

Pakistan: VOM Assists Attack Victim

A woman who lost her eye during an attack because of her witness has recently received medical care from VOM and is continuing to heal.

Josephine Barkat, 22, was attacked in 2012 by the owner of the beauty parlor where she worked in Pakistan. After being pressured to convert to Islam by her coworkers, the owner demanded she stopped praying for her fellow employees in Jesus' name because she was "misguiding Muslim workers."

"I told you that I will not accept Islam," Josephine told her boss. "I am happy with my life. Don't force me. I can leave the job, but I cannot leave Christ."

The owner then started slapping Josephine and kicking her. As she fell to the floor, a broom handle impaled her in the eye – the same eye that had already been burnt by the fire that Muslims set her house to when she was a young girl.

At the age of 4, Muslims set fire to Josephine's home after her older brother had helped decorate their street for Christmas. She suffered severe burns to her face, neck and upper torso.

In June 2014, the pain in her eye grew worse and developed further complications, leading her doctor to remove the eye. Josephine's father had to borrow a large amount of money for the surgery and her recovery.

In February 2015, Josephine joined a sewing school, but, again, her daily prayer time offended the other students and her teacher. Their behavior toward her led Josephine to leave the school.

VOM recently paid for Josephine's medical care and helped with trauma counseling. We've also given her a Bible. Although she was illiterate at the time of her attack, she now works in another sewing center operated by a VOM partner where she is learning to read her Bible. She hopes to eventually attend a Bible school.

Having been disfigured from the two attacks, she's experienced rejection from many in her community. Now, having experienced healing and both personal and spiritual growth, she hopes to help other girls who have not been accepted by society.

"I know there are girls who are like me – those who are not accepted by society because they are 'ugly,'" Josephine said. "I want to help these kinds of girls so they can be a good part of society. They should stand on their feet and have confidence in themselves."

Source: VOM Sources