



# Action by Christians

*All that is required for the  
triumph of evil is that  
good men do nothing"*

Edmund Burke

# Against torture

February/March 2013

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## Chairman's Letter

Dear Members

Last Sunday (27<sup>th</sup> January) was Holocaust Sunday when all those who have died or suffered in many other ways as a result of holocausts whether during WW2 or more recently in Bosnia, Rwanda and many other countries are remembered.

I heard on the local radio of one survivor of the Nazi Holocaust, he was imprisoned as a 10 year old and saw his whole family decimated, gassed and worked to death in Auschwitz Birkenau. He talked movingly of how as a child he was stripped, shaved, showered, tattooed and dressed in striped pajamas and then herded into a train container with hundreds of other, the door was locked and barred and there were guards with dogs outside. He talked of how freighted he was.

When he arrived at Auschwitz he was again herded into a hut with hundreds of others, crammed in for living and sleeping. How without warning they were made to gather in the main square counted time and time again and all the time guards and dogs stood by watching. Just in case...

Food was a cup of thin coffee or similar with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a loaf for the day whether it was morning or evening he cannot remember. He said how he can no longer recall the timings of events just that these things happened. He was lucky he survived whereas so many of his compatriots did not.

When I was a student I went to Poland for a short holiday and visited Auschwitz Birkenau. I was moved to tears by the desolation there, no grass, no birds, silence. No bird sings at Auschwitz I was told. I saw the corridors of cases the size of rooms holding suitcases, hair, clothes, disability aids which had been taken from the captives. How they must have been feeling I just could not imagine. Then onto the huts, huge barracks housing hundreds. I could not bring myself to go into the gas chambers that were so so upsetting.

I returned to my hotel sure in my heart that something like this ever again. When I returned to the UK the news was all about Bosnia and how camps of starving, beaten humiliated men had been found. They again spoke of the events that took place. I felt so so desperate that we as humans had not learnt from the holocaust. I was still happening.

I then made a promise to myself and to God that I would do everything I could to end torture and ill treatment of people wherever and whoever they were. I found a brochure about a meeting in Bristol of ACT as it was then and went to the meeting. The rest is history.

Torture is not something which happened in the past, it is happening right now, as I write this letter and as you read it. Please please encourage as many as possible to join us, to write letters and appeals on behalf of those who cannot do this for themselves. Most importantly of all pray for those suffering in the world today.

As Christians we all know the power of prayer in the world today. It may not be obvious to us, but somewhere, someone is supported and held up as a result.

What happened to David, the 10 year old in Auschwitz? He lost his entire family through Krystal Nacht and imprisonment and gassing. He survived; he came to England after the war, coming with other refugees. He eventually came to Bath, married and raised a family. Even as an old man he travels round the area giving talks of his imprisonment at that time. Not as a history lesson, more as bring people's awareness to the fact that it happened and similar is happening. He works to try and ensure that nothing of this nature ever reoccurs.

Sadly we have a very long way to go but we, as ACAT members can do our part to help.

With every good wish for the work ahead

Margaret Russell

John 8:31-32 *So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

## **APPEALS**

*(only available to members)*

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### **TO REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS**

**ZHU CHENGZHI, CHINA**, human rights defender, arrested June 2012, because he refused to halt an investigation into the suspicious death of labour activist, Li Wangyang; he is held incommunicado on 6 months "residential surveillance.

**MONTHA CHUKAEW and PRANEE BOONRAT, THAILAND**, women members of the Southern Peasant's Federation of Thailand, killed in November in long running dispute involving community farmers and a powerful palm oil company - the community of Khlong Sai Pattana has suffered constant violence, attacks, harassment, murders together with legal challenges - pray for the safety of other activists in this community and the families of the 2 murdered women.

**UMARALI KUVVATOV, TAJIKISTAN**, businessman and founder member of Group - 24, opposition group which criticises the President; he was arrested in the United Arab Emirates while travelling from Moscow to Brussels following an extradition demand from Tajikistan.

**ALEXEY KOCLOV, RUSSIAN FEDERATION**, environmentalist and head of the Foundation for Ecological and Social Justice from Voronezh; he has received death threats.

