 political prisoners in Burma in need of our solidarity and support. If you wish to send messages of encouragement to other prisoners of conscience, please email [admin@csw.org.uk](mailto:admin@csw.org.uk) with your message, putting 'Message for Burmese prisoners' in the subject field. We will then pass on these messages to our contacts who will distribute them to prisoners and their families. Many of these individuals are not Christians, so please be sensitive to this when writing your messages.

You can also send e-cards to IDPs, victims of Cyclone Nargis and Bible school students through **Change for Burma!** Please visit [www.changeforburma.org](http://www.changeforburma.org) to send your cards.

## Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate  
54 University Avenue  
Rangoon (Yangon)  
Burma (Myanmar)



## Peng Ming

Peng Ming was sentenced to life in prison by Chinese officials in October 2005 on charges of engaging in terrorism activities. He has suffered beatings while in prison and has been denied medical treatment.



## Alimujiang Yimiti

Alimujiang was working as a project manager for a British company, Jirehouse, when it was targeted in a series of closures of foreign businesses belonging to Christians in Xinjiang in September 2007.

He was arrested in January 2008 on charges of "suspicion of inciting secession and organising people in stealing, spying, buying and illegally providing state secrets or intelligence to overseas organisations". Though one Chinese court has ruled that there is "insufficient evidence" to find guilt, and the UN has given the opinion that he is being detained arbitrarily because of his faith, Mr Yimiti remains in detention as he awaits a final decision from a Communist Party committee. Mr Yimiti's case was heard on 28 July 2009 and ended after three hours without a verdict.

## Peng Ming

No. 4 Prison Branch  
Hubei Provincial Han Yang Prison  
Cai Dian District, Wuhan City  
Hubei Province  
People's Republic of China

## Alimujiang Yimiti

Detention Center Kan Shou Suo  
Ka Shi, Xinjiang  
844000  
People's Republic of China

# CHINA

*Information courtesy of China Aid Association*

## Mr Hu Wenxiang, Mr Tang Houyong and Mr Xie Zhenqi

In December 2008, these three members of a Chinese house church were arrested and sentenced to one year of re-education through labour for "illegal proselytising" and attending an "illegal gathering". They were meeting in a home for worship when police arrested them.

Please note the new address for these three prisoners, who have been moved.

## Mr Hu Wenxiang, Mr Tang Houyong and Mr Xie Zhenqi

No 3 Reeducation through  
Labour centre of Henan  
Xuchang City  
Zhoukou  
Henan Province  
People's Republic of China

# COLOMBIA



Isaias Prasca



Otto Figueroa Otalova

## Pastor Isaias Prasca and Pastor Otto Figueroa Otalova

Both of these pastors and their families have received death threats from the armed groups operating in their area. They continue to carry out their ministries in areas hit hard by the violence and work with particularly vulnerable communities. Letters and cards serve both as an encouragement to them and to their congregations, reminding them that their situation is not forgotten, and also send a message to the armed groups that these men and their families are part of a worldwide body that cares very much about what happens to them. This can often mean the difference between life and death.

## Pastor Isaias Prasca

Iglesia Cristo Reg  
AIEC  
Calle 15 #16-76  
Tierralta  
Cordoba  
Colombia

## Pastor Otto Figueroa Otalova

(wife is Olga Rosa and their children are Otto, Carlos, Angela and Yazmin)  
Iglesia Alianza Cristiana  
Cra-12 No 9-45-  
Neiva  
Huila  
Colombia



**Pastor Evaristo Marin M.**

CSW met Pastor Evaristo in May 2007. Like many pastors, he has been subjected to extortion and faces grave threats if he refuses to pay.

**Pastor Evaristo Marin M.**

Centro Misionero Interamericano  
Calle 125 #48A-03  
Medellin  
Colombia



**Yuvy Andrea Oyola Garcia**

Yuvy's husband, Pastor Joel Garcia, was abducted and assassinated by FARC guerrillas in July 2007. She and her daughter Lilly, only nine months old at the time, were forced to flee their village and now live as part of the internally displaced population

in the city of Ibagué. Unemployment is extremely high, and they struggle to make ends meet.

