

Rev. Vijayesh Lal
General Secretary

Evangelical
Fellowship of India



INTERNATIONAL DAYS OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH, 5TH & 12TH NOVEMBER 2023

*"If one member suffers, we all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together." –
1 Corinthians 12:26*

Greetings from the Evangelical Fellowship of India,

We would like to invite your participation in International Days of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP). IDOP gives us the privilege to join worldwide churches in 150 countries to pray for the persecuted church every year. An initiative of the World Evangelical Alliance, IDOPs are promoted in India by the Evangelical Fellowship of India (EFI), as days of intercession for persecuted Christians worldwide.

The statistics for Christian persecution are distressing. According to the World Watch List, 5,621 Christians were killed, over 2,100 churches were attacked, and more than 4,500 Christians were detained for their faith in 2022. These staggering numbers highlight the harsh reality that many believers endure daily – harassment, discrimination, wrongful imprisonment, and even death for their devotion to Christ. Christ as Lord. Due to increasing Christian persecution across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Latin America, and beyond, more than 360 million Christians currently reside in regions where they encounter significant levels of persecution. Across India, over the years, Christians have suffered deaths, livelihood losses, property damage, and many have been falsely accused, resulting in their languishing in prison due to rising intolerance towards missionaries, pastors, priests, and the Christian community at large. In the first 10 months of 2023, the Religious Liberty Commission, an initiative of EFI, has documented close to 600 incidents of violence and hate crimes against the Church in India.

Yet, as we come together in prayer for our persecuted fellow Christians, we discover hope and strength within the Scriptures. In his letter to the 2 Corinthians, Paul says, "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." IDOP serves as an occasion set apart for us to remember thousands of our Christian brothers and sisters around the world who suffer persecution, simply because they confess Jesus. This translates to approximately one in seven Christians worldwide. IDOP enables us to bring global attention to the plight of our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ. The primary focus is the work of intercessory prayer and citizen action on behalf of persecuted Christian communities. Also, let us pray for the souls of the oppressors and the nations that promote persecution and those who condone it.

EFI appeals that special IDOP services to raise prayer for the persecuted Church may be organized by all EFI Member Churches, organizations and individuals on 5th & 12th November 2023, all over India.

Charter Member of World Evangelical Alliance

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The following resources for IDOP are available and can be accessed at our website (www.efionline.org) and on our Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/EFoIndia>

- Posters and Pamphlets: designed specially to create awareness in the local church to mobilize and organize prayers.
- Monthly Prayer Calendars to help Christians pray better for the persecuted Church in India and the World. You can sign up for the monthly prayer calendars by writing to efirc.india@gmail.com

We hope and pray that you will support and organize this important event in your Churches, house groups, and organizations and pledge your encouragement and support for the persecuted church through intercession and prayer.

If you wish to have an EFI representative present during your observance of IDOP, do contact us at mail@efionline.org. Taking part in this important day of prayer and intercession would be our privilege.

It would be great to hear from you how you observed the IDOP in your Church, local group or organization and how were you blessed through it. Please feel free to send us reports and photos at mail@efionline.org.

If you desire and are led by God to strengthen the hands of EFI in providing aid and advocacy to and on behalf of the victims of persecution in India, please do consider partnering with us financially. You may contact us at efirc.india@gmail.com

Warm Regards,

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