Len’s legacy

He was a paramedic, a pastor, a pilot and a pioneer missionary. That may sound like a lot, yet those words don’t even come close to describing the impact Pastor Len Barnard has had on the people of Papua New Guinea and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific.

"The people of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the wider community thank God for the life and ministry of Pastor Len Barnard.

"We wish to pay a very special tribute to him for the vision and courage that enabled him to pioneer the ministry of Adventist Aviation in the South Pacific. To see the sparkle in his eye as he recently spoke to the assembled thousands at the bi-centenary of Adventist Aviation in Goroka, was to catch a glimpse of the joy of service and determination which enabled him to do what he has done under the blessing of God.

"May the comfort of heaven be with Pastor Barnard’s family and with all of us who loved and respected him."—Dr Barry Oliver, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the South Pacific

To learn more about the legacy of Pastor Barnard, keep reading this week’s edition of Record eNews.
**Pioneer missionary pilot dies**

The South Pacific Division is mourning the loss of 95-year-old pastor Len Barnard. He was the first Seventh-day Adventist medical missionary pilot in Papua New Guinea.

**Camporee closes on spiritual high**

Sabbath at the iThirst South Pacific Division Pathfinder Camporee was a high point, with 1430 Pathfinders asking for Bible studies and 456 requesting baptism.

**Presidents build church in Dominican Republic**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s 29 top leaders traded their laptops and cell phones for paintbrushes and shovels on Wednesday as they constructed a church building on the

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**Read Adventist Record**

Be sure to get your hands on a copy of the newest issue of *Adventist Record*—the first for 2015!

**Watch/download InFocus**

So you’ve got your physical workout sorted. But what are you doing to strengthen your brain? Record InFocus host Kent Kingston interviews brain function specialist Dr Arlene Taylor.

Also on set for this special holiday episode is Pastor Sammy Lee, who reveals the bible stories hidden within ancient Chinese symbols.

*Record InFocus will be back to its regular bulletin*
Caribbean island of the Dominican Republic.

In a class of its own

Pacific Adventist University (PAU) is one of Papua New Guinea's most respected tertiary institutions. Vice chancellor, Professor Ben Thomas, reflects on PAU's progress and future.

Religious freedom

2014: The year in review

In many respects, one could argue that advancing technology has enabled lifestyle improvements that would suggest we must be living in the best of times. From a religious liberty standpoint, however, one could argue it's worse than ever.

Eat, pray, love

Are you falling asleep at your desk and struggling to kick back into work mode? Don't worry—you're not alone.
The South Pacific Division (SPD) is mourning the loss of 95-year-old pastor Len Barnard. He was the first Seventh-day Adventist medical missionary pilot in Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Pastor Barnard began working for the Adventist Church in 1933. When World War II broke out, he served with Australian Infantry Forces in PNG as a paramedic.

Sixteen years later, he would return there as a medical missionary, building and operating a leper colony at Mt Hagen in the Western Highlands. He spent 30 years serving as a pioneer missionary in PNG, but said his greatest joy as a pioneer was to fly the first Adventist mission plane to go into service anywhere in the world.

"Pastor Len Barnard must be remembered as a missionary in the fullest sense of the word," says Pastor Ken Vogel, general secretary and Public Affairs and Religious Liberty director for the Australian Union Conference. “Whether it was in service for God in a foreign country or in his home country of Australia, Pastor Barnard was always at the vanguard of missionary action."

As a fellow former missionary pilot, Pastor Vogel will always associate Pastor Barnard with his contributions to Adventist aviation.

“But his influence and energy was felt even before I became a pilot,” Pastor Vogel acknowledges. He particularly recalls Pastor Barnard flying several Avondale College students, including himself, to isolated outback towns where...
they would run evangelistic campaigns and hold vacation Bible schools.

It doesn't take much research to see that Pastor Barnard's life has inspired and touched the lives of many.

“A most remarkable life has ended,” says Dr John Hammond, who flew with Pastor Barnard many times in the mission plane Andrew Stewart. “We have lost one of our finest.”

Dr Hammond’s tribute to Pastor Barnard on social media saw several people follow suit in sharing their own memories of Pastor Barnard as a pilot—and as a person.

“Some people barely make a ripple on the pond of life and are soon forgotten. Len Barnard will never be forgotten,” posted Bruce Burling.

