



Open *Doors*

MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2025

**PERSECUTED
CHILDREN
UPWRAPPING HOPE
THIS CHRISTMAS**

STRENGTHENING CHRISTIANS WHERE FAITH COSTS THE MOST

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CONTENTS

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Torn Apart by Persecution | 4 |
| IMPACT: “We Were Not Alone” | 10 |
| IMPACT: A Secret Christmas | 12 |
| Good News | 14 |



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Cover image: For children like Robin, in Bangladesh, the cost of faith is heartbreaking. But Christmas is one day they look forward to – and this year, you can bring hope. Read more on page 4.

OPEN DOORS MAGAZINE is published 6 times a year to provide concerned Christians with information about events affecting persecuted Christians worldwide. ODC is a member of Canadian Centre for Christian Charities and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. The material contained in this publication cannot be reproduced in any form, including on the internet, without written permission. © 2025 Open Doors Canada.

GARY'S TAKE



Pastor Gary Stagg
 Executive Director
 Open Doors Canada

In this issue you will read the story of Robin, a young boy from Bangladesh, whose life has been deeply impacted by his faith in Jesus.

Robin lives in a community where being a Christian is not only rare—it's dangerous. At school, he feels isolated and rejected by classmates who see his faith as strange or wrong. In his own neighbourhood, he often walks alone, knowing that others view him with suspicion or hostility.

The pain runs even deeper at home. When one parent becomes a Christian and the other does not, children like Robin are caught in the middle of family conflict. They face emotional strain, confusion, and sometimes even threats from relatives who oppose their faith.

Sadly, Robin's story is not unique.

Today there are untold numbers of children who live without one or both parents because they have been killed by extremist attacks. Others live with family members in camps for Internally Displaced People (IDP) because they have had to flee their communities and churches because of the violence aimed at them.

These children face rejection, isolation, and sometimes violence—all because of their faith. But through your prayers and support, they are reminded they are not alone. You help provide safe spaces, discipleship, and encouragement that strengthen their faith and give them hope. Through your support, we can remind children like Robin that they are not alone, and we can help them grow in faith and resilience.

Thank you for standing with these courageous young believers. Your prayers and generosity make a world of difference.

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Gary Stagg



TORN APART BY PERSECUTION



For children like Robin, in Bangladesh, the cost of faith is heartbreaking. But Christmas is one day they look forward to – and this year, you can bring hope.

Eleven-year-old Robin* sits alone at the edge of a field watching children play football. He longs to join in. But it's not possible.

"I am a Christian," Robin explains in a quiet voice. "So no one talks to me, no one plays with me. They see me watching but don't invite me, and I can't ask them out of fear."

It's the same at school, where Robin is simply known as 'the Christian'. His eyes follow the laughing group of boys chasing the ball. "I feel sad," he says. "I just sit here and feel very lonely."

Persecution has torn Robin's life apart in the most heartbreaking way. But it's not just his friendships that have suffered...

BROKEN FAMILY

Robin's mother, Moly*, was the first in the family to become a Christian. She'd seen a neighbour carrying a Kitabul Mukaddas, a Bible, and it sparked her interest. Moly borrowed the book and read in secret.

Soon after, Moly fell desperately ill. She prayed for healing, and when she woke the next morning, she was completely well. That day, Moly gave her life to Christ, and her husband Jubayer* came to faith too. But this family's joy was short-lived.

Last August, violence broke out across Bangladesh and radical Muslims began targeting Christians. Moly, Jubayer and Robin were in their small house church when a mob of 50 people approached, led by local imams. The family fled – but raiders destroyed the church and burned every Bible they could find.

That was the last time Robin's mother and father were together. Shaken by the attack, Jubayer returned to Islam and divorced Moly. Now Robin and his mother are alone – vulnerable, isolated and facing financial hardship.

MOST PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

Officially, people in Bangladesh are free to follow Jesus. But 91% of the population is Muslim, and in reality Christians are persecuted for their faith.

According to Robi*, our local partner, "Religious and political leaders have a dream to make Bangladesh a Muslim country. There is no place where Christians can live entirely safely."

Children who convert from Islam, like Robin, face the most severe hostility and ridicule. “They lose confidence,” says Robi, our partner. “Without support, they lose hope. It is very difficult for a person to survive when they are alone.”

And if the smallest followers of Jesus give up, the very future of the church is at risk.



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Today, Robin and his mother get by with support from Moly’s brother. “I miss my father but I have a mother who takes care of me,” says Robin. “She reads to me from the children’s Bible and prays for me every day.”

Life is hard and lonely – but soon it will be Christmas and the family can forget their suffering for one day. Robin can hardly wait...

“On Christmas morning, I wash my hands and face, my mother cooks good food, then we go to church wearing new clothes,” smiles Robin, his eyes shining with excitement. “We have fun, wear party hats, eat cake and play with everyone as we celebrate Jesus’ birthday.”

