

NOVEMBER 2023

***Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments. (Deut 7:9)***

Dear Friends,

This letter is all about faithfulness – how can we ever properly appreciate those of you who have been giving so faithfully to Advocates International – some of you for over thirty years! We never take any gift for granted – thank you so very much!

I am writing to you from Orange County, California. I am halfway through my US east-to-west trip and praise God for how blessed it has been so far!

After a delightful visit to board member Ben Bull and his wife Lynda at their beautiful house on Branch Lake in Maine, I travelled to Boston MA for the Christian Legal Society annual national conference. As always, the conference arrangements were top notch with David Nammo and his team presenting an excellent program! Ligia did a great job of hosting our exhibition table, there was lots of interest shown by the delegates – especially in the Daniel Project.

In the middle of November, board member Nate Adams and his wife Heather, hosted me in Tallahassee, Florida. I had the honor to speak at both morning services of their church, the First Baptist Church of Tallahassee, and at their Bible study hour. I focused on the disturbing escalation of religious persecution globally and on how we aspire to train lawyers in the Daniel Project to be able to represent the persecuted. Two days later I was privileged to speak to a group of lawyers (including two judges) at a lunch meeting in Tallahassee.

Following this, I was invited for a radio interview by Jason Gonzalez, a Tallahassee lawyer who co-hosts a radio program called “Veronica LIVE” on FM 101.1 Panama City Beach Florida. If you would like to listen, the interview is available on <https://speaker.page.link/osGVf5rXtTJasT3n9>.

From Florida I traveled to Tennessee to meet some prospective benefactors and prayer partners. I am looking forward to attending the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Global conference of **Transform Our World** in Santa Clara, CA. This formidable organization was started by Dr Ed and Ruth Silviso. It aims to “*build a world community of world changers who are partnering with God and each other to bring transformation*”. My objective with attending the conference is to explore ways in which Advocates International and Transform Our World can collaborate and together expand our networks globally.

From Santa Clara I will go on to visit some longtime as well as prospective supporters in San Francisco, CA, Washington state, Colorado, and Virginia Beach.

The apostle Paul says in Galatians 5:22-23 “*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, **faithfulness**, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*”

Before travelling to Florida, Ligia and I hosted a lunch in Fairfax for 23 longtime northern Virginia volunteers and supporters. During lunch I asked each one of them to introduce themselves. It was then that I decided that the theme of this newsletter will be **“faithfulness”**. One after the other they accounted how they had been supporters or volunteers “since the beginning” or “for so many years” or “since Sam Ericsson asked us to become involved”. I was deeply moved by each one of these wonderful people who have remained committed and faithful to AI, despite the personal challenges they have experienced through the years.

At this lunch we had the wonderful opportunity to celebrate her eightieth birthday with Romi Kobayashi. Who can forget Romi’s faithfulness to Advocates International! She was one of those whom Sam called *“the best staff money can’t buy”*. Romi, with her roommate Peggy Lereche, remains some of our most faithful prayer supporters!

Whenever I speak about the escalation of religious persecution, I am under the profound impression of the faithfulness of these believers in the face of death. The Christians of Algeria come to mind. Algeria has some of the largest number of Christians in the Arab world - estimated numbers range between 380 000 and 500 000. Since 2017, 95% of all Protestant and Evangelical Churches in Algeria have been closed and sealed – we are aware of only two Protestant churches which remain open. Many Christians continue to be prosecuted for proselytization or blasphemy.

The Christian faith has a long history in North Africa, especially among ethnic Berbers who inhabited the area long before the founding of Islam in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Many of them are now rediscovering their Christian heritage. Algeria has experienced one of the world’s largest movements of Muslims coming to faith in Christ. The Berber Christians don’t hesitate to share their faith boldly even in and around al-Qaida terrorist camps. What is written to the angel of the church in Pergamum in Revelation 2:13 reminds me of our Algerian brothers and sisters *“I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. **Yet you remain true to my name. You did not renounce your faith in me, not even in the days of Antipas, my faithful witness, who was put to death in your city—where Satan lives.**”*

While the faithfulness of people I speak about above is indeed admirable, **nothing matches God’s faithfulness to us!** The extent of His faithfulness is described in Ps 36:5 *“**Your love, LORD, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.**”*

In the past month, since leaving South Africa at the end of September, I have undertaken 15 flights, taken more Uber rides than I can remember, visited several cities and been in contact with hundreds of people. Through all of it I have remained safe, healthy, and have experienced so much hospitality, love, and favour wherever I went. I certainly cannot claim any tribute for it - I can only contribute it to God’s eternal faithfulness!

Let us continue to be faithful in the small things so that God can trust us to be faithful in much!

Warmly in Christ



Teresa Conradie

President and CEO, Advocates International



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