“He was a true man of God who lived his faith and touched the lives of those around him,” Julie Aitken commented.

In 2014, Pastor Barnard and Pastor Colin Winch received citations from the SPD at the Adventist Aviation Jubilee, celebrating 50 years of Adventist Aviation in the South Pacific. SPD president Dr Barry Oliver acknowledged their contribution and dedication to mission and aviation.

“Len was a great pioneer. I had the privilege of starting the flying program in New Guinea with him,” recalls Pastor Winch. “Working together, Len and I became very close friends and our friendship has lasted more than 50 years. I pray our Heavenly Father will surround his family with love and comfort. He has made a tremendous contribution to the winning of souls in PNG and left a legacy which we all admire.”

“The Adventist Church in PNG acknowledges the contribution that Len and his family have made to the expansion of God’s kingdom in this country,” says Dr Leigh Rice, president of the Papua New Guinea Union Mission. “Pastor Len Barnard’s legacy in PNG will live on long after his death.”

**Old friends:** Pastor Len Barnard (centre) catching up last year with some of the men who helped carry equipment through PNG’s rugged highlands on mission patrols prior to 1964, when Adventist Aviation Services was established. [Photo courtesy: Kent Kingston]

Pastor Vogel urges Adventists to draw inspiration from the life and mission of Pastor Barnard.

“As one more servant of God passes to well-earned rest, awaiting the resurrection day at the return of Jesus, may God use their story to stir up others to step up in their place,” he says.

“As we do so, let us remember that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of God that great men and women have impacted on the mission of the Church. Pastor Barnard was always the first to recognise that anything done was for God, under God’s guidance and certainly by God’s power. We thank God for blessing the Seventh-day Adventist Church with a man such as this. He will be missed but never forgotten.”
To learn more about Adventist Aviation, click HERE.

To learn more about Pastor Len Barnard’s mission and life, you can watch his interview with Record InFocus below.
Camporee closes on spiritual high

Toowoomba, Queensland

Sabbath at the iThirst South Pacific Division Pathfinder Camporee was a high point, with 1430 Pathfinders asking for Bible studies and 456 requesting baptism.

The details of those who made commitments will be passed on to local youth directors and church pastors for follow-up. Sabbath afternoon saw more than 70 Pathfinders who had previously made a commitment being baptised.

The existing commitment of many Pathfinders was also highlighted by the statistics, with 1596 saying they wanted to connect or reconnect with Jesus and 2238 saying they are ready to serve.

“When I look at you in your uniforms,” said outgoing Trans-Pacific Union Mission Youth Ministries director Pastor Maveni Kaufononga, “I don’t see kids, I see an army of young people with potential to do great work for the Lord.”

A sometimes boisterous Saturday night closing ceremony featured spontaneous chanting and waving of national flags as well as the more formal thankyou's, marching and the official close of the camporee.

Pathfinders enthusiastically participated in praise songs, although some of their leaders confessed the energy level was a little high for their taste. The live streaming of the event by Living Ministry Media added extra interest, with Pathfinders excitedly waving every time they saw themselves on the big screen.

The serial drama closed with a risen Christ commissioning His friends with specific ministries to care for the hurting and spread the hope of the gospel. The special effects highlight of the camporee was the Ascension of Jesus into the clouds, courtesy of a cable and harness and stage smoke.

For his closing sermon, featured speaker and Avondale College Church pastor Eddie Hypolite, used 1 John 1:3 as his closing text: “That which have seen and heard, we proclaim also to you . . .” Zeroing in on the self-consciousness that is common among people of Pathfinder age, he urged the audience to be bold in identifying themselves as Christians and to express their faith clearly and authentically in everyday situations. “Share your life,” were Pastor Hypolite’s closing words. “Share your life. Share your life.”

Visit the Living Ministry Media website for photos.
Presidents build church in Dominican Republic

La Romana, Dominican Republic

The Seventh-day Adventist Church’s 29 top leaders traded their laptops and cell phones for paintbrushes and shovels on Wednesday as they constructed a church building—some for the first time—on the Caribbean island of the Dominican Republic.

Dr Ted Wilson, president of the Adventist Church’s General Conference, led the group of division presidents, general vice presidents and other senior church administrators in taking a break from a weeklong business meeting to assist in the project in the town of La Romana.