Yuvy has moved to a safe location with her daughter, so her address is no longer publicly available.

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



**Pastor Fernando Kutino**

Evangelical church leader Fernando Kutino was arrested in May 2006 and sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment for the illegal possession of firearms, criminal conspiracy and attempted murder. The charges were introduced after the trial was

underway, and the trial itself was summary, lasting for only nine sittings despite the complexity and gravity of these charges.

Pastor Kutino's situation improved following interventions by MEPs who were prompted to take action by CSW supporters. Sadly, although his case was re-opened on 12 December 2007, he was later sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

**Pastor Fernando Kutino**

Prison Centrale de Makala  
CPRK  
Kinshasa/Selembao  
Democratic Republic of Congo

## CUBA

*Please refrain from making any political comment on Cuba.*

**Dr Jorge Luis Garcia Paneque**

Dr Paneque is a Roman Catholic doctor who was imprisoned in 2003 for his human rights and democracy work. He is serving a 24-year sentence in the Las Tunas prison. He is in bad health and has suffered beatings while in prison.

**Dr Jorge Luis Garcia Paneque**

c/o Moralinda Paneque Martinez  
Avenida Sergio Reino # 101  
Municipio Amancio  
Reperto La Carretera  
Las Tunas, Cuba



**Dr Oscar Elias Biscet**

Roman Catholic Dr Biscet is serving a 25-year sentence for his activities promoting respect for human rights.

**Dr Oscar Elias Biscet**

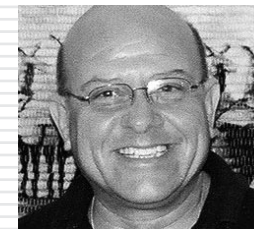
c/o Elsa Morejob Hernandez  
Acosta 464 e/ 8va y 9va  
Lawton  
Ciudad de la Habana  
Cuba

**Father José Conrado**

Father Conrado is a Roman Catholic Priest who has suffered harassment and threats for speaking out against human rights violations and allowing the families of political prisoners to attend mass at his church.

**Father José Conrado**

Iglesia Santa Teresita  
J. A. Saco 953  
Santiago de Cuba 90100  
Cuba

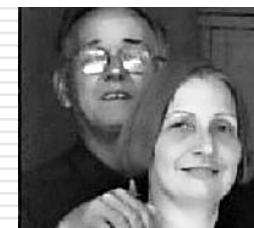


**Dagoberto Valdez**

Dagoberto Valdez is a Catholic lay leader who has been the target of threats and harassment because of his activities in independent civil society, including working on independent Christian publications.

**Dagoberto Valdez**

Polvorín #8  
e/ San Juan y Raverio  
Pinar del Rio CP 20100  
Cuba



**Rev. Roberto Rodríguez R.**

Reverend Rodriguez and his son Eric have both been the victims of harassment and have been put on trial on false charges. This is following the withdrawal of the association led by Reverend Rodriguez from the government endorsed Cuban Council of Churches in late 2008.

**Rvdo. Roberto Rodríguez Rodriguez and/or Eric G. Rodriguez**

Princesa No. 54 e/ Laborde y Gene  
Cárdenas  
42110  
Matanzas  
Cuba

**Pastor Omar Gude Pérez**

Pastor Omar Gude Perez has been in prison since May 2008. Those close to him believe that he has been targeted because of the rapid growth of the Christian Apostolic Movement, which he leads.

The following pastors have all been targets of harassment and threats and would be much encouraged by letters and cards.



