

I WILL NOT
ABANDON
THEM!

Fundraising Guide



RELEASE INTERNATIONAL
voice | 50 YEARS
of Persecuted Christians | 1968-2018

#IWillNotAbandonThem



Dear Friend,



Six years ago, during my first week as CEO of Release, I met with a pastor from Nigeria who told me how some Islamist extremists came to his home seeking to kill him. They put a gun to his head, but before they could pull the trigger, he asked them if he could pray.

Knowing this might be his final day on earth he prayed for these men, asking God to forgive them. Suddenly they decided to leave, saying they couldn't kill a man of God.

What this pastor did was very courageous. But the thing that impressed me the most was the fact that he still lived in the same house and continued to witness faithfully for Christ, knowing that more assassins could be sent again at any time.

Over the past six years I have met many persecuted Christians like that pastor who shared with me stories of their suffering and their joy of following Christ in adverse circumstances.

Some of the believers I met were forced to flee their homes. Some had been thrown into prison. All of them had endured hardships and had even seen their loved ones killed.

The Christians we love and serve face tough challenges every day. They need our help and our prayers.

That is why I am inviting you to mark the 50th anniversary of Release's ministry by making a fresh commitment to pray, to fundraise and to take action on behalf of persecuted Christians worldwide.

Together, we can continue to help our brothers and sisters to rebuild their lives, to grow strong in their faith and to share about Jesus, even with their persecutors!

With deep gratitude,

Paul Robinson Release International CEO



HOW YOU AND YOUR CHURCH CAN GET INVOLVED

PRAY: Join our #PRAY50 campaign to pray for those who persecute Christians. Check our website (releaseinternational.org) and our Facebook page (@releaseinternational) for weekly prayers for you and your church to use.

ACT: Invite your church leaders to support the initiatives you'd like to organise. This could be some of the simple ideas on page 8, a Cross Walk, or even a local sponsored challenge.

FUNDRAISE: Encourage members of your home group and others in your church to raise funds for supporting persecuted Christians through Release.

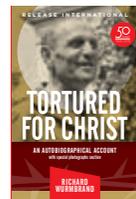
FOR HELP AND SUPPORT JOIN OUR ONLINE COMMUNITY

 [releaseinternational](https://www.facebook.com/releaseinternational)  [@ReleaseInt](https://twitter.com/ReleaseInt) [#DontAbandonThem](https://twitter.com/ReleaseInt)

WILL YOU PLEDGE TO SUPPORT PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS?

In his autobiographical *Tortured for Christ* Richard Wurmbbrand, the Romanian pastor who inspired the founding of Release, asked Christians like us not to abandon our persecuted brothers and sisters around the world.

To mark Release's 50th anniversary, we are inviting you and your church to help persecuted Christians by pledging to support one or more of Richard Wurmbbrand's pleas.



Tortured for Christ (£8.00 inc p&p) is available from our website or by calling 01689 823491.



PLEA 1



GIVE US THE TOOLS WE NEED.

Send a gift to Release to help provide food, shelter and discipleship resources to persecuted Christians, prisoners of faith and their families.

PLEA 2



CHRISTIANS CAN HELP BY PROTESTING PUBLICLY.

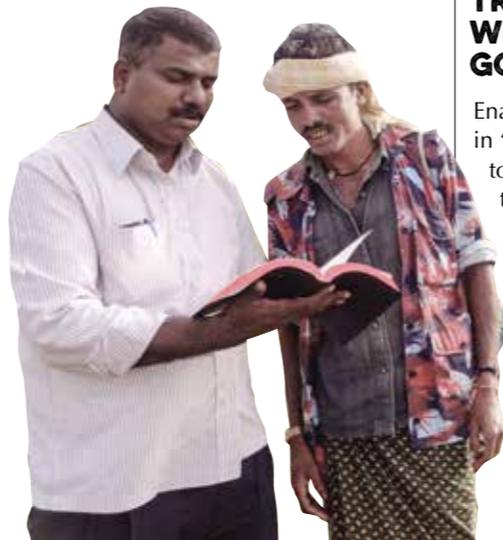
Give persecuted Christians a voice by signing our petitions, by writing to your MP and by raising awareness about their suffering through social media.

PLEA 3



PRAY THAT PERSECUTORS MAY BE SAVED.

Join our #Pray50 campaign to pray for persecutors weekly using information from our website and Facebook page.



PLEA 4



BIBLES ARE URGENTLY NEEDED.

Support our initiatives to get the Bible in various formats into the hands of those who have little access to the Scriptures.

PLEA 5



JOIN HANDS WITH MEMBERS OF THE UNDERGROUND CHURCH AND GIVE THEM THE FINANCIAL MEANS TO TRAVEL ABOUT WITH THE GOSPEL.

Enable church leaders in 'closed' countries to offer pastoral care to new believers, to families of prisoners of faith and to Christian communities.

PLEA 6



WE MUST BROADCAST THE GOSPEL.

Partner with Release through your gifts and prayers to ensure that the gospel is proclaimed in restricted and hostile places through radio, TV and social media.



PLEA 7



WHEN A CHRISTIAN GOES TO PRISON AND OFTEN TO TORTURE OR DEATH, THE SUFFERING ONLY BEGINS. THE FAMILY SUFFERS ENDLESSLY. WE CAN AND MUST HELP THEM.