“What a privilege it is to take a break from administrative duties to do something practical,” Dr Wilson said during morning worship at the hotel where the group is staying. “This is a work of multiplication—expanding the church.”

Top church leaders gather at the start of every year for a so-called PREXAD (President’s Executive Advisory) planning meeting, but Dr Wilson encouraged the leaders this year to also build a church. Division presidents will join Silver Spring, Maryland-based officers in looking at the initiatives established in the last four years, examining the upcoming General Conference agenda, and engaging in strategic planning for the next quinquennium, said Pastor Orville Parchment, assistant to the General Conference president.

Ahead of the meeting, the General Conference contacted Maranatha Volunteers International, an Adventist-affiliated organisation known for its One-Day Church building projects, and ultimately settled on the Villa Caoba Adventist Church in La Romana.

“Evangelist Mark Finley finishing up a bathroom wall at the new Villa Caoba Adventist Church in La Romana. [Photo courtesy: Libna Stevens]”

“The building where the church’s 40 members currently worship. [Photo courtesy: Libna Stevens]”
The new church building, with a price tag topping $US15,000, will provide 40 local Adventist members with a place to worship. The structure is larger than a typical One-Day project, with male and female restrooms and a freshwater well that will offer the local community of 12,000 people with drinking water.

The local church conference contributed land and money to the project.

Local Adventists currently worship in a humble building with zinc metal sheets on its roof and walls, eight rundown pews, and an uneven dirt floor that gets muddy when it rains. Children meet for Sabbath school under a tree behind the church.

On Wednesday, church leaders primed and painted the two restrooms in the new church, laid brick walls, and placed the roof over the building’s frame. They also raised a One-Day structure with metal frames and a roof that will serve as the Sabbath school classroom next to the church.

In addition, the leaders held a prayer of dedication for a 200-foot (60-meter) well that can pump 22 gallons (83 liters) of water per hour.

Local residents currently rely on a truck that passes through the neighborhood daily for their water supply. The community will now be able to collect water during scheduled hours at the church.

Don Noble, president of Maranatha with a long history of coordinating projects in the Dominican Republic, welcomed the church leaders to the construction site and underscored the importance of volunteer work. He said Maranatha sorely lacks labour and has a backlog of 180,000 requests for churches and other buildings around the world.

“You’re the best-looking volunteer group we’ve ever had,” Noble told the leaders.

“I bet you say that to every group,” someone shouted back jokingly.

Dr Wilson, centre, gives Pastor Blasious Ruguri, right, president of the East-Central Africa Division, a lesson on how to build with an electric screwdriver. General Conference general vice president Dr Lowell Cooper is to the left. [Photo courtesy: Libna Stevens]
Evangelist Mark Finley volunteered to paint the bathroom walls, and he was joined by General Conference vice presidents Dr Ella Simmons and Pastor Armando Miranda.

Pastor Finley, who just wrapped up a five-day evangelistic series on the island that will result in an expected 3000 baptisms on January 17, the last day of the PREXAD meeting, said two things were going through his mind as he worked Wednesday: painting correctly and praising God for the opportunity to serve Him.

“It’s wonderful to feel the international flavor with all of us here, to work together to expand the church,” Pastor Finley said.

Dr Simmons, who is completing her second, five-year term as the first and only female General Conference vice president, said this was her first time to participate in building a church.

“I’ve wanted to do this for many years. It’s so wonderful,” she said.

Dr Simmons spent some time painting and then announced that she had graduated to cementing bricks.

Building a church with Maranatha was also a first for Dr Israel Leito, president of the Inter-American Division, which includes the Dominican Republic.

“This is a very historic moment to have all the church leaders building a church for our members,” he said. “We are so happy because this assures our members that we are with them, not just sitting on our offices.”

Esteban Paredes, pastor of the Villa Caoba Adventist Church, said that the new church was the smallest of the six congregations that he leads locally but that the decision of the church leaders to work on the site had left a big impression.

“It is such a joy to see and have the leaders of the Adventist Church from around the world standing shoulder to shoulder to build this temple,” he said. “It’s a real privilege.”

