

ACAT NEW YEAR GREETINGS CAMPAIGN

ACAT is *Action by Christians Against Torture* and details of its actions can be found [HERE](#).

One of the **Justice & Peace** themes is reaching out to prisoners of conscience and others unjustly imprisoned. We are inviting our parishioners to participate in a New Year Greetings Campaign based on the ACAT Christmas Greetings Campaign.

- The Campaign involves writing a simple message of hope to a prisoner, usually overseas.
- We will provide cards and specimen greetings.
- Information about the people to whom greetings can be sent is set out below.
- Address labels will be provided and we will also arrange the posting.
- The Campaign will take place after Mass on **14 and 15 January**.

If you would like to help with the signing process after Mass at your church (30 mins max) please contact the organisers at ACAT@cpg.church.

You will see below an abbreviated profile for a number of individuals currently facing prison sentences, some of whom are also at risk of being executed.

For a more detailed profile of these (and other) individuals and their circumstances you can download [HERE](#) the ACAT 2022 Christmas Greetings Campaign by clicking on the blue panel.

Thank you for your interest and compassion.

PROFILES OF INDIVIDUALS



In May 2004, **Reverend Haile Nayzgi** was arrested and taken to a police station in Asmara. He was the leader of Eritrea's Full Gospel Church, which comprises 120 to 150 house meeting groups. The church groups were closed by government decree on 15 May 2002.

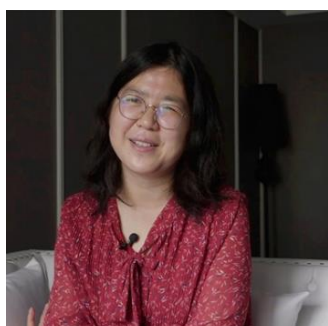
Haile is married and has three children. During his incarceration, Haile has been refused any personal contact with his family. Haile has been moved to various locations since his arrest, but the actual charges against him have not been released. He is believed to be at the location below.



Pastor Li Juncai of the Yuanyang County Central House Church in Xinxiang, Henan Province in China is serving a prison sentence of five and a half years after protesting against the government's attempts to remove the cross atop his church building in 2019. Pastor Li Juncai told the workers who came to remove the cross they should proceed according to the law and that he opposed the removal of the crosses. He was arrested and accused of disrupting public service. He was charged with embezzlement and obstructing government administration, sentenced to five and a half years in prison and given a fine of more than \$7,000 USD.



In July 2021 **Fariba Dalir** (51), was arrested in Iran along with five other Christian converts. On 4 December 2021 the courts sentenced Fariba to five years in prison for 'acting against national security by establishing and leading an Evangelical Christian church'. Fariba's sentence was later reduced to two years. On 16 April 2022 Fariba returned to Tehran's notorious Evin Prison to begin her two-year sentence. She is due to be released in April 2024.



Freelance journalist **Zhang Zhan**, a well-known activist for human rights in China, was detained in May 2020 as a reprisal for her coverage of the Covid-19 pandemic from February 2020. During July and August 2021 she was hospitalised due to her deteriorating health as a result of an ongoing hunger strike begun in June 2020. She was later transferred back to the Shanghai Women's Prison, where she is currently believed to be held. There is very grave concern about her well-being.



In 2017 sisters **Ju Dianghong** (pictured) and **Liang Qin** were sentenced to jail terms of 13 and 10 years respectively for their Christian activities. In 2016 Yunnan officials investigated the Three Grades of Servants religious sect as a dangerous cult. Over 200 Christians were arrested, with 40 still detained in 2018. Denials that they ever belonged to the cult were ignored and six— Ju Dianghong, Liang Qin, Zhang Hongyan, Zi Huimei, Yang Shunxiang, and Zhang Shaocai — were sentenced to between four and 13 years in prison.



Ashfaq Masih (34) has been in prison in Pakistan since 2017, when he was accused of blasphemy. He is still awaiting trial. A bicycle mechanic from the Christian Mariam Colony in Lahore, Ashfaq Masih was accused of blasphemy after he was involved in a dispute with a Muslim customer over payment for repairing a bicycle. Police arrested Ashfaq, who is imprisoned in the District Jail (aka Camp Jail), Lahore. On 4 July 2022 Judge Khalid Wazir sentenced Ashfaq to death for blasphemy. He plans to appeal to the High Court.



On 3 March 2021 journalist **Min Nyo** was arrested and severely beaten by police while he was covering a pro-democracy protest against the military coup in Pyay, Bago Region in Myanmar. On 12 May 2021 a military court in Pyay Prison found him guilty of attempting to 'hinder, disturb, damage the motivation, discipline, health and conduct' of soldiers and civil servants and 'cause their hatred, disobedience or disloyalty toward the military and the government' (Penal Code, Article 505-a) and sentenced him to three years in prison. He is currently detained at Pyay Prison and is appealing against the verdict. [Picture: DVB, cpj.org]

PROTESTORS IN BAHRAIN

Since the Arab Spring of 2011, when thousands demonstrated for democracy in several Arab countries, death sentences in **Bahrain** have greatly increased following convictions in sham trials based on flawed evidence and confessions obtained through torture and coercion. Bahrain was the only Gulf state to see mass protests during the Arab Spring.

The following men are believed to be held in a prison notorious for its insanitary conditions, poor health care, abusive treatment and the obstruction of family visits: **Maher Abbas al-Khabbaz, Sayed Ahmed al-Abar, Zuhair Ebrahim Jasim Abdullah, Husain Ebrahim Ali Husain Marzooq, Husain Moosa, Mohamed Ramadhan, Husain Ali Mehdi, and Salman Isa Ali Salman.**

In June 2022, 26 men were on death row, and all have exhausted their appeals. Under Bahraini law King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has the power to ratify these sentences, commute them, or grant pardons.

PLEASE PRAY FOR PRISONERS

Please remember in your prayers all the individuals mentioned above and the many other individuals imprisoned and persecuted for their fight against repression and injustice or for their religious faith.