**HILAL MAMMADOV, AZERBAIJAN**, (2nd appeal) editor and minority rights defender, arrested June 2012; he was severely tortured and ill-treated and has been charged with treason, large scale manufacture etc of drugs, and other charges; his official complaint about his torture has been rejected by the District court and the Baku Appeals Court. There is a real fear that his life may be in danger.

**PASTOR YOUCEF NADAKHANI AND MOHAMMAD ALI DADKHAH, IRAN** - Pastor Nadakhani was returned to prison on Christmas Day to complete the remaining 45 days of his sentence. Mohammad Ali Dadkhah, a human rights lawyer, represented Pastor Nadakhani and is serving a 9 year sentence; he is in need of urgent medical treatment and was moved to hospital for a 5 day stay in December.

# *PRAYER*

**Lord Jesus You endured ill-treatment, torture, and a violent death although you had done no wrong,**

**Be with those who suffer at the hands of the torturers,**

**With all who are held in incommunicado detention;**

**those who feel they are forgotten,**

**those who are in despair and have no hope of freedom**

**Grant that in the midst of their suffering,**

**They may know that they are not alone.**

**Give them renewed strength and hope and an end to their suffering**

**Lord, we remember before you the families of the tortured;  
you know the depths of their fear and distress.**

**Grant that when we bring before you the suffering of the tortured we do not forget their loved ones.**

**Give us the courage to walk with them**

**along their Calvary Road. Amen**



# SPOTLIGHT ON BANGLADESH

There have recently been appeals for Bangladesh

## THE COUNTRY AND ITS PROBLEMS

The People's Republic of Bangladesh (the country of Bengal), faces the Bay of Bengal to the south, India to the north, west and east, with Burma on the southeast. It is separated from Nepal and Bhutan by the narrow Indian Siliguri corridor; it is also close to China. The present-day borders were established at the partition of Bengal in 1947, when the region became East Pakistan. It was separated from West Pakistan by almost 900 miles of Indian Territory. East Pakistan suffered from discrimination and economic neglect from the Government of Pakistan, which was dominated by the military and upper classes, based in the western part of the country. In addition the central Government made a poor response to a massive cyclone which devastated the coast of East Pakistan, killing up to half a million people. There were demands for independence and in 1971 there was an assault on East Pakistan by Pakistan troops, which led to a massive guerrilla war which lasted for 9 months, until a ceasefire was negotiated by the Indian Army and Bangladeshi forces.

Bangladesh is in the low lying Ganges Delta, formed by the meeting of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers and their tributaries. This has resulted in some of the most fertile land in the world. However natural calamities occur almost every year - flooding on a massive scale, tropical cyclones, tornadoes, tidal bores, which leave hundreds of thousands dead. These add to problems resulting from deforestation, soil degradation and erosion. Bangladesh is seen as one of the country's most vulnerable to climate change. In the recent past there have been severe famines.

The population is estimated at between 158 and 170 million, making it the 8th most populous country in the world. It is also the most densely populated. A very successful birth control programme was started in the 70's, slowing down the rate of increase. It is still classed as a developing country. Most Bangladeshis continue to live in rural villages, practising subsistence farming with little access to reasonable

health care. There is serious malnutrition - Bangladesh is ranked first in the world for the number of children suffering from malnutrition. 60% of children under 6 years old are stunted. On the other hand, life expectancy has been increased by 23 years, and girls are encouraged to go to school.

98% of the population is Bengali with the remainder Biharis and some indigenous tribal groups. There is also a small population of Rohingya refugees from Burma. Most of the 45 tribal groups live in the Chittagong Hill Tracts in the south east of the country; they have been a source of unrest since before the formation of Bangladesh. The Government has done little to prevent violence and discrimination or the protection of their rights.

The Government finally made Islam the state religion in 2011; the majority are Sunni but many practice Sufism. A significant percentage of the population are Hindus, with small numbers of Buddhists and Christians.

## **SIGNS OF PROGRESS**

Bangladesh has seen a decrease in its dependency on foreign grants and loans over recent years; although it is still classed as a developing nation, there has been a dramatic increase in foreign investment and also the development of microcredit, through the Grameen Bank, pioneered by Muhammad Yunus, who won the Nobel Peace in 2006. He has since been removed from his position and other directors have been threatened. Major infrastructure programmes are in progress, including the construction of the largest deep sea port in South Asia.

