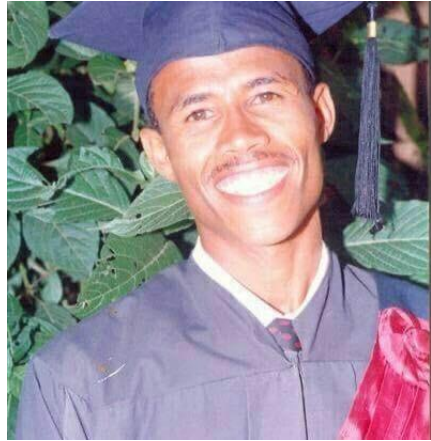


ACAT (Harrow group) – prayer case of the month (*June 2020*)

Please pray as you feel led for **Aklilu Desbele** (46), a Christian who has been in prison in Eritrea since 2008 because of his commitment to sharing the gospel.



Aklilu Desbele is known as a man of prayer, integrity and good humour, who was so committed to the gospel that his friends called him the “Fifth Gospel”. An accountancy graduate from Asmara university, he was arrested in 2008 because of his faith and incarcerated in Assab military prison on the Red Sea coast in the southeast of the country.

In May 2002, Eritrea effectively outlawed Christian activities technically not affiliated with the Roman Catholic, Lutheran or Orthodox denominations. But since then, thousands of Christians belonging to ‘permitted’, as well as banned Christian communities, have been detained without charge or trial in inhumane, life-threatening conditions, where they may experience torture.

Recently, **Aklilu Desbele** has been moved to Mai Serwa prison, where several Christians including Twen Theodros and Mussie Eyob, both former ACAT (Harrow) prayer cases, are incarcerated. Mai Serwa is located 8 km northwest of the capital, Asmara. As well as buildings, this prison reportedly uses shipping containers, buried truck containers and zinc hangars as cells. But in contrast to other prisons, some prisoners can receive food parcels, medical care and visitors.

Like many Christian prisoners in Eritrea, **Aklilu** has been offered freedom in exchange for renouncing his faith, but has refused. He has never been tried.

Update: some good news! It has been reported that **Ali Aarrass** (our prayer case for November 2014) has been released from prison in Morocco, several years early.