

Missionary Slain by Al-Qaida Led 'Triumphant Life'

Mike Riddering, a missionary with Sheltering Wings in Burkina Faso, has been slain by al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Amy Riddering called her husband a "warrior."

"Heaven has gained a warrior!" she posted on Facebook. "I know God has a purpose in all things, but sometimes it is a complete mystery to me. My best friend, partner in crime and love of my life. The best husband ever. An amazing father to his children and a papa to everyone. My heart is so heavy, and I am having trouble believing he is gone. Mike was an example in the way he lived and loved. God be glorified! Mike Riddering, I will love you always! You left quite a legacy here. I can only imagine the adventures you are having now."

Mike Riddering and Valentin, his Burkinabe associate, went to Ouagadougou on Jan. 15, 2016, to pick up a team of short-term missionaries coming from the U.S. to work at the Les Ailes de Refuge Orphanage in Yako, Burkina Faso in West Africa.

The two arrived early and went to a café across from the Splendid Hotel. A terrorist group called al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) attacked the café and hotel. Pastor Valentin called Amy urgently requesting prayer, but before he could complete his call, the phone went dead.

Pastor Valentin apparently was somehow separated from Mike during the attack and hid in the café. Several hours after his call, Amy was notified that Valentin had been rescued by security forces, but he did not know where Mike was. Another missionary, Philip Matheny, began searching for Mike and found his body in a morgue Jan. 16.

Before becoming a missionary with Sheltering Wings, Mike attended Fort Lauderdale Christian High School and graduated in 1988. He and his family were members of Hollywood Community Church, in Hollywood, Florida.

The Ridderings and their team care for about 400 orphaned children, provide direct assistance to disenfranchised widows and help to direct the operations of schools.

The couple adopted two children since their arrival in Burkina Faso, Biba and Moise.

Mike leaves behind his wife and four children: Haley, 23; Delaney, 19; Biba, 15; and Moise, 4.