Donate to Release's relief fund to support families of Christian martyrs and prisoners of faith who struggle with poverty.

PLEA 8



ASK YOUR PASTORS AND CHURCH LEADERS WHAT IS BEING DONE IN YOUR NAME TO HELP YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

Encourage your pastor to share the stories of persecuted Christians with your congregation and to support them through prayer and giving.

TEN IDEAS YOU CAN ADOPT OR ADAPT TO FUNDRAISE FOR RELEASE

- 1 Host a coffee morning** – ask the women’s fellowship or your home group to host a coffee morning. Share with them why you are fundraising for Release. You can provide the cakes and the coffee but the guests can bring along their friends and have a good time.
- 2 Let’s have afternoon tea** – people love a good cuppa, freshly baked scones and cakes so why not host an afternoon tea in your garden or the church hall. Introduce people to Release’s ministry using our 50th anniversary video and ask them to make a donation to help persecuted Christians.
- 3 Host a dinner party** – Why not organise a Sabina Supper? This is a new initiative to raise awareness and funds for persecuted Christians. Inspired by Sabina Wurmbrand, the pack can be downloaded from our website, or you can call 01689 823491 for a printed copy.



- 4 Host a screening of *Tortured for Christ*** – a moving drama documentary about the bold witness and patient endurance of the pastor whose experience in Romanian prisons still inspires Christians around the world. It is free of charge for private screenings. Call 01689 823491 to order your copy.
- 5 Monopoly, Scrabble or Snakes & Ladders, anyone?** – why not host fun games nights for your church’s youth groups, your home group or friends from work. Invite guests to donate for participating.

- 6 Hold a sale** – do you enjoy cooking, crafting, or growing plants? Then why not arrange a Saturday sale from your home or church hall, if others get involved. People can be amazingly enthusiastic about supporting charitable sales like these!
- 7 Run a quiz night** – this is another effective fundraising idea. First, arrange a quiz master and a venue. Then look online for the types of questions you want to use. Invite your friends and make sure you provide some tasty snacks. You can charge for tickets and maybe even do a raffle if you have a few items or services that you might want to auction.
- 8 Organise a sponsored walk** – ending with tea and cake at the church hall. Don’t make the walk too long! Challenge the walkers to raise £50 or more each, and if 10 take part, you’ve raised £500!

- 9 Organise a football match** – this is a great way to involve men and young people in your church. Organise and promote a football match and if you don’t get enough people playing you can always make it a game of five-a-side. Ask each player to pay a fee for playing and get the spectators to make a contribution too. Also, you might want to provide some hot drinks and snacks and charge a small amount for them to raise more cash.
- 10 Organise something more challenging** – such as a three peaks walk, a 50-mile bike ride, an abseil, a bungee-jump, or taking part in a marathon, for example. These are all things supporters have done. See the next page for some inspiring examples of how supporters have fundraised for persecuted Christians.



GET SOME INSPIRATION FROM SUPPORTERS WHO FUNDRAISED FOR RELEASE

- **Mervyn** celebrated his 50th with a barbecue in his garden. He asked for gifts not for him, but for Release. They amounted to some £350.



- **Ella** invited friends and family to celebrate her 85th birthday at her church hosting a feast enjoyed by all as well as songs and dances by performers. Ella invited people to support two charities of her choice rather than give her presents. This way Ella raised a fantastic £500 for Release.

- **Belinda** arranged a bed push in colourful and comical costumes which raised an amazing £1,700.



- **Ruth** wanted to honour the memory of her best friend Diane. She was a keen supporter of Release who sadly died of breast cancer at a young age. So Ruth invited friends to participate in the Belfast marathon, and between them, they raised over £1,100.



- **Sam** took part in the Lanzarote Ironman triathlon and raised funds for Release three times. This is a gruelling 2.4 mile swim, followed by a 112 mile bike ride, and a 26 mile marathon. For his last triathlon, Sam raised £600!

- **Catarina** ran the Edinburgh marathon and raised a fantastic £1,300.



- **Robert** arranged a 700+ mile sponsored cycle ride from Cape Wrath in Scotland to Peacehaven in Sussex. Three riders joined him for the whole distance, and dozens of others rode with him on various days. Altogether, they raised over £50,000!

GET YOUR CHURCH TO HOST A MARTYRS' DAY EVENT ON JUNE 29!

Encourage your leaders and congregation to join with other churches around the UK on 29 June as we remember Christian martyrs and their families.

We will celebrate their faithful witness, pray and raise support for their surviving families, and engage Christians to support others who faithfully follow Jesus, even when their lives are at risk.

Request your free **Martyrs' Day church's pack of information, guidelines and sample prayers** by calling us on 01689 823491 or emailing us at info@releaseinternational.org.

Tabitha's husband Musa was killed by militants because he was pastor of a church in Jos, central Nigeria.



Release speakers are available to visit your church throughout the year. Call us on 01689 823491 to arrange a visiting speaker.



God will judge us not according to how much we endured, but how much we could love.”



Richard Wurmbrand,
Tortured for Christ



Thank you so much for transforming the lives of persecuted Christians through Release International.

www.releaseinternational.org

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