

Prayer Diary: Victims of enforced disappearance

25-31 August 2024



30 August: International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearance

‘We don’t want people to forget. We want them to remember and to continue to pray.’ – Susanna Koh

Hundreds of thousands of people have been forcibly disappeared in 85 countries across the world. Victims are often subjected to torture and severe physical and psychological abuse. The families and communities left behind also experience anguish, not knowing the fate of their loved ones.

Let us take the opportunity this week to remember those who have been taken and disappeared because of their beliefs, or the actions it inspires them to take. Lift them up in prayer to the one who brings both comfort and can work miracles.

Pastor Méndez Ruiz

Pastor Aarón Méndez Ruiz and his colleague Alfredo Castillo de Luna were kidnapped in 2019 from the migrant shelter which they ran. The men had bravely stood up to a criminal group who were trying to kidnap Cuban migrants from the shelter and hold them for ransom. Neither man has been seen or heard from since, and little seems to have been done in the way of investigation by the Mexican government.

Please pray for the truth of their fate to be brought to light and justice done.

Pastor Raymond Koh

It took just 42 seconds to abduct Pastor Raymond Koh in 2017. An eyewitness described it as ‘something out of a movie’, as five black SUVs, two motorcycles and 15 men wearing balaclavas took Pastor Koh from a street Malaysia in broad daylight. His whereabouts remain unknown.

The Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) found that the Special Branch of the Malaysian police were responsible for the pastor’s disappearance. But despite an investigative task force launched by the government in 2019, there has been no update. Pray that Pastor Koh’s wife Susanna and whole family will be strengthened and kept safe from harm. Cry out to God for his safe return.

Gao Zhisheng

The Chinese human rights lawyer, Gao Zhisheng, was disappeared multiple times between 2006 and 2011. He was subsequently disappeared again in 2017. His whereabouts for the past seven years have been unknown, though it is believed he is some form of detention. His family – living in exile in the United States – have continued to call for Gao’s release and for further information on his whereabouts.

Pray that the rule of law will be upheld, and the government of China will disclose Gao’s whereabouts and set him free without delay. We also pray for his family in the US, for their continued safety and comfort.