

Today's Martyrs – January 2015

Thursday January 1, 2015



Nigeria: Gombe, Gombe state

Joseph Kamida Cham (president of Urban Frontiers Mission, wrote in an email “The suicide bomber targeted one of the churches where I worship in Tudun Wada Gombe. There are three churches side-by-side, ECWA Gospel, ECWA 3 and COCIN. COCIN and ECWA 3 are on the opposite side of the road that the bomber took; it is also the only access road into the communities behind the Gombe State University. The road is usually barricaded on Christmas and the New Year’s Day, when the service is going on...The only casualty is the suicide bomber, as he was torn into pieces. He stopped and greeted the Boys Brigade [Boy Scouts] that were stationed at the point alongside the police - after the explosion, the particles affected eight Christians. Two had serious injuries, while others had minor injuries and shock from the blast”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/attacks-by-islamic-extremists-in-nigeria-leave-at-least-28-christians-dead/>

Friday January 2, 2015



India: Maulvikhurd village, Amethi district, Uttar Pradesh state

Arvind D'Souza (placed in 'preventative' detention for 14 days after Hindu radicals accused him of 'spreading Christianity', police acknowledged that he committed no crime but decided 'public order' required his detention)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-man-detained-on-security-grounds-even-though-he-did-not-commit-any-crimes-33130.html>

Saturday January 3, 2015



India: New Delhi

Fr Cyril Patrick (contradicted a police report that the destruction of his church's creche was an electrical fire, said "CCTV videos show something being poured [on the Nativity Scene] from the top")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Delhi:-crèche-destroyed-by-fire-in-a-Catholic-church-33112.html>



Iran: Karoun Prison, Ahvaz

Amin Khaki (church employee, beaten and arrested on March 5, 2014 during a picnic in Shush; transferred to Ahwaz Prison on May 7, 2014, beaten; **UPDATE**: released on bail)

<http://vocir.org/2015/01/03/iranian-christian-prisoner-amin-khaki-was-released/>



Iraq: Mosul

Zouheir Papka Elias (**killed**)

<http://indefenseofchristians.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Genocide-report.pdf>



Ukraine: Kharkiv

Bishop Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk (**UPDATE**: said “The situation in the war zones is catastrophic. There is hunger. More than 80 people have already died of it in Luhansk and Donetsk...We are trying to help where we can. Just a few weeks ago, we were at least able to give 300 pairs of shoes to children...Twenty years ago, we didn’t have a single parish - today there are more than 50. The faithful have Ukrainian, Polish, Russian as well as Vietnamese roots”)

Ukraine: Lutsk

Bishop Vitaliy Skomarovsky (said “The war may seem far away. But in reality, many young men from the western part of the country have joined the war. Just recently, a row of fir trees was felled in the cemetery of Lutsk to bury 13 young soldiers”)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/for-catholics-in-ukraine-the-situation-in-the-war-zones-is-catastrophic-87393/>

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/for-catholics-in-ukraine-the-situation-in-the-war-zones-is-catastrophic-87393/>



Libya: Sirte

Hanna Aziz (described the abduction of 13 Egyptian Christian workers from their apartments

"They were 15 armed and masked men who came in four vehicles. They had a list of full names of Christians in the building. While checking IDs, Muslims were left aside while Christians were grabbed... I heard my friends screaming but they were quickly shushed at gunpoint. After that, we heard nothing. I am still in my room waiting for them to take me. I want to die with them", three relatives were among those taken)

Mila Ishak (aged 27, described the abduction of his friends by ISIL terrorists "[My friend in a nearby apartment building] called me again and with fear and a low voice told me that they were able to break the door of the room beside his room, and had abducted all their six friends who were inside the room...[They came to my building.] I was hearing everything. One of the seven residents of the room...awoke and opened the iron door of the room. They entered the room and abducted all of them too...[They came to my room and tried to enter then one said] 'leave them. That is enough. Let's go'", fled the country and returned to Egypt)

Maged Solaiman Shehata (abducted)

Abanoub Ayyad Ateyya (abducted)

Yusuf Shukry Yunan (abducted)

Hany Abdel-Messeih Saleeb (abducted)

Kirollos Beshry Fawzy (abducted)

Milad Makeen Zaky (abducted)

Tawadros Yusuf Tawadros (abducted)

Samuel Estafanous Kamel (abducted, had told his family that 100 Copts had contacted the Egyptian embassy for help to escape the country but received no response)

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Mina Fayez Aziz (abducted)

Malak Ibrahim Sinewt (abducted)

Girguis Milad Sinewt (abducted)

Bishoy Adel Khalaf (abducted)