## **VERY BRIEF POLITICAL HISTORY**

Bangladesh has had a troubled political history since independence, with assassinations, coups, martial law, revolts by all major political parties and the public. Bangladesh reverted to parliamentary democracy in 1991 when the Bangladesh Nationalist Party won the election. The Awami League now rules the country with Sheikh Hasina as Prime Minister.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES**

The Awami League has not used its 2011 Parliamentary mandate to protect human rights. The security forces, in particular the Rapid Action Battalion, continue to make arbitrary arrests, carry out abductions, torture and extrajudicial killings. Such killings are disguised as cross -fire killings. This practice is now being used by other law enforcement institutions particularly the police. The Prime Minister states that the Government has a zero tolerance policy with regard to extrajudicial killings but such killings are still not properly investigated and no perpetrators are brought to justice. The Home Minister has refused to acknowledge the need for accountability. According to the human rights organisation, Odhikar, at least 1,600 people have been the victims of such executions since 2004. Before the Awami League came to power, its leaders had accused the RAB of widespread extrajudicial killings; they now claim that all deaths occur during armed exchanges with criminals.

The military and police employ torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment on suspects, in violation of both international and national laws. At least 12 people died in police custody in 2011 from the effects of torture. No members of the RAB, police, or other security personnel have been brought to justice for human rights abuses.

Bangladesh retains the death penalty. More than 49 people were sentenced to death in 2011 and at least 5 were executed.

### **MILITARY TRIBUNALS and THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL**

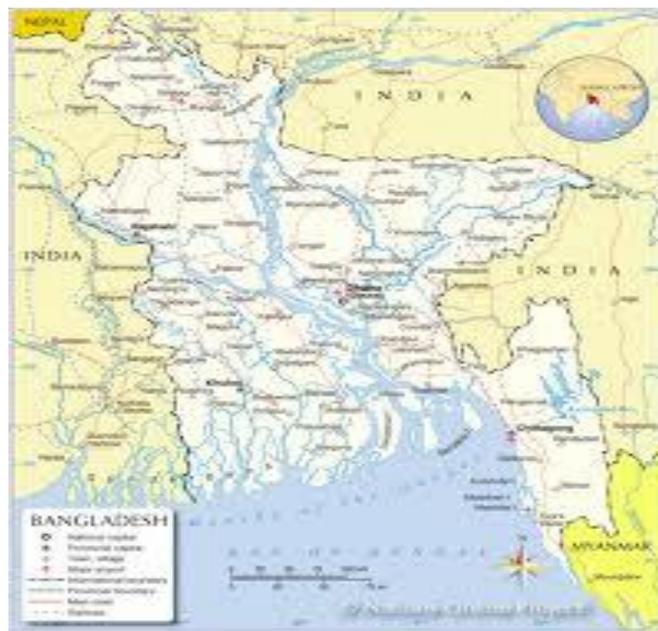
Military tribunals continue to be held against members of the Bangladesh Rifles, who took part in the 2009 mutiny. Military courts convicted nearly 1,000 soldiers in mass trials, which were totally unfair. The prosecution did not produce individualised evidence against each soldier. In one trial 657 were found guilty and sentenced to between 4 months and 7 years imprisonment. Several thousand are still awaiting trial in military courts, while 847 have been charged under the Bangladesh Criminal code. Some of these could face the death penalty. There have been many allegations of torture, which have not been investigated and a high proportion have had no legal representation. It is thought that as many as 70 suspects died during investigations following the mutiny.

The International Crimes Tribunal was set up in 2010 to try those accused of large scale abuses during the War of Independence in 1971. It has still not begun to hear cases. The Rules of Procedure needed amending to ensure that trials meet international standards of fair trial.

## HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS

In 2011 the Government tightened controls over NGO's and other civil society organisations by prosecuting union leaders etc. It increased the surveillance of the human rights organisation Odhikar in particular, threatened and harassed staff. It also continues with legal action aimed at intimidating the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity and brought criminal charges against two union leaders.

