

Mike Pence Issues Urgent Call to Action

Speaking at the first-ever Help The Persecuted Summit in Washington, D.C., on Friday, March 15, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence highlighted the vital importance of standing with Christians in the Middle East, and beyond, who are suffering for their faith.

“No people of faith face greater hostility or hatred than followers of Christ,” explained Vice President Pence.

He added: “In more than 100 countries, from Iran to Eritrea, over 245 million Christians confront intimidation, imprisonment, forced conversion, abuse, assault or worse simply for holding onto the truths of the gospel. In Iraq, we see monasteries demolished, priests and monks beheaded, and the two-millennia-old Christian tradition in Mosul clinging for survival. In Syria, we see ancient communities burned to the ground and believers tortured for confessing the name of Christ. It’s heartbreaking to think that the Christian population in Syria has been cut in half in just the past six years, and many of those who remain have been displaced from their ancient homes. In Iraq, the followers of Christ have fallen by 80 percent in the past decade and a half.”

The vice president went on to highlight the impact of the ministry of Help The Persecuted, which is helping many of these believers who are now returning to their communities in the Middle East, having been driven from their homes by ISIS: “We couldn’t be more grateful for the heroic efforts of the men and women who work with, and invest in, this organization, because Help The Persecuted, each and every day, puts hands and feet on our faith. You provide physical and spiritual support to those who are literally standing outside the gates because of their faith and who they are.”

Help The Persecuted has supported over 30,000 Christians since 2011. The organization's president, Joshua Youssef, said he was deeply humbled to have Vice President Pence join them for this significant gathering: "It was one of those pinch yourself moments to have Vice President Pence address our inaugural summit. From the very beginning of this administration, the vice president has been a passionate champion for the cause of the persecuted church and for religious freedom around the world. To have him get behind our organization was very humbling, and I just feel honored."

During the weekend-long inaugural Help The Persecuted Summit, worship was led by Keith and Kristyn Getty, and guests heard firsthand accounts from the ministry's field staff serving on the front lines as well as Christians from across the Middle East.

Joshua believes many who attended the su