UNWRAP HOPE

This year, you can unwrap hope for Robin at Christmas. Your support can help pay his school fees, so he has an education and a future, and provide vital relief to ensure this family survives.

Open Doors’ vision is to strengthen persecuted children so they are resilient, courageous followers of Jesus. Your gifts and prayers will provide shelter, trauma counselling and aid to children like Robin. Because of you, they will not be alone.

“We are strangers, yet you are praying for me so that we can be well,” says Robin gratefully.

**names changed to protect this family*



Christmas is one day Robin looks forward to; a time to celebrate Jesus’ birth with his church family. You can unwrap hope for Robin and other persecuted children today.

PLEASE GIVE



Every \$47 could give vital aid to two persecuted families facing financial hardship.



Every \$61 could bring a child to a special Christmas gathering, and give them joy.



Every \$111 could give Bibles to 10 children, to nurture their faith.

PLEASE PRAY

- ★ Robin has a simple prayer request this Christmas: that people will stop mocking him, and he will make new friends.
- ★ Ask God to give strength to Robin’s mom, Moly. And pray for Robin’s dad, that he would find his way back to Jesus.
- ★ For children around the world whose lives are torn apart by persecution. Pray Christmas would be a time of joy and respite.



HOPE THROUGH PRAYER

Meet two persecuted children and read their stories of courage and faith. This Christmas, will you pray for them?

REJECTED AND ATTACKED

Fifteen-year-old Dayang* knows the pain of rejection. Most people at school, in the southern Philippines, avoid her. “Because of my tribe, they say I should be a Muslim,” says Dayang.

But it’s not just rejection; this quiet teenager has experienced violence too. One afternoon, classmates followed Dayang home and threw stones at her, shouting, ‘Traitor! Traitor!’ “It hurt,” remembers Dayang with a sigh. “But I won’t let go of Jesus.”

Dayang’s faith is being strengthened through an Open Doors youth leadership program



– and she’s counting down the days until Christmas. “When we’re together at Christmas, it’s a moment of joy,” says Dayang.

PLEASE PRAY

- For God’s protection over Dayang and her mom, also a believer.
- That Dayang’s father will come to know Christ through his daughter’s faithful witness.
- Ask God to bring hope to persecuted families in the southern Philippines this Christmas.



BREAKING POINT

Mina* was ready to step onto the stage and receive first prize in a singing competition, near her home in central Asia. She’d been told about the award and attended the ceremony specially. But at the critical moment, it wasn’t Mina’s name that was announced as the winner...

“They said only Muslims can take first place,” said Mina. “I felt very hurt. Sometimes it brings me to tears.” This injustice is just one example of the relentless bullying Mina endures for her faith. One day, persecution brought her to her breaking point. Mina’s mom discovered Mina had secretly been searching online: ‘how to convert to Islam’. Today, Mina urgently needs your prayers.

PLEASE PRAY

- Pray that, this Christmas, Mina will be able to worship Jesus without fear and risk.
- Mina added, “I would like you to pray that people will understand us and treat us kindly.”

**Names changed to protect their identities*



A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Dear Jesus,

We lift up every child facing persecution because of their faith in you.

This Christmas, we ask that you surround them with your joy, peace and fellowship.

For those living in hostile places, unable to celebrate, fill their hearts with the light and unending hope of your coming at Christmas.

Amen.



GIFTS OF HOPE.

Children’s Bible
\$18 provides a child with one Bible

Send a Child to Camp
\$65 sends a persecuted child to camp



“WE WERE NOT ALONE”

When Alicia’s family was cut off by villagers because of their faith in Jesus, your support provided the answer to their prayers.

“What scared me most was that they would kill us. Burn us alive, one by one.”

No one should face this fear – but especially not a child. Yet these words are spoken by 12-year-old Alicia*, from Oaxaca, Mexico, as she remembers the terrifying persecution directed at her family.

Alicia’s father had refused to take part in indigenous worship practices – and it sparked fury among villagers.

“They debated whether to tear down our house or burn it,” remembers Alicia. “In the end they stripped us of everything. They cut off our electricity and water, seized our land, and banned us children from going to school.”

It left the family penniless and desperate. “I felt deeply worried because we were losing everything. Even members of our family turned against us,” said Alicia.

But, when everything seemed hopeless, you stepped in and became the answer to this family’s prayers.

FORGIVENESS AND A FUTURE

Open Doors workers heard what was happening and visited Alicia’s community. Thanks to your support, 12 Christian families attended our ‘persecution preparedness’ training.

“We felt we were not alone – that God sent some of his children to comfort us and give us strength,” says Alicia. “They gave us words of encouragement. That was what we needed.” Alicia’s mom Flor* added, “They taught us how to forgive those who hurt us. My heart began to heal. We understood God was with us.”

Your gifts also helped Alicia’s family start a small sheep-breeding project, giving them an independent livelihood, as well as dignity and a renewed sense of purpose.