**Pastor José Miroel Matos Guilarte and wife Odelkys Breijo**



**Pastor Tony Milhet Toirac and wife Gloria Pagán González**

**Pastor Mario Álvarez and Alexi Perez**

In early 2009, a group of men interrupted a service at the Apostolic Evangelical Church, hitting and kicking worshippers. Instead of pursuing those responsible, government authorities visited the church and informed Pastor Alvarez that if any similar incidents occurred, the church would be shut down. In July 2009, Alexi Perez, a church leader and Pastor Alvarez's driver was imprisoned. Those close to him say that he was being pressured to implicate Pastor Alvarez in illegal activity but refused to do so.

**Pastor Emerson Movenó Risco**

Please note that his situation has changed and cards should not be sent to him.

**La Familia Gude Pérez**

Avellande 278  
entre Esteban y San Martín  
Camaguey, CP 70100  
Cuba

**Pastor José Miroel Matos Guilarte and family**

Calle 21 #23 entre 8 y 10  
Reperto el Triangulo  
Colombia, Victoria Las Tunas  
Cuba

**Pastor Tony Milhet Toirac and Gloria Pagán González**

Eduardo Mármol #91 (oeste)  
e/ Maceo y Honorato del Castillo  
Ciego de Avila 2  
Cuba

**Pastor Mario Álvarez**

Iglesia Apostólica Evangelio  
Completo  
San José, Lajas,  
La Habana  
Cuba

**Pastora Tomaza Victoria Ayala**

Pastora Tomaza Victoria Ayala Zellero, also of the Apostolic Movement and pastor of the Apostolic Church in the Leningrado Agricultural Cooperative in Central Elia, Las Tunas province, and her family were evicted from their home on May 22, 2009. They were originally told that the house, which also served as the church, would be confiscated in July 2008, despite the fact that Ayala Zellero and her husband, Jorge Zellero Leal had lived there for almost thirty years and were the legal owners. When they were finally evicted, the authorities served them documents which prohibit Ayala Zellero from holding any religious services and the police chief threatened to imprison Zellero Leal for "dangerousness." Finally, the authorities also forcibly closed Zellero Leal's carpentry shop, leaving the family homeless and with no source of income.

**Pastora Tomaza Victoria Ayala Zellero**

Iglesia Apostolica  
Cooperativo Agrícola Leningrado  
Victoria de las Tunas  
Cuba

## ERITREA

**Helen Berhane**

Gospel singer Helen Berhane is now safe in Europe, along with her fourteen-year-old daughter Eva, following a miraculous escape to Sudan in December 2006 and several tense months of maintaining a low profile while awaiting an asylum decision. Her

health remains poor following torture, but the calibre of her faith is an incredible testimony to God's faithfulness and grace during times of adversity.

If you would like to write to Helen, please send cards and letters, which will then be sent on, to:

**CSW office**  
PO Box 99  
New Malden  
Surrey  
KT3 3YF

# INDIA

## The Christian community in Orissa

Christians in Orissa state, India have been deeply traumatised by the wave of violence that occurred last year. Some are struggling to rebuild their lives and homes; others have been unable to return to their homes because of hostility from their neighbours, fears of renewed violence and forcible conversions.

You can provide much-needed encouragement to the Christian community in Orissa by sending cards and letters to Archbishop Raphael Cheenath, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bhubaneswar-Cuttack (the state capital of Orissa) and a figurehead of the Christian community in Orissa state.



### Archbishop Raphael Cheenath, SVD

Archbishop's House  
9/16 Satyanagar, P.O.  
Bhubaneswar – 751 007  
Orissa  
India

# NIGERIA



### The Most Rev. Dr Benjamin Argak Kwashi and Mrs Gloria Kwashi

The Most Rev. Dr Benjamin Argak Kwashi, Anglican Archbishop of Jos, is a prominent and eloquent advocate for the persecuted Christians of northern and central Nigeria. His family has been subjected to two brutal attacks in recent years, but has made a full recovery. In addition to writing to the family, please pray for their safety, and for the assailants responsible for these crimes to be caught.

