

Egypt Violence Spurs New Prayer Call

Egyptian Christians have requested our prayers following several violent incidents affecting Christians and their property during February.

We regret to report that a priest was murdered in the Assiut area. He was found dead in his home on Feb. 23, having been stabbed several times. It has been suggested that he was murdered because of a long-standing dispute. Two years ago a youth claimed that the priest had incited him to insult local Muslims.

There have been incidents at several monasteries involving the army. The Anba Bishoy Monastery in Wadi Al-Natroun erected an additional security fence on their land due to the absence of the local police. On Feb. 21 the army ordered that they remove this since it was constructed without due planning permission. On Feb. 23 the army used their armoured personnel carriers to destroy the fence. When the monks protested the army responded with gunfire using live ammunition. One monk and six other Christians were injured and taken to hospital. There have been similar incidents targeting at least two other monasteries.

The governor of Minya governorate has ordered that a Christian centre be demolished. The five-story building belongs to the Coptic diocese of Mallawi and is used for providing services to the elderly and children from 75 villages. No reason for the decision has been published. Many local people have demonstrated in support of the building, claiming that it, "was inaugurated by the governor himself four years ago and all licenses and papers are fully correct."

Egyptian Christians request our prayers that:

a. The wounded and traumatized will know the healing touch of

Jesus

- b. The murdered priest's congregation will know the presence and peace of Jesus
- c. The demolition order would be formally withdrawn
- d. Church leaders will know the Spirit's guidance at this time
- e. All officials involved will love mercy, act justly, learn about Jesus and choose to follow Him
- f. The current process of political change will bring about greater freedoms for all Egyptians including the Christians.

Are you actively praying about the situation in the Middle East?