

Mainstream Media Call for AG Pastor's Freedom

Assemblies of God Pastor Noe Carias is behind bars in a California detention center, and the mainstream media are calling for his freedom.

His plight was picked up by *The Nation*, and will be told by Brave New Films in a release titled: *No More Detention: Free Pastor Noe*.

According to the video synopsis, "Pastor Noe Carias, a man of faith, family, and freedom is currently being detained in Adelanto Detention Center—an unregulated private prison where many people have been treated inhumanely—after fleeing violence and living in the US since he was 13 years old. All people, especially those of faith, should speak out against detaining people in immigrant prison camps! Watch this video and demand that ICE free Pastor Noe now!"

Brave New Films' founder Robert Greenwald says, "This is a national shame, and it is incumbent upon all people to speak out against it. America is a country built by immigrants, a country that has been guided by immigrants of all faiths since its very first days. Join Brave New Films in speaking out against immigration detention—help free Pastor Noe and fight to free all the unjustly detained immigrants throughout our nation. In this moment of racial crisis in this country, join other faith leaders in speaking out against racism and bigotry. Watch *No More Detention: Free Pastor Noe* and share it with your community."

Carias crossed the border illegally more than two decades ago after he was kidnapped and held hostage by guerrillas in his native Guatemala. According to his family, he was allowed to remain in the United States as long as he regularly met with

immigration officials. Not anymore.

The case has caught the attention of several charismatic leaders, including Rev. Samuel Rodriguez:

I am dismayed to hear of the arrest and impending deportation of Noe Carias, a fellow pastor and father. Beyond that, Noe is a member of my own denomination, the Assemblies of God. By all accounts, Pastor Carias is a law-abiding and productive member of his local Los Angeles community. Beyond that, he is a model father of two children who are both U.S. citizens, and Wednesday will be his 14th wedding anniversary to his wife Victoria—also a U.S. citizen.

Time and again, President Trump has stated his priority would be to deport violent criminals, drug dealers, human traffickers and gang members. Pastor Carias is the very opposite of that description. We should deport pushers, not pastors. We have worked tirelessly with the White House and the Trump administration precisely in order to avoid this kind of result. To deport any immigrant whose life is so deeply connected to the United States and whose family is comprised of U.S. citizens is an assault on the sanctity of life and the sacredness of the family. We cannot and must not allow families to be ripped apart by an immigration system that is attempting to make up for any real or perceived inadequacies of our past enforcement policies.

Reconnecting Pastor Carias with his family and church community is now the priority of the NHCLC, and I will personally work with the Trump Administration and other appropriate authorities to rescind his deportation order with hopes no other family is forced to endure such unnecessary heartbreak. Please pray for our political leaders as well as our enforcement officers, that they would act justly and compassionately and that we would find a swift conclusion to this case.

Carias and his wife Victoria pastor an Assemblies of God church in Los Angeles. She and their children are U.S. citizens.

"I just tell them, 'Daddy's going to be home soon. Be patient. We have to just pray. We have a powerful God.'" Victoria says.

Asked what she would tell President Donald Trump, she says:

"This is hurting a whole family, my kids and myself. The church, the congregation, we're all hurting. We want to get things right. We've been trying to get it right. Please, have mercy on us."

Ministries like the Christian Community Development Association and Matthew 25 SoCal have picked up the Carias' cause, as well.

Carias himself remains a man of prayer.

"I pray for the president. The Bible say, 'Pray for our leaders,'" says Carias. "I also want to ask President Trump for compassion. I'm never going to lose my faith. I love my family. I love this country."

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