### The Most Rev. Dr Benjamin Argak Kwashi and Mrs Gloria Kwashi

Anglican Diocese of Jos  
PO Box 6283  
Jos  
Plateau State 930001  
Nigeria



### CSW Nigeria

Please pray for and send cards of encouragement to our newly formed partner organisation, which has already undertaken effective press, mediation, advocacy and aid initiatives despite having limited resources.

### CSW Nigeria

c/o ECWA Good News  
Niamey Crescent  
Ungmar Rimi Lowcost Housing Estate  
PO Box 8286  
Kaduna  
Nigeria

## Pastors Augustine and Ruth Aifuobhokhan

Pastor Augustine narrowly escaped death on three occasions during the 2006 Cartoon Riots. His church was destroyed by rioters and their dwindling congregation meets in the open air. They cannot afford to rebuild because the government has still not paid compensation. During the 2009 violence, the family was confined to their home for four days as fighting raged around them, and their congregation has now dwindled even more. Pray for Augustine and Ruth as they seek God's wisdom for the future.

## Pastors Augustine and Ruth Aifuobhokhan

PMB 1199  
Maiduguri  
Borno State  
Nigeria

# PAKISTAN

## Parvez Aslam Chaudhry

Parvez is the Chairman of Legal Aid for Destitute and Settlements (LADS), a small group of Christian lawyers based in Pakistan. Parvez has been the recipient of numerous physical attacks and threats on his life.

## Parvez Aslam Chaudhry

Arslan St # 6  
D/Block Youhanabad Colony  
Ferozpur Road  
Lahore  
Pakistan

## Augustine Ashiq 'Kingri' Masih

## Augustine Ashiq 'Kingri' Masih

c/o All Pakistan Minorities Alliance  
GPO Box 1868  
Lahore  
Pakistan

The following have all been arrested or convicted under section 295C of Pakistan's penal code – the notorious Blasphemy Law – which makes blasphemy of the prophet Mohammed punishable by death (this is usually commuted to life imprisonment). Over recent years, many Christians have been falsely accused under this law.

Please write to them individually at this address:

**Iftkhar Ahmad, Naseem Bibi, Nasreen Bibi, Qamar David Abdul Hameed, Mehdi Hassan, Waji-ul-Hassan, Haji Latif Aslam Masih, Hussan Masih, Shahbaz Masih, Younis Masih Hafaz Afzal Rehman, Ishan Ullaha, Zahid and Shahid** (both minors)

c/o LADS  
Arslan St # 6  
D/Block Youhanabad Colony  
Ferozpur Road  
Lahore  
Pakistan



Qamar David



Abdul Hameed



Younis Masih

# PERU



La Comunidad de Putis

## Putis

The community of Putis suffered a horrific massacre at the hands of the Peruvian military in December 1984. The massacre left 123 dead, including women, children and infants. The bodies of the victims, the majority of whom were members of the Assemblies

of God Church, were left in mass graves which the villagers had been tricked into digging by the soldiers. The graves were exhumed in 2008 and the remains are undergoing DNA analysis so that they can be returned to their loved ones for a proper burial. Unfortunately, in some cases entire families were killed so identification will be difficult. Thus far, no one has been held to account for this massacre.

## La Comunidad de Putis

c/o Paz y Esperanza  
Urb. Mariscal Cáceres Mz. L.  
Lt 30  
Ayacucho  
Peru

# UZBEKISTAN



## Dmitry Shestakov

Pentacostal prisoner of conscience Dmitry Shestakov is serving four years' imprisonment for "operating an illegal religious organization and distributing materials promoting religious extremism". Dmitry has lost a lot of weight since being in prison, and

there are reports that he has been pressured to recant his faith, demonstrating perhaps the real reason for his imprisonment. According to Forum 18 News Service, former prisoners from Camp No 29, where he is being held, describe routine beatings, unsanitary living conditions and hazardous working conditions, all of which lead to high levels of sickness among prisoners.