After the cement and paint dries, a Maranatha group will arrive in 10 days to complete the project.
Church leaders, their spouses, and other volunteers posing at the church construction site. [Photo courtesy: Tom Lloyd]

Back on the construction site, Dr Wilson, who previously joined in building a church in Zambia, gave Pastor Blasious Ruguri, president of the East-Central Africa Division, a lesson on how use an electric screwdriver to fasten together the metal frame of the Sabbath school building.

Pastor Ruguri beamed as he spun in the first screws. “Yeah, yeah did you see that? One-minute training and look at that!” he said.

“You did a good job,” Dr Wilson said.

“This is one of the things that we miss as leaders, getting our hands into building something like this,” Pastor Ruguri said. “This is part of the mission, and we need to do this more.”

In a few months, Maranatha is scheduled to help build union offices in Kenya and Rwanda in his division. Pastor Ruguri said he would also ask his division leaders to take a day off work to assist with the construction.

Dr Wilson observed that the Dominican Republic church project fostered a team spirit among the leaders and helped them focus on something local that was highly mission-oriented.

“This gives us the opportunity to do something very practical in a place that could use the help,” he said. “All of us are in this mission together.”
I am absolutely focused on staying true to our mission—it must be at the forefront. So every decision has to be made using this criteria: will it make this a better place to develop a relationship with God or not? We have no value proposition if we lose our unique spiritual component. If we lose that our reason for existing disappears.

We could grow by 15 per cent instantly by adding day students. But day students miss much of the spiritual content on campus, from our morning and evening worship to our spiritual activities on the weekends. So before we add a large contingent of day students we have to be sure we have a plan for them to be spiritually engaged.

As our boarding student numbers grow—we have close to 2000 people on campus now—we are adapting to ensure they are spiritually active. Currently we have two churches. But there are only so many people who can be active in the program of a large church during a given service. So we are in the process of setting up four additional worship service centres around the campus. The idea is to significantly increase the opportunity for spiritual leadership and active engagement.

I believe a significant reason I’m still in church is that when I was 14 I was made a junior deacon in my local church. I had to be at church on Sabbath because my church needed me. I had a job. I want to make sure our students have the same experience.

Each school puts on a weekend of spiritual emphasis each semester. This is in addition to our four separate weeks of prayer each year. One school did theirs in the nearby prison training facility. They camped in a hall there. All the kids—dorm and day—along with the faculty participated in ministering to the inmates. These kinds of events reinforce that deans and faculty have a spiritual mission along with an academic mission.

Our director of spiritual services and academic dean are working together to integrate spiritual values into our classes. We want both the spiritual team and our academics to help each other think about how their roles integrate and inform their respective work.

On the academic front we’re looking at our assessment. Traditionally we’ve used the curve to grade. That is, the students’ grades were arranged from top to bottom and grades assigned by a predetermined spread. The problem is that this grading system doesn’t necessarily ensure that students have mastered the core subject matter. Currently we’re moving to criteria-based assessment. That is, grades will be assigned for achievement in assessment where criteria are aligned to learning outcomes. After the transition, an entire class could do well or do poorly or we could
have an inverse curve based on how well they perform against the criteria aligned to learning outcomes. Dr Jeff Crocombe is working on this with a team of faculty members and they are doing an outstanding job. This is a challenging process. But we’re doing it because we’re dedicated to excellence.

When we started we had 27 faculty and 109 students. Staff and students really got to know each other well. There’s a lot of mentoring that goes with that. Today we’re so large it makes that personal touch hard to maintain. As we grow further the personal interaction will continue to diminish unless we address it. In part to address the scale of the university, we’re working to ensure each school is a tight-knit community where everyone knows everyone else and the faculty are there not just to teach but to model and mentor.

But growth also has tremendous advantages. First, we are reaching far more people. Second, we’re able to build a level of depth, breadth and sophistication of programs. This enables us to serve the Church better and to assist the Pacific nations in nation building.

We have had very positive meetings on ways PAU can assist in other areas of our Division. One of the areas we’ve been asked to help is the Solomons. It’s too early to say how these things will work out. But the most important thing is that we are working together in a wonderful spirit of unity.

In the past two years we’ve finished five student duplexes, two faculty duplexes, a new girls' dorm, a health sciences extension and now we’re building a new school of business and a three-storey men’s dorm. There’s also a new high school on our land operated by the Central Papua Conference. The long-term goal is to have a 1200 student high school, a 1500 student primary school and a preschool for 300 children. We will use it as our demo school, integrated with our education program.

