Shining the *"Light of Hope"*

Each year, VOMC's *Christmas Blessing* project gives Canadian Christians an opportunity to share Christ's love with persecuted believers around the world. Through partnerships with trusted ministries, gifts such as Bibles, food, clothing and school supplies – along with other basic necessities – are distributed to children facing hardships because of their families' faith. More than simply presents, these gifts also serve to remind the young recipients that they are not forgotten by God nor fellow believers across the globe. In addition, the distributions point them to the greatest gift ever given: *His Son Jesus Christ*.

CHRISTMAS BLESSING 2025

During the Christmas season last year, through two of VOMC's *Christmas Blessing* distributions in India, our trusted ministry partners were able to bless 850 children belonging to persecuted families. Working alongside local churches, participating pastors and volunteers helped to successfully distribute hundreds of gift packages containing school supplies, water bottles, hygiene products, warm scarves, colouring materials, toys, chocolates and Bibles. For many of the children, it was the first time they ever received gifts specially prepared for them – and the majority never had a Bible of their own before. Beyond meeting the practical needs of those growing up amid severe hardship and opposition, the distributions also provided great spiritual encouragement.

One of the children we helped was Alison, whose father – Pastor Ajay – had been killed by Hindu militants because of his ministry. In the aftermath of the fatal attack, Christian families in Alison's village were driven from their homes, leaving many of them displaced, traumatized and struggling to rebuild their lives. Today, as the surviving members of Alison's family seek safety and refuge in their rented accommodation, they must still deal with the pain of persecution, loss and uncertainty. Despite the challenges, these believers are remaining steadfast in their faith and continuing to trust God for the future. Through the *Christmas Blessing* project, Alison and her brother Suraj were delighted to receive such special gifts – including their own Bibles – which brought them great comfort and joy amid their healing journey. While these *Christmas Blessing* distributions seem to be simple expressions of Christian benevolence, they convey a very powerful message: *persecuted believers are loved and cherished!* Through your generosity, hundreds of children like Alison and Suraj are able to experience the compassion of Christ in tangible ways, assuring them that their global Christian family is standing with them in faith, love and prayer.

HOPE FOR CHILDREN IN LEBANON AND SYRIA

This year, in partnership with *Heart for Lebanon*, our 2026 *Christmas Blessing* project will reach **2,385** vulnerable children in Lebanon and Syria, most of whom come from families experiencing economic hardship, displacement, instability and pressure due to opposition for their Christian faith.

Many in Lebanon continue to struggle amid the country's severe economic and humanitarian crises, while families in Syria are facing the ongoing effects of civil conflict and instability. For many parents, providing even a small Christmas celebration for their children is otherwise far beyond their reach. In response, VOMC's ministry partners have developed "Light of Hope" gift packages, offering these families tangible reminders that even in life's darkest seasons, the light of Christ continues to shine.

Each package will include:

- A children's illustrated Bible.
- A lantern, serving as both a practical item and a symbolic reminder that Jesus, the *"Light of the world,"* came to shine amid the darkness of our world.
- Warm clothing items such as scarves, gloves and socks.
- A reusable water bottle.
- A cake mix, enabling families to create a joyful interactive Christmas memory at home.
- A toy, sweet treats, and a bracelet bearing encouraging messages such as "You Are Loved" and "You Are Strong."

The gift packages will be distributed during special Christmas gatherings where children and their families will hear the message of Jesus' birth and be reminded that they are loved, seen and valued by God. Through established educational programs and trusted church partnerships, this year's project will also strengthen mentoring relationships that are going to provide further spiritual encouragement, discipleship and community fellowship throughout the new year.

The focus of this initiative will be on children from families that are actively participating in Bible studies, Sunday school programs, and other church-based ministry outreaches. Many of these children, who are now eagerly following Christ, have come from Muslim backgrounds – a decision that often increases one's vulnerability, persecution and marginalization among opposing communities. It is for these young believers – children who are growing in their faith despite the cost – that this project is designed to bless.

This Christmas, you can help shine Christ's light into some of the darkest places. Your support will bring practical assistance, joyful memories, and the life-giving message of the Gospel to children who need it most within these countries of the Middle East.

Donate today at: **www.vomcanada.com/ChristmasBlessing**

