

'60 Minutes' Sunday Spotlights Plight of Christians in Iraq

This Sunday, *60 Minutes* will air Lara Logan's report on the plight of the Christian church in Iraq. Among those interviewed for the program was Bishop Bashar Warda whose flock has expanded by 60,000 as Erbil has abandoned thousands of those displaced by the Islamic State.

21Wilberforce also met with Bishop Warda and other faith leaders during a January visit to northern Iraq and issued a report entitled "Edge of Extinction" ().

Just as Bishop Warda's flock has grown exponentially, dozens of priests from Mosul and surrounding areas have seen their flocks decimated with a reported 12 Christian families leaving Iraq daily due to the violence and desperate circumstances of their prolonged displacement.

"I am pleased to see *60 Minutes* shining a bright light on the existential crisis facing Christians and other religious minorities in Iraq—a crisis which increasingly looks like genocide. As we approach April, Genocide Prevention Month, we must not let the words 'Never Again' ring hollow," said former Congressman Frank Wolf, co-founder of the 21st Century Wilberforce Initiative.

Yesterday the United Nations human rights office released a report which found that the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) may have committed genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in its attacks against ethnic and religious groups in the country.

Specifically the UN mission gathered information regarding acts of violence perpetrated against civilians because of

their affiliation with an ethnic or religious group and then surmised, "It is reasonable to conclude that some of these incidents, considering the overall information, may constitute genocide.

"The church in the West must stand in solidarity with our beleaguered brothers and sisters in Iraq, Syria and throughout the Middle East who find themselves in the murderous crosshairs of the Islamic State," remarked Wilberforce president and co-founder Dr. Randel Everett.