## Dmitry Shestakov

8th Detachment  
82nd Brigade  
Navoi's Camp No 29  
210105 Navoi-5  
UYa 64/29  
Uzbekistan

# VIETNAM

*Please refrain from making any political comment on Vietnam.*



Nguyen Van Dai

## Mr Nguyen Van Dai and Ms Le Thi Cong Nhan

Mr Dai and Ms Nhan are both prominent Christian human rights lawyers who have been imprisoned for "disseminating slanderous and libelous information against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam". They are serving sentences of five and four years respectively.

## Mrs Vu Minh Khanh

(wife of Mr Nguyen Van Dai)  
Phong 302, Nha Z8  
Bach Khao  
Hanoi  
Vietnam

## Tran Thi Le (mother of

Ms Le Thi Cong Nhan)  
Nha 316-A7 Khu Tap  
The VP Chinh Phu  
Pgo 4 Phuong Mai  
Dong Da, Hanoi  
Vietnam

## Father Nguyen Van Ly

Father Ly is a Catholic priest who was sentenced on 30 March to eight years' imprisonment for "disseminating slanderous and libelous information" harmful to the state, a sentence considered extremely harsh. Father Ly has previously spent fourteen years in prison for alleged dissident activities.

## Father Nguyen Van Ly

c/o Duc Tong Giam Muc Nguyen  
Nhu The  
Toa Tong Giam Muc Hue  
69 Phan Dinh Phung  
Hue  
Vietnam

# SEND LOVE THROUGH PRAYER

**Sadly, in some of the countries where we work, sending letters and cards could further endanger the recipients. Instead, please remember the individuals and countries listed below in your prayers, asking God to strengthen, comfort and protect them.**

**North Korea** – There is no freedom of religion in North Korea, and deviation from state doctrine is met with ruthless and devastating punishment. Around 200,000 people are believed to be held in prison camps with no hope of escape, where they face hard labour, torture, and even execution.

**China** – Christian human rights lawyer Mr Gao Zhisheng has frequently spoken in defence of those suffering religious persecution. He was abducted by Chinese security agents in August 2006 and was given a suspended prison sentence towards the end of 2006. In September 2007, he was again arrested, with his family, this time for writing an open letter addressing major human rights abuses taking place in the context of the run up to the 2008 Olympics.

On 4 February 2009, Mr Gao was taken from his home in Shaanxi province by a dozen police officers and has not been heard from since. His family, who has now safely escaped to America, remains deeply concerned for him. Please pray for Gao and his family at this time.

**Eritrea** – Around 3,000 Christians are currently detained without charge or trial in Eritrea. Among them is the Patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church, Abune Antonios, who was forced from office and placed under house arrest in January 2006 after increasingly objecting to the Eritrean Government's continual interference in Church matters. The government has illegally enthroned another patriarch and removed Abune Antonios from his official residence, detaining him in an undisclosed location.

**Somali Christians in Kenya** – In a desperate attempt to escape persecution, many Somali Christians have fled to Kenya, hoping to be free to practice their faith. Instead, they continue to suffer severe harassment, both from Somali Muslim refugees and from Kenya's own Somali population.

**Laos** – The number of Christians currently detained in Laos is fluid, but CSW has seen an increasing number of short-term detentions of Christians in recent months. Please continue to pray for those who are in prison at this time.



# not forgotten

## About Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) is a human rights non-governmental organisation that specialises in freedom of religion. Our purpose is to be a voice for justice, pursuing religious freedom for all.

If you would like to learn more about CSW and other ways that you can help the individuals for whom we work, please call **0845 456 5464** or visit our website at **[www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)**.

**T** +44 (0)845 456 5464  
**F** +44 (0)208 942 8821  
**E** [admin@csw.org.uk](mailto:admin@csw.org.uk)  
**[www.csw.org.uk](http://www.csw.org.uk)**

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**CHRISTIAN  
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VOICE FOR THE VOICELESS