

# Prayer Bulletin September 2022



"I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)

Dear Prayer Partners,

Jesus, the risen Lord, has ordered his disciples to a mountain in the north of Israel. There he is suddenly visible among them again. Nevertheless, some doubt. But Jesus tells them: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. Baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And be assured, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." This is true to this day. Jesus is always with us as we fulfill His Great Commission!

## Our current concerns:

**The Levantine:** this war-torn geographical area needs our sincere prayer! Yassir has visited the area a few times since the travel restrictions due to corona COVID-19 were lifted. One of the CM Council members is a Kurdish MBB and lives in northern Iraq, where he leads a network of CM communities. We are grateful, that in this area we are enjoying a time of relative peace and prosperity, which cannot be said for other areas of the Levantine. The Turkish aggression across the border is of course threatening and condemnable. But at least the population can for the most part get on with their lives and provide for themselves. The situation in Syria and Lebanon is quite different.

The stalemate in Syria with the relocation and resettlement of parts of the population is a tragedy and personal catastrophe for many. Millions have fled the country, including the majority of the Christian population. But even in these extremely difficult circumstances, the MBB population is growing, in several cases filling the churches left empty by the historical Christian population which has left their homeland for good. MBBs are having a rough time here. Just making ends meet is a huge challenge for all of the war-ravaged area, but converts are typically at the bottom of the heap. They very rarely receive any aid through the government or charities if they register as Christians. In most cases they do not even dare to register for fear of persecution. There is persecution of converts from Islam to Christianity throughout the Levantine. One brother was murdered just hours after Yassir had telephone contact with him to arrange a meeting later in the day. His family and the group of MBBs that the deceased brother pastored are under great pressure by the community not to press charges or initiate an investigation into the cause of death.

It is unfathomable to Yassir how people manage to live under the catastrophic conditions of hyperinflation, shortage of all necessities, defunct infrastructure etc. etc. in Lebanon... And still the vibrant MBB community is growing! Praise the Lord for the wonders he is working in the midst of this bankrupt and corrupt State:

## Lebanon: Perfect Storm of Collapse

The 17 October 2019 uprising in Lebanon signaled the start of the expected "perfect storm" that has continued to engulf the country till the present time. Starting with the default of the central bank to cover its national debt payments, thus triggering the crisis in an atmosphere where already 25% of the population is composed mostly of Syrian refugees.

With Covid, the August 4, 2020, explosion at Beirut harbor, political instability, and corruption, all contributed to transforming Lebanon from a relatively affluent country, to one on the lower scale of poor nations. Prior to the uprising the Lebanese Lira was trading at 1,500 Lira's to the dollar. Today it is trading at almost 30,000 Lira's to the dollar., i.e., at 5% of its earlier value.

And the country continues to suffer from this perfect storm—a country that has always been a shining light in the region because of her open society and relative religious liberty. Thanks to the latter, CM has been involved in the nurturing of MBB churches and home groups, with many having been baptised by CM ministers. These MBBs are sharing in the suffering of most Lebanese, and in many cases, they are suffering even more, as their faith has created barriers to receiving international help. Furthermore, we have seen instances of persecution, and even killing of MBBs because of their faith.

Pray that the MBB community in Lebanon would continue to grow and to remain steadfast against persecution and oppression. Pray also that the local Lebanese church would continue to provide support in many ways.

**Germany – Registration of CM:** CM headquarters has been functioning through major cooperation with other supportive institutions. The work has reached a point where we need to be registered as a legal entity. The Executive Board has commissioned the registration process. Pray that we would take all the hurdles and not meet up with any red tape. CM has a huge network of vital contacts in 79 countries (at last count). It is a daunting task to organize a suitable database and populate it with all the necessary information. Pray that our Chief of Operations would experience God's guidance as he up the contact database (CRM).

**MBB ministries in Europe:** we are thrilled to see MBB ministries thriving among the migrant population of Europe! In thoroughly secularized areas of eastern Germany for example, MBB congregations are among the largest in existence and I having an impact even on the post GDR secularized and atheist German population. Pray that these brothers and sisters would continue to be an effective witness to our Lord Jesus in their new habitat!

**Mauritania: Christian leader released from horrible jail** We reported in May that two leaders of the young movement in Mauritania had been arrested and charged. Now one of them has been released. It is not yet clear when or whether the case will be brought to court. Please continue in prayer for him and his family! The Mauritanian government has become even more repressive in recent years. In 2018, the penal code established the death penalty for changing one's religion and for blasphemy. Pray with us that these laws will not be applied to our brothers and sisters!

**Egypt: Jesus rewards MBB girl's courage** Amina (name changed for security reasons) sat in the classroom of her final school year listening to the diatribe of her teacher. He was describing in vivid colors what he thought of the Christians, who are almost 10% of the population in Egypt. He ranted and raved about how bad the Christians are and why Muslims need to hate them and persecute them. Amina raised her hand to speak. She said she knew for a fact that not all Christians were bad people. The teacher, taken aback, demanded to know how she could know that. She answered: "Because my father is Christian and he is a very good person!" as the classmates gasped, the teacher asked what her father's name was. "Mohammad", she answered. The teacher stormed out of the classroom and came back with the principal. She was dragged out of the classroom and handed over to the police who kept her in jail in miserable conditions for four days. After her release, she was told that she could no longer attend classes. Her final exams were six months away, and she needed to study effectively for them. What to do with no access to the school, the library, the teachers? Her only resort was to study on her own. When she sat for the exam a half a year later, she passed with flying colors, surpassing all of her classmates. After being baptized with her whole family she shared that it was only through the help of Jesus, that she was able to pass her exams! Jesus rewards those who are courageous and confess Him before the world!

Thank you for supporting us in prayer.  
Shalom - Peace be with you -  
Yassir Eric and co-workers

