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## **Austria: “Red Wednesday” celebrated today. Abbeys and monuments lit in red to remember persecuted Christians**

Abbeys, monasteries, churches and public places in Austria will be lit in red today to draw attention to the plight of millions of persecuted and threatened Christians. Indeed, over 50 monuments will turn blood red to mark the fifth “Red Wednesday”. For the first time, the Parliament building, in Vienna’s Hofburg complex, and Admont Abbey in Styria will also be lit. The “Red Wednesday” is organized around the world by the Catholic humanitarian organization Kirche in Not (Church in Need) that supports persecuted and poor Christians. Thousands of cathedrals, churches and public buildings worldwide are taking part in the campaign. In the same context, Admont Benedictine Abbey also organised an online week of commemoration for persecuted Christians (until 21 November), since “Christianity has never been so threatened as it is today”, Abbot Gerhard Hafner said as he presented the campaign yesterday: “With our online week of commemoration and our blood-red-lit collegiate church, we want to draw attention to the fate of our brothers and sisters who are persecuted and killed”, Abbot Hafner pointed out. With the “Red Wednesday” – a statement reads –, Kirche in Not remembers the more than 260 million Christians who suffer persecution, discrimination and violence worldwide because of their faith. In 60 countries, people are hampered in their religious practice, and in 14 countries, “there are serious religious freedom violations”. In 2019 alone, 4,136 Christians were murdered around the world because of their faith.

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