All this strengthened the faith of the Christian community, and they started fasting and praying about their situation. Alicia too started a diary, writing the names of people who hurt the family so she could pray for them. “I prayed they would realize what they were doing was wrong, and God would show them He is the only God,” she said.

Then one day, incredibly, the village leaders agreed to talk. The family’s electricity and water was reconnected. Some rights were restored. Now Alicia’s family have chosen to remain in the village, living as salt and light amid ongoing adversity.

“We saw it as an answer from God,” says Alicia. “God is telling me, ‘don’t be afraid, I’m here, I’m your Father, I’m taking care of you and I have a plan for you.’”

**names changed to protect the family*



PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for Alicia and her family this Christmas, that they will have freedom to worship God.
- Lift up local community leaders in Oaxaca, Mexico, that they will allow the building of a church.
- Pray for emotional healing for Alicia and other children who have suffered persecution this year.

A SECRET CHRISTMAS

It's so dangerous for Inaya to follow Jesus, she says her prayers in a whisper. But, despite everything, you are helping to grow her faith.

Eyes closed, 11-year-old Inaya* whispers her heartfelt prayers. She keeps her head bowed discreetly. She does not even dare to say the name of Jesus aloud, such is the enormous risk.

But, because of your kind support, this little girl's faith is growing in secret...

It was just a few years ago that Inaya and her parents, both in their 40s, came to faith in Christ. It put them in extreme danger. After all, in the Southern Philippines where they live, families which leave Islam for Christianity are seen as traitors. Clan hostility and religious tensions run deep. Inaya's father was once shot in both arms during a rido, a violent clash between tribes.

In this volatile place, it might seem impossible for a girl like Inaya to learn about Jesus and be part of a church community. But, thanks to your gifts and prayers, it's happening.

'NOT ALONE'

Inaya recently joined a children's Bible storytelling program run by Open Doors. It's in a secret location, led by a trusted local believer. Here, in a rare safe space behind locked doors, Inaya and other persecuted children can sing songs, do crafts and – most importantly – listen to Bible stories.

The sessions strengthen the faith of children, stir their courage and bring them comfort. For Inaya, one story touched her heart more than any other...

"It was about Daniel in the lions' den," remembers Inaya. "Despite the danger, Daniel prayed and God saved him."

That night, before going to sleep, Inaya turned to her mother and whispered: "If Daniel wasn't alone, maybe I'm not alone either."

She added, "I'm scared, but I feel brave too. Like there's a light shining inside me."

HIDDEN PRAYERS

This Christmas, Inaya's family will

say quiet prayers behind closed doors. They cannot celebrate openly, because it's too risky, but they will spend time together and remember God's great gift to us. Thanks to you, they know they are not alone.

"We don't have lights or presents," says Inaya. "But I feel happy because we remember Jesus and we're together."

*name changed and representative images used for her safety



PLEASE PRAY

- Pray for God's protection over Inaya, and pray her faith will continue to grow.
- Lift up the brave believers running the Bible storytelling program, as they serve with wisdom and courage.
- This Christmas, pray that persecuted children like Inaya will be wrapped in hope.

GOOD NEWS

THANKS TO YOU, AMINA HAS HOPE AGAIN



Amina hands a new Bible to a resident of the homeless shelter.

Amina is one of many Christians in Central Asia who struggle with poverty and a lack of support. Amina was kicked out of her home by her stepmother at the age of 15 and for a time, it seemed that she had no hope. While living in a homeless shelter, she met her husband. A local church, supported by Open Doors, was able to connect with Amina and she came to faith. Today, 55 years old, she works as a cleaner in the church and helps newcomers to the shelter get acclimated. Because of your support, churches in Central Asia can keep showing God's love to people like Amina!

GOD IS USING YOUR SUPPORT TO HELP STRENGTHEN CHRISTIAN COUPLES IN INDONESIA



A couple embraces during one session of the marriage seminar put on by Open Doors partner churches in Indonesia.

Open Doors church partners in Indonesia recently held a seminar called "Unshakable Family, Undefeated Faith". Christian couples were able to learn about the importance of family roles, communication, and faith as the foundation to withstand challenges. Games, photo sessions, dinner, and testimonies all combined for a time of laughter, joy, and tears, as Christian families renewed their commitment to each other. By strengthening their relationships and marriages, the Christian community is better prepared to endure the difficulties that will come their way through life.



TRAVEL TO LATIN AMERICA

Join us for an exciting opportunity to bring love and encouragement to believers in Latin America.

Spring 2026

Max age: 50

Fall 2026

Max age: 60

For more information, and to apply, visit
www.opendoorscanada.org/travel
or email travel@odcan.org



UNWRAP HOPE

FOR A PERSECUTED CHILD

The lives of children like Robin, in Bangladesh, are torn apart by persecution.

He's been rejected and targeted with violence. Now Robin and his mother face financial hardship.

Will you unwrap hope at Christmas?

EVERY \$47 could provide vital aid to two persecuted families.

Please send your Christmas gift. Go to www.opendoorscanada.org to give today.

Thank you

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