

The Persecuted

Why do our churches make so little of the persecution of Christians? Why do we almost never hear about it on a Sunday morning? So often, prayers and intercessions make much of the trials of the poor, the perils of being a refugee or asylum seeker, of being outcast or marginalised – and we certainly hear much about abusing the planet (that great threat to humanity – global warming – is what is meant, here) – but prayers for the many Christians throughout the world who are suffering and dying for their faith?

This persecution is very real, and it is not just happening in the Middle East, but in the West as well (as shown by reports that among groups of refugees in Germany, many Christians are being singled out for rough treatment by other refugees).

Often we hear a sermon or two lasting twenty minutes, perhaps – in which time, a very large number of Christians may have been killed, beaten or falsely imprisoned; but no mention is made of this. The answer to my question as to *why* this is seems to have something to do with a very developed sense of *fairness* – the same that was seen after the recent Paris killings, the reluctance to name the cause and nature of the outrage.

The mainstream media, of course, in its determination not to show Christianity any positive partiality, or any support, generally avoids stories of persecution if they refer to Christians. The cause and nature of the outrages, of course, is Islam, and Western media and rulerships' determination never to admit this will not protect it, nor any of us.

How long before a gunman sprays a church or cathedral in this country to the cries of "Allahu Akbar"? – and will then, at last, our weekly intercessions include a list of the dead, those who died for Christ?

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