



GET FED BY THE FAITH OF  
THE PERSECUTED CHURCH



**OpenDoors**

Serving persecuted **Christians** worldwide

**"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."**

**1 Corinthians 10:31 (NIV)**





# SYRIA

**Our menu suggestion: pitta bread, hummus, olives, fresh vegetables**

Why? Because this kind of food is characteristic of the Middle East. Before the war, eating in a Syrian café could mean many little dishes of hummus, halloumi, baba ganoush, olives, salad and pitta bread. Of course, since the war, a lot has changed. Nowadays, millions of Syrians are reliant on emergency food provision.



## CHEW ON

**Fast Food** is a six-part series during which you share a meal with others, serve up stories of the persecuted Church and take away a fasting challenge. (For more on this series see p. 4). In this issue we look at the country of Syria, which has been engaged in a civil war for over seven years. Throughout the war Christians have been caught in the crossfire of the fighting between government troops and rebels. Although many Christians have left the country or are internally displaced, there are many Christians who are sincerely committed to staying in Syria in the midst of this civil war.

## THE MENU

### 1. Serve the meal

Share a simple meal of typical Syrian food. Visit [www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food](http://www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food) for some recipe ideas.)

### 2. Chew it over

Reflect on your last **Fast Food** challenge (Issue Three). What did you find difficult? What did you find easy? Did God speak to you through the experience? Has it helped you to understand the needs of the persecuted Church?

### 3. Feast your eyes

Show the video. This issue's video is about Christian refugees in Syria. As you watch, think of how you can live out Christ in your community and support those who are living out Christ in places like Syria. Find the video on our website at [www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food](http://www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food).

### 4. Food for thought

Talk about persecution in Syria. Share the stories on the placemats. What have you seen or heard on the news recently? Take the "Know Your Place(Mat)" quiz ([www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food](http://www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food)).

### 5. Pray

Pray for believers in Syria. (Use the Bite Size section and Prayer section to help you pray.)

### 6. Take up the challenge!

## THE CHALLENGE

### YOU ARE GOING TO FAST FROM... COMFORT

When refugees flee countries like Syria, they often have to leave behind virtually everything they own. They find themselves sleeping wherever they can: in tents, in cars, on the side of roads... So this week you can show solidarity by sleeping on the floor. Use a sleep mat or some kind of padding (or nothing at all). Try it for a night, or more.

### GO LARGE

Many refugees find themselves in tents. So you could try sleeping outside in a tent. Or in a shed. In many places, churches have housed refugees as best they can: sometimes many families make their home in a church hall. So, perhaps you could sleep in your church hall for a night?







BITE  
SIZE

## FAST FACTS ABOUT PERSECUTION IN SYRIA

- Christians are not only caught up in the violence of the war in Syria, but are specifically targeted by Islamic extremists for attack, abduction and murder.
- In areas dominated by Islamic extremists it is almost impossible to be a Christian. But even in areas still controlled by the government, evangelism and conversion from Islam are prohibited.
- Despite all this, the Church in Syria is having a huge impact and is seeing people come to Christ.
- Open Doors partners with the local Church in Syria to care for and provide relief aid to tens of thousands of displaced Christians, as well as distributing Bibles and Christian books, providing training for Christians and trauma counselling.

*"This relief work is offering much needed help to hundreds of Christian families who lost everything... This is a rare opportunity for breaking the denominational barriers through the love of Christ."* –Syrian church leader

## PRAYER

- Pray for strength and protection for brave Open Doors partners and church leaders who are choosing to stay in Syria to witness about Christ, despite the risks.
- Pray for provision for the thousands of displaced people in Syria who are simply too poor or infirm to leave the country.
- Pray that Christians will be able to return to their homes one day and rebuild the communities shattered by conflict.







# HOW IT WORKS

**Fast Food** is a resource based around several meals. Each meal comes from a different country where Christians are persecuted for their faith. And each issue you do three things...

## 1 FEAST

Share a meal with family, friends, your youth group or small group. One time you might have a curry, the next time you might have a tiny, plain bowl of rice. Each meal links to a country where Christians are persecuted.

## 2 SHARE

Explore the challenges that Christians face in that country. To help you, we've provided six menus, suggesting what food to serve, and given stories and prayer points about the country. There are also videos, downloadable placemats, and recipes on our website at [www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food](http://www.opendoors.org.za/fast-food).

## 3 CHALLENGE

Be challenged to "fast" from something or to give something up for maybe a few days, a week or even a month. It might mean "fasting" from comfort and sleeping on the floor or giving up money and trying to cope on a very limited budget. You might even be challenged to "fast" from speaking! Each challenge gives you a taste of what life is like for persecuted Christians around the world. Whenever you choose, you can reflect on what you have learned, and how God has spoken to you. And then it will be time for another meal – and a different challenge!

### **Fast Food is family friendly!**

One of the best ways to do **Fast Food** is to share the meals and take the challenges as a family. The menus are easily adaptable for family discussions.



### **Church Leaders**

**Fast Food** is great for churches. Not only is it ideal for home groups, it's a great way for families to be involved. If members of your church are doing **Fast Food**, how about giving them a few minutes in the Sunday service to share what they are doing?

### **Fast days**

All around the world persecuted Christians know the value of fasting and praying. If you wish, you can make the day of the meal a fast day. Participants can abstain from food during the day, and gather together to break their fast in the evening.



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