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/c59a93ddbe83476ab7551b2fb45d4326/least-20-egyptian-christians-kidnapped-libya>

<http://en.sectarianattacks.com/attacks/194-thirteen-coptic-egyptians-kidnapped-in-libya>

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1284&A=17109>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/01/3644201/>



Nigeria: Ambe-Madaki village, Sanga Local Government Area, Kaduna state

Yohanna Adamu (described an attack by Muslim Fulanis that killed 15 Christians “Many of our people are missing, and more than 20 houses have been burned down”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/attacks-by-islamic-extremists-in-nigeria-leave-at-least-28-christians-dead/>

Sunday January 4, 2015



United States – California: San Diego

Pastor Dwayne Shepherd (injured in a shooting in his church parking lot, he and another minister were deliberately targeted, hospitalized, released)

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/47847-watch-you-won-t-believe-what-this-church-did-after-pastor-was-shot>

Monday January 5, 2015



Indonesia: Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam province

Rosnida Sari (university lecturer, received death threats after posting a web article about bringing her students to a church to inquire about gender equality in Christianity, 17 Muslims were included and defended her, in hiding)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/lecturer-threatened-after-taking-muslim-students-to-church/72733>



China: Liuji, Bozhou, Anhui province

Liu Yongju (home raided by DSPS officers, USB drive seized)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/anhui-officers-threaten-house-churchs.html>



Kazakhstan: Oral

Nikolai Novikov (aged 34, arrested on November 10, 2013 at an unregistered Sunday religious service; fined 50 MFIs on December 18, 2013; sentenced on August 18, 2014 to 5 days' imprisonment for refusing to pay his fine; **UPDATE**: received a restraining order on his garage, apparently in preparation of its seizure)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2026



Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan

Zuhair Benyameen (**killed** by the Islamic State [ISIL], funeral held)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58942>



United States – Utah: Salt Lake City

Kathy Taylor (aged 34, wife of Nathan, mother of six, reported on [January 5, 2015](#) to have **died of melanoma** after delaying the birth of her unborn child in an attempt to save his life, named Luke, he died of an infection days after birth on [September 22, 2014](#))

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/mom-of-6-dies-after-refusing-cancer-treatment-to-give-her-baby-a-chance-at>

Tuesday January 6, 2015



Iraq: Ankawa, Erbil, Kurdistan

Fr Daniel Alkhory (said "I just keep telling the kids [in the refugee camp that] you have to forgive. Forgiveness will lead us to so many paths. I don't want them to grow up and be after revenge and be angry. We want to make a party for them every day. We just want them to be happy and keep smiling. We just want the children to feel like they are at home", added that they have lost contact with 15 Christian families that were unable to escape ISIL)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20150105195557.htm>



Egypt: Aswan

Talaat Israel (aged 60, has gone on a hunger strike in protest against a policeman who bought furniture from him and stopped paying installments, previous attempts to collect led to police threats of fabricated charges against him and his family)

Egypt: El-Bayadeya, Mallawi, Minya province

Fr Girgis Zakaria (shot at by masked gunmen, escaped)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58957>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58955>



United States – Arizona: Phoenix

Alex Stojic (parishioner, condemned pro-Ustashi vandalism on his church on Christmas Eve, called it "an outright threat")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/76394.htm>

Wednesday January 7, 2015

Christmas – Eastern Calendar



Vietnam: Dak Jak, Kontum

Fr Dominic Tran Van Vu (ordered by the government to leave his parish, temporary church building to be torn down, demolition delayed after more than 6,000 parishioners mounted anti-government demonstrations)

Bishop Michael Hoang Duc Oanh (**UPDATE**: spoke on the government's refusal to allow a permanent church building to be built)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vietnamese-authorities-threaten-to-tear-down-a-church-and-expel-its-priest-33729.html>



Iraq: Kirkuk

Rachel (elderly woman, forced out of her [Qaraqosh](#) nursing home by ISIL on [October 24, 2014](#), fed and protected in Mosul by her Muslim neighbors along with nine other elderly Christians, all were forced to flee after refusing ISIL demands to convert to Islam, spent two days in the cold no-man's land between ISIL and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters before being rescued on [January 7, 2015](#))

http://www.fides.org/en/news/37068-ASIA_IRAQ_They_refuse_to_convert_to_Islam_10_elderly_Christians_expelled_from_Mosul#.VLCbSsJTEfg
https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/02/article_3661725.html/



Turkey

Umut Sahin (secretary-general of the Union of Protestant Churches, convert, described some of the problems faced by Protestant Turks, described how 'anti-Christian bigotry in Turkey is deeply rooted')

<http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/01/