

A Christmas Celebration

Many of you would have heard over the last year or two about the plight of Iraqi Christians generally. Whilst Iraq may no longer be front-page news, the problems of the Iraqi Christians are still there.

People are often surprised to learn that there are Christians in Iraq; in fact the Christian church was established in Iraq in the first century by St Thomas the apostle, some 500 years before the arrival of Islam. Since the war on Iraq in 2003, Iraqi Christians have been kidnapped, tortured, raped and murdered by Muslim Extremists; two young men have even been crucified. A total of 16 priests have been kidnapped and eight priests & deacons murdered. Last March, the Bishop of Mosul was abducted and killed together with his three companions. Over 40 Churches, monasteries, convents and an orphanage have been bombed, raided and occupied by militia. In view of these atrocities, Christians left their homes and possessions in droves seeking refuge in neighbouring countries, especially Syria and Jordan. The majority of them rely on the help of their relatives abroad, the charity of local Churches, few NGOs like Caritas and the support of specific charities like ICIN, registered in the UK in May 2007 to support Iraqi Christians in need.

In order to raise monies for their needy brethren, many functions are held by ICIN and one such event, *A Christmas Celebration*, will take place at this church (or St Elizabeth's Church, Richmond) on **Saturday 5th December 2009 at 7.30 pm**. The event will consist of a Concert of Christmas carols performed and led by singers from the London Symphony Chorus, probably Europe's finest non-professional choir. There will also be a young Iraqi liturgical choir to sing two Iraqi carols. All this music will then be followed by a Grand Iraqi Buffet which I promise you will be a true culinary experience. Anyone who attended last year's event will attest to the quality and fun of the evening. This time, we will also have the Mayor of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, Cllr Celia Hodges and Dr. Vince Cable MP and Mrs Cable share the evening with us.

Ticket prices are £40 for Concert & Buffet or £20 for Concert only. Joe Bahoshy and family members are currently at the back of the church hoping to sell tickets, hand out flyers or answer any questions you may have. Your generous support would be much appreciated.

[\[Click here to view our previous event\]](#)