In all this growth, we like to think PAU will remain a great place to contribute to our mission. Others seem to think so. This year we won the Employer of the Year Award from the PNG Human Resources Institute. Kay Humble is our director of Administration, Policy and Planning, which includes the HR function. She is doing an outstanding job.

Professor Tracie Mafile'o, our deputy vice chancellor, with the assistance of Dr Lalen Simeon, director of Research and Postgraduate Studies, oversees our research efforts and is passionate about turning our campus into a centre for knowledge creation relevant to the Pacific context. The research our faculty is engaged in is quite broad and very important. For example, we are doing biofuel research that has the potential to revolutionise the production of fuels in PNG—and possibly further afield. Another area we are at the forefront in is HIV/AIDS research—this has included our own Church responses in PNG. Other communicable diseases are also of interest to our health sciences faculty and our business/economics team is active researching factors that can turn the economic development of PNG into substantive gains for all its citizens.

Among Adventist universities, PAU has an almost unique position as we are a leading university for this nation. That comes with a responsibility and it is a responsibility that we take very seriously as we work to build PAU into a university that is world class. But in the process we want to keep our spiritual values at the forefront of all we do. God is the centre of this campus and knowing Him is the beginning of all our learning.

Professor Ben Thomas is vice-chancellor of Pacific Adventist University.
If you’re anything like me you’re returning to work around this time extremely enthused about the new year, ready for any challenge. Truth be told, you’ve missed working, the thrill of deadlines, the exciting mental gymnastics of important decision-making or the comforting familiarity of repetitive motions. OK, OK, I’m being slightly sarcastic. Don’t get me wrong; I’m happy to have the opportunities and blessings I do but sometimes it’s hard to get motivated, especially after returning from a holiday. Let’s be honest: I’m falling asleep at my desk and not too ready to kick back into work mode. Sometimes we need holidays from our holidays. Hopefully you’ve survived without major sunburn or a few extra kilos of Christmas cheer.

You’re surveying the year ahead with a mixture of anticipation and expectation but also trepidation. Like most years there will be surprises (good and bad), disappointments, planned events that bring joy and fellowship, milestones and anniversaries passed and the routine of life. There may be new opportunities and doors that close. There may be tragedy. There is no way of telling.

It’s back to reality. My good intentions of getting up early, shaving and ironing, preparing a healthy and tasty breakfast and starting the working year on the right foot . . . well it didn’t really happen. New year’s resolutions are like that. If you made any, you’ve probably slipped up already and it’s just making you feel guilty.

A new year in some ways feels like a new start, a second chance. But rather than feeling guilty about goals not achieved, I think it’s important at this time of year to look into the past and the future and be thankful for what we have.

I had a thought about what I would like to aim for this year. Let’s phrase it positively.

The phrase “Eat, Pray, Love” comes from a popular novel that was made into a movie. I haven’t seen it but the phrase resonates with what I want to achieve this year.

**Eat:** Often people have the goal of not eating or at least losing weight in the new year. But that’s negative. When you sink your teeth into that first cream bun or ice-cream of the year it often feels like failure. This year I want to eat. I love eating, especially with friends and family. But I want to eat responsibly. Eat less, eat healthy, eat cheap and eat with
others.

**Pray:** Connect with God. In the rush of life and events that accompanied the end of another year my prayer and devotional life suffered. I need to talk to God as well as spend time listening to Him and His Word.

**Love:** I need to be more loving. Love God more so His love rubs off on me. Love my wife and not keep score. Love her family as much as mine. Love my family and forgive their faults. Love my friends and be more generous. Love strangers by being patient, honest, kind, giving and forgiving.

These are positive goals that will bring fun and fellowship. This year might be tough but God’s will for us is to rejoice and be thankful.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18: “Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

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*Jarrod Stackelroth is associate editor of Adventist Record.*
Religious Freedom 2014: The Year in Review

Dwayne Leslie Become a fan Director of Legislative Affairs, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Email

In many respects, one could argue that advancing technology has enabled lifestyle improvements that would suggest we must be living in the best of times.