Sources: Wikipedia, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty Annual Report Eleanor Newland



## NEWS ON CASES AND REPLIES

### HILAL MAMMADOV, AZERBAIJAN (further appeal in this Newsletter)

A number of replies have been received, from the Chief of Investigation Department for Grave Crimes, with a translation attached; these stated that Hilal Mammadvov had been properly charged on a number of counts, including treason.

## **MOHAMMMAD NAZRUL ISLAM, BANGLADESH (Dec/Jan Newsletter)**

Replies have been received from the High Commission regarding the abduction and disappearance of Mohammad Nazrul Islam. These have been passed on to the appropriate authorities. Rev Richard Dent, former Chairman, phoned the High Commission and talked with the 2nd Secretary at some length - he asked about ACAT and considered that members could include the name of ACAT when writing appeals. The direct appeal by phone to the 2nd secretary was a very worthwhile thing to do - thank you, Richard!

## **NAZMA, JORDAN/BANGLADESH**

NAZMA, a migrant worker in Jordan from Bangladesh; she disappeared and it was feared she had been raped and then murdered; a number of replies have been sent to members from the Jordanian Embassy, stating she had returned to her family. We should be wary of accepting the letter at face value. There is no indication that she has returned to her family.

For members who received replies from the Embassy - if you wish to reply - thank the Embassy for its information but state that according to information received, there is no indication that she returned safely to Bangladesh. You are still concerned about her safety in view of other reports about the sexual harassment, rape and the disappearance of migrant women workers at some work places in Jordan. Ask for a full investigation into all the allegations of abuse with special reference to Nazma. Also state that in some cases the names of abusers are known to the authorities.

## **PASTOR FERNANDO KUTINO, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO**

(The following article from Audrey Wells should have appeared in the Newsletter for Jan/Dec but was missed)

Pastor Fernando Kutino, an evangelical pastor in the Democratic Republic of Congo, was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment in 2006 for alleged attempted murder, criminal conspiracy and possession of firearms. His real crime seems to have been that he broadcast

criticisms of President Kabila. Because of international pressure in 2007, his sentence was reduced to 20 years.

In October I decided to go to the DRC's Embassy in London to see if I could raise the matter of his treatment. I was given an appointment with the First Counsellor, a woman named Marie. I explained to her that I was a member of ACAT and also a lecturer. She was very pleasant and told me she was a born again Christian. Then I gave her a present: the BBC book of the Nation's Favourite Poems. (At £7.99, I thought it would be worth it if it helped secure the Pastor's release!) As I had hoped she was delighted with it. As rapport was then established I told her I did not think that Pastor Kutino had had a fair trial and gave my reasons. I added, hopefully tactfully, that this was no reflection on the Congo's system of justice since in Britain people also are wrongly imprisoned after unfair trials. I then said that I thought Kutino needed a better lawyer. To my surprise Marie agreed with me and said she thought that his case should be reviewed. She told me that the Ambassador was away which was why I had not seen him, but when he returned she would talk to him about the matter.

I also emailed my concerns to the Foreign Office website. Last week I had the reply that the British Embassy at Kinshasa was going to raise the matter of Pastor Kutino's treatment with the relevant authorities again. So I am hoping and praying for his speedy release - or at least an improvement in his prison conditions.

Audrey Wells

A number of members will remember Pastor Kutino - his name and address has been included for several years on the Christmas Greetings List. Thank you, Audrey, for all you have done on Pastor Kutino's behalf. This was tremendous and well worth doing!

### **REZA SHAHABI (ZAKARIA) IRAN - NEWSLETTER JUN/JULY 2012)**

Reza Shahabi, Treasurer of the Union of Workers of the Tehran and Suburbs Bus Company, has been held in Evin Prison since June 2010 following his sentence of 6 years for his trade union activities. He has suffered severe beatings and ill-treatment. His health has been very

poor - he had an operation in May last year on his neck and spine and should have had 3 months convalescence; he has been in urgent need of further treatment for some time but this was refused. He was finally taken to a hospital for tests on 15 December but the guard with him refused permission for the tests to be made. Reza Shahabi immediately stopped taking his medication and went on hunger strike two days later. He was released for a hospital stay of 5 days on January 9th. At the moment there is no further news.

