

Prayer Diary: India

29 October-4 November 2023



‘This is what the Lord says: do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of the oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place’. (Jeremiah 22:3)

India is home to over 1.4 billion people – one-sixth of the world’s population. While many religions are represented, almost 80% of the population is Hindu. Since coming into power, the government has promoted Hindu nationalism, and religious minorities are facing increasing injustice because of their religion or beliefs.

Yet countless reporters, journalists, lawyers and activists refuse to let darkness have the last word. Their extraordinary courage is the living embodiment of God’s command in Jeremiah 22:3.

Doing ‘what is just and right’ often means speaking truth to power, which can make them a target for harassment, imprisonment or worse.

Father Stan Swamy is one of those. The Jesuit priest was detained in October 2020 – falsely accused of terrorism. In reality, he was targeted for his human rights activism. Sadly, he contracted COVID-19 and passed away in July 2021 as a result of cardiac arrest, while still in judicial custody.

Throughout this week, pray protection over all those whose commitment to truth and justice will not let them stay silent – even when that puts them in danger.

- Pray that other activists will not be discouraged by what happened to Father Swamy, but instead would be inspired by his example of courage.
- Pray that the Lord will raise up others to stand in the gap for the Adivasis in Jharkhand and in many parts of India; an oppressed people whom Father Swamy stood up for.
- On 2 November, this Thursday, the world marks the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists. Pray for that future day we look forward to, when anyone who tries to silence a journalist or activist will be held accountable for their actions.