

Prayer Diary: Egypt

5-11 January 2025



Egypt Coptic crosses

This week, most Christians in Egypt will be celebrating Christmas on 7 January.

On 6 January, many Orthodox Christians will go to church and share a type of bread called ‘qurban’ which is marked with 12 dots to symbolise the 12 apostles of Christ. After this they will break their fast, having adopted a plant-based diet for 43 days. There are also smaller numbers of Coptic Catholic and Protestant Christians in Egypt who celebrate Christmas on 25 December.

Egyptian Christians are the largest Christian community in the Middle East, and in recent years they have enjoyed greater freedoms and protection under President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. However, these changes have yet to permeate to wider Egyptian society, where societal hostility often persists.

In Upper Egypt, for example, sectarian tensions frequently spill over into mob violence, often centred on the issue of church construction or renovation, as we saw over this past year.

For example, on 6 January 2024, a temporary church building in Minya Province, Upper Egypt, was destroyed after a local mob set it on fire. It had been built on land belonging to the church, and local Christians had been using it as a place of worship.

Even homes that are newly built or under construction are at risk of being attacked, if perpetrators suspect they may be used for any form of worship.

Please pray:

Dear Lord,

We bring the people of Egypt to you in prayer.

We thank you that Christians in many areas are free to celebrate Christmas and hold services throughout the year – yet we know that in others, celebrations, meetings and church renovations can provoke the ire of local extremists.

Draw near to protect them on this day, and every day. May your presence guard, surround and guide them through the threat of injustice, and may reconciliation and respect for diversity become a reality.

Kyrie Eleison; Lord, have mercy.

Amen.

Find out more at csw.org.uk/Egypt