## **SOME GOOD NEWS!**

### **MOHAMMAD ALI DADKHAD, IRAN**

Mohammad Ali Dadkhad, lawyer for Pastor Youcef Nadakhani and co-founder of the Centre for Human Rights Defenders, was released from Evin Prison on 16 January and appeared on Iranian TV. This information was received just as an appeal for him was being compiled! He is a prominent human rights defender, sentenced to 9 years imprisonment; his licence to practice law was also revoked for 10 years. He was pressurized to confess on TV that the Centre had received financial support from abroad and was promised release if he did so. He refused. There was an international outcry against his sentence. There have been very serious concerns about his health. On a recent visit he did not recognise his daughter and he appeared very confused. There will no doubt be further developments in this case. It seems as if international pressure has influenced the authorities in this case to enable him to receive medical care.

### **NASRIN SOTOUDEH, IRAN**

Nasrin Sotoudeh, human rights lawyer, arrested 2010, is serving a sentence of 6 years reduced on appeal from 11 years. She has suffered severe ill-treatment in Evin Prison and has gone on hunger strike a number of times, the latest for 40 days. She was given a 3 day release on January 17th, which it is hoped will be extended. This will enable her to have medical checks.

## **CHRISTMAS GREETINGS CAMPAIGN**

The Christmas Campaign was well received this year with a larger number of requests by email and post for the List. This was very pleasing! Thanks to all who took part or arranged for events to be held at their churches or in churches in their neighbourhood. Thanks also to the many J & P Groups, to Pax Christi and other diocesan organisations who supported ACAT's campaign.

There are reports that a small number of cards have been returned in connection with Lawyers for Human Rights, Pakistan and Alafia Siddiqui, USA. Obtaining addresses for prisoners etc is often very difficult - some addresses are almost impossible to copy correctly, sometimes prisoners have been moved, prison officials can refuse to hand over letters and cards to prisoners in their care.

In spite of all the problems and disappointment when cards are returned, the Campaign is still worth doing and brings such comfort to prisoners, human rights defenders etc.

This is what Dr Peneque, Cuba, a Roman Catholic journalist and prisoner of conscience, said about receiving cards and letters: "I know that I'll never meet you.... I'll never read your cards again but know that you are in my heart. A prisoner who receives those letters, those messages, grows, strengthens and has faith you cannot imagine the worth of a letter. You cannot imagine the worth of some words of encouragement."

Information given by Christians Solidarity Worldwide who reported in the summer of 2012 that Dr Paneque wanted all Christians to know that they should never doubt the value of sending cards to a prisoner or someone facing hardship because of their faith.

## **INFORMATION FROM CHURCHES, ACAT GROUPS ETC.**

Jan Lepper reported that St Teresa's Church, Ashford had held a "sign in" and more than 60 cards were signed with some people also taking home addresses and details of prisoners to who they would write with strict instructions regarding what to write etc.

From a supporter of ACAT:-

You thanked me for taking part; but I feel it is a privilege as well as a duty to share in this project. I have already sent off ten cards. I print my own on office-type paper - A4 folded twice. For the face of these cards I photocopy pictures from cards I have received, and then type a message on the other pages

From the Galashiels Group

The ACAT Group at St Peter's Episcopal Church decided to do things differently this time. Instead of printing several copies of the lists, cutting them up into slips for folk to take home and hopefully, remember to send some cards, we provided the cards at church. One of our members produced two designs of non-religious cards with appropriate wording and we asked members of the congregation to choose a group or prisoner, with the name in the card and sign it. This was very successful as we managed to send at least two cards to each group or prisoner. Members of the congregation also gave generous donations to cover the cost of postage and producing the cards. The cards had a note printed on the back stating that they came from the ACAT Group in Galashiels. We shall be repeating the exercise this year as it also gets people talking about the appalling things that are happening in the world. Sheena Cossar

From the Rev Mr P Duffy

Our 2 - SUP Conferences sent some 90 cards through our primary school in Bewdley and the 5th and 6th year pupils wrote and sent them on to the prisoners.

From the Rev Duncan Ferguson, as in other years, we handed out 100 slips at Mass - a smaller number than usual because of the flooding; slips were also handed out the following week.

Ann Howarth, as usual , arranged for the sending of cards at St John the Worker, Hutton, Brentwood Essex - 135 were sent and a considerable donation sent on to ACAT.

From Jennifer Ruxton

Oxted Churches Together had a successful Christmas Card Campaign. I think we sent about 300. I had a table after our Advent Carol Service and the URC lent us their Church for a tea and card signing event.

From Margaret Russell

Horfield Parish Church and The Church of the Nazarene held 3 card signing events after the morning services. About 100 cards were sent in all. The name of ACAT was spread around and next year I hope to go to the Asian Christian Church which worships at the Church of the Nazarene on Sunday afternoons.

## **INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE TORTURED**

The ACAT Committee has once again agreed to take part in the International Day of Prayer for the Tortured - this marks United Nations Day of Support for Victims of Torture. This will take place on the night of 29th June or at other suitable times near this date, for groups and churches unable to hold an event on the 29th. The ACAT Committee hopes that all individual members and groups will either take part or encourage their churches to take part in this important event. Last year we were disappointed by the response - do let us all determine that even if we are unable to organise an event or ask for an event to be held, we will hold the tortured and their families in prayer for a few minutes. Simple prayers as well as suggested services will be available free of charge from the beginning of May.

**Eleanor Newland**

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## SOS TORTURE



This will reach you as our thoughts turn from the celebration of the birth of Christ among us as a refugee and a homeless person, then in his ministry as a tireless worker for the disadvantaged- finally as himself a torture victim who by his death won for us the Holy Spirit who empowers us to continue his work. That death will soon occupy our thoughts and prayers through to Easter.

ACAT members have a small but significant part to play in Christian ministry by speaking up for the silenced and voiceless - among them SOS writers who always welcome new participants - details from me or from the Office.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter.

Anselm, Coordinator

### ADVANCE WARNING - DIARY DATE

The 2013

AGM and CONFERENCE

This will be on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October at  
Broadmead Baptist Church

Bristol

Please keep this date free and make every effort to attend. We are in the process of booking speakers and it is always nice to have as many members as possible coming.



## CHANGES

Those receiving their mailing by post will notice immediately the smaller size.

The A4 size is somewhat difficult on occasion to insert into envelopes. It takes a lot of sitting on them or even standing on the envelopes to ensure the mailing can go by second class ordinary delivery. The cost of printing will reduce and we can definitely get the mailing into the envelope with no difficulty

The committee felt that an A5 size mailing may be viable hence the smaller size this time. We would welcome feedback. Could you send this to Margaret Russell c/o ACAT office (*address on page 21*).

Those receiving the mailing by e mail will only see that the font size is larger which should not make too much of a difference. The only difference you will have is the file is saved as RTF (Rich text format) which should enable all to open the file with no difficulties.

## Questionnaire

We are delighted by the response we have had from issuing a questionnaire on the future of ACAT. Richard Dent will be collating the answers in the next month or so. We have had some very interesting and thought provoking replies which the Committee will be discussing over the months. Details of the survey results will be published as soon as practical.

If you have not sent your completed survey there is still time to do so.

Margaret Russell

## Christian Resource Exhibition

This year the event was held at the University of the West of England, Bristol. As last year we occupied a stand to publicise the work we do.

We were a little concerned this year due to the weather conditions we all experienced. Could we get to the venue to set the stand up? Could people get there to help? More importantly would people actually attend?

Well, God was really on our side. Tuesday afternoon I managed to get off my driveway (with difficulty!) and take the materials to the event. With Steve Goddard's help a stand was set up and prepared for the following two days.

The Wednesday the weather was not too good, but we were delighted by the attention the stand drew. People stood and talked with us, literature was taken and we all felt it was a profitable day.

The Thursday was amazing. The venue was teeming with visitors many of whom stopped and were very interested by what we had to say. We gave out lots of literature to people and others signed a request form to obtain information. ALSO Radio 4 appeared and is considering an interview with one of our committee. We await further details.

The exhibition is not just about getting more members; it is a way we can get our name known to the churches. It was interesting to note that some groups which are not mainstream denominations were interested. We will follow these up. Also, the event is about networking, finding new ways of publicizing ourselves and seeing how groups can work together.