Unfortunately, however, those of us who spend our professional lives monitoring religious freedom developments -- and fighting to protect those freedoms -- see the other side of the coin. Just using the last 12 months as an example, from a religious liberty standpoint, one could say we are living through the worst of times.

2014 was a year marked by barbaric beheadings, kidnappings, mass murders and other terrible acts targeting religious minorities. The most violent year ever for religious persecution? Quite possibly, but more to the point, the overall trends are worsening in recent years and even as I pray for an easing of this violence and for greater understanding and increased brotherhood among people of all faiths, I can't help but wonder whether 2015 will be as horrific as has been the past year.

Before we completely pivot to the future, I think it's worth a look back at several of the key developments in the world of religious freedom circa 2014:

UN Passes Resolution Condemning North Korea

Just last month the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution that condemned the "ongoing systematic, widespread and gross violations of human rights." As the chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, Katrina Lantos Swett, said in a statement supporting the resolution, "Many have been arrested, tortured, and executed, and thousands are imprisoned in North Korea's notorious penal labor camps, including refugees wrongly repatriated from China."

North Korea remains one of the world's leading government-sanctioned violators of religious freedoms and many around the world will be closely watching -- and praying -- for any signs of improvement in 2015.

Myanmar Government Proposes Restrictions on Interfaith Marriage

Also in December, the president of Myanmar, U Thein Sein, proposed a draft law to "protect race and religion" by restricting marriages between Buddhist women and non-Buddhist men. Opponents quickly noted that love and marriage are social issues -- even when laden down with pressures from parents, families and friends -- and not matters to be regulated by the government. The law is expected to be debated by the Parliament this month.

This is another disturbing example of governmental attempts to restrict the ability of private citizens to make their own decisions about how to practice their faith.

Continued Violence from Boko Haram

On November 28, Boko Haram -- the terrorist group best known for the kidnappings of Nigerian schoolgirls early in 2014 that sparked the #BringBackOurGirls campaign -- extended its year of horrific violence with an attack on worshippers at Kano's Central Mosque that killed or injured more than 100 people.

By some estimates, Boko Haram attacks resulted in more than 11,245 deaths in northern Nigeria in 2014, in part aimed at Christians and other groups not aligned with Boko Haram's goal of imposing Sharia law.

China Mandates Life Sentence for Uighur Muslim Scholar
When China sentenced the prominent Uighur Muslim scholar Ilham Tohti to life imprisonment for "separatism," it was widely seen as flying in the face of Chinese claims to be a country that believes in the rule of law. Critics claimed the sentence violated international law and called for the government to reverse course and release Tohti, rather than continue to suppress Uighur Muslims and other peaceful human rights advocates.

**ISIS Orders Christians and Others to Convert, Leave or Die**

As the terrorist group ISIS seized additional territory in Iraq over the summer of 2014, they issued an ultimatum against Christians in Mosul demanding that they convert, leave, pay a tax, or face death. This, despite the fact that Christians had enjoyed a peaceable existence in Mosul for more than 1,700 years. In addition, ISIS's persecution of the Shi'a and Yazidi communities, as well as Sunnis who rejected ISIS's extremist ideology, resulted in more than half a million people fleeing the area by the middle of June. Those who didn't flee were subject to killings, rape, torture, and kidnappings.

This was yet another horrific example of religious persecution in 2014, and part of what motivated United States intervention in the region later in the year.

**Myanmar Proposes "Religious Conversion Law"**

Already considered one of the worst countries on religious freedom matters, the Myanmar government in May developed a draft law that would create a government Registration Board that would be required to approve all religious conversions by citizens. To outside observers, the law clearly was designed to discourage conversion into a different faith, with proposed penalties of up to two years in jail for people applying to convert "with an intent to insult, disrespect, destroy, or to abuse a religion." Myanmar has a long, troubled track record when it comes to religious freedom and continued to oppress people throughout 2014.

My heart breaks as I think about everything the victims of religious violence and persecution experienced in 2014 -- and make no mistake, I have only touched on a few representative examples here. Many thousands of other members of religious minorities were forced to suffer or even die in 2014 just because they happened to believe differently than their oppressors.

As we turn now to the year ahead, let us all, as people of faith, pray for a more just world in 2015, one in which more people in more parts of the world, are allowed to follow their conscience as they see fit.