



Current Issues in Prayer

October 2016

Welcome! The Pope invites people of different faiths to come together and pray:

That journalists, in carrying out their work, may always be motivated by respect for truth and a strong sense of ethics.



Getting started:

Let me get comfortable and calm. For a few moments, let me concentrate on my breathing ... in and ... out. Now, gently, let me repeat five times Our Lord's words : « Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right ».

Let me now thank Our Lord for those journalists who live these words at great personal cost.



Short story:

Both Mahad Ahmed Elmi and Ali Imam Sharmarke were well known journalists in Somalia. Both were killed in Mogadishu in two separate attacks on the 16th August, 2007. Elmi was shot in the head as he went to work in the morning. Sharmarke was blown up by a remote controlled mine as he returned home from Elmi's funeral.

Sharmarke, who was 50 years old, had his wife and children living in Ottawa. Leaving a good job he had in Canada, he had returned to Mogadishu, the city of his birth.

Elmi, who was 30 years old, from Somalia, worked with Sharmarke in a radio station called *Horn Afrik*. This radio station was openly critical of the government as well as of the Islamic militia in Somalia. Every morning, Elmi would host a very popular talk show. Residents at Mogadishu would phone in and report crimes and government interventions that were taking place around them. Sharmarke was also an active member fighting for freedom of expression in the *National Civil Society, Somalia*.

These two journalists died because they were prominent voices in favour of democracy and reconciliation in Somalia.



Ali Iman Sharmarke & Mahad Ahmed Elmi



Time to reflect:

Would my life have been the same had there not been such people as journalists who bring the news from far and wide?

Am I aware of the great risks that many journalists take so as to inform people of what is going on, without compromising with the truth?



Let us pray:

Father God, help me to appreciate the work of those who make the news available for us, even in our homes. Merciful Father, may their work serve to bring all people to reach their full dignity.



Inspiration:

"We don't go into journalism to be popular. It is our job to seek the truth and put constant pressure on our leaders until we get the answers." *Helen Thomas*



Hands on:

I could offer my sufferings for those journalists who daily put their life at risk.