My thanks and appreciation go to Steve Goddard who attended all 3 days, Richard Dent, Keith Taplin, David Loveridge, John and Phillada Ware for helping so much to make the event so profitable. Also to members of my own church who stepped in to allow us to take short breaks during the day.

Will we attend a similar event? Watch this space! Margaret Russell

## ***"Freedom from Torture: Write to Life,***

*Tues 5 March, 4.30-5.30pm,*

*Guildhall: Stories and Poems from Amazing Lives.*

*Writers/performers from Freedom from Torture's renowned creative writing programme will make you laugh, cry, and see the world in a new way ever afterwards. Free entry, but please register in advance for tickets through Bath Box Office":*

[https://uk.patronbase.com/\\_BathFestivals/Productions/D9/Performances](https://uk.patronbase.com/_BathFestivals/Productions/D9/Performances)

In Bristol in April or May there will be a public event (with someone from Freedom from Torture's headquarters as speaker) to launch the Bristol-Bath branch of FfT in Bristol

## **Advance notice of available literature for Holy Week**

The time when we celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord is fast approaching. Our faith is built around the torture to death of an innocent man. We acknowledge this each time we worship and it is this foundation to our faith, which should be applied as members of ACAT. Please remember at this season of Lent/ Holy Week and Easter that there are so many people in the world who are suffering through torture or the death penalty. Either personally experiencing it, or are the perpetrators or are the families and friends.

Please try to put a time aside to remember this. Often it is possible to hold a short service during this season either in your own homes or involve your local church.

We have an order of service for use during Holy Week/ Good Friday - "The Way of the Cross".

Copies can be sent FOC from the office

# Prayer and meditation for Lent

## Prayer

*Lord, sometimes when we doubt that our efforts make any difference to the suffering of the tortured and imprisoned grant that we may perceive in our hearts and minds the image of your resurrection which remains our only source of courage and strength so that we may continue to face the challenge and struggle involved in the battle against the evil that is torture*

Adapted from a prayer from a slum community, Philippines,  
"Prayers Encircling the World"

Our Father, we pray for those whose freedom has been taken from them: for all who suffer imprisonment, whether for crime or for conscience sake:

For all whose vision of your world is seen through bars and in whose heart the lamp of hope burns low

For all who are tortured or fear they will be tortured, God of mercy, give them help according to their need. And hear our prayer for Jesus Christ's sake.

From 'Let my People go' Michael Evans

## A Prisoners Prayer

O Lord  
Remember not only the men and women of good will  
But also those of evil will.  
But do not remember all the suffering  
They have inflicted on us.  
Remember the fruits we have borne  
Thanks to this suffering -  
Our comradeship, our loyalty, our humility,  
Our courage, our generosity,  
The greatness of heart  
Which has grown out of all this;  
And when they come to the judgement,  
Let all the fruits that we have borne  
Be their forgiveness.

*This prayer was found scribbled on a piece of paper near the body of a dead child at Ravensbruck concentration camp*

From 'Let my people go' Michael Evans

Spirit of God, strengthen my faith,  
help me to hate the evil,  
to do all I can to stop torture and cruel treatment in your world.

But help me also to be concerned for and to love people who do these things

In Your Name and for Your sake.

AMEN

# *A final Thought*

*If many little people  
In many little places  
Do many little deeds  
They can change the face  
of the Earth*

**African Proverb**

We hope you find this mailing stimulating and thought provoking

Articles for the next and future mailings are always required. Especially it would be good to hear about individuals or group activities, any good news about prisoners or any queries you may have about the work of ACAT(UK).

Please send any material - handwritten, or typed to:-

Margaret Russell, c/o ACAT Office

By 20<sup>th</sup> March 2013

Email: [uk.acat@gmail.com](mailto:uk.acat@gmail.com)

Website: [www.acatuk.org.uk](http://www.acatuk.org.uk)

Office: ACAT UK  
8 Southfield  
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Cornwall PL12 4LX

*Remember we are on Facebook. Check us out on [facebook.com/acaduk](https://www.facebook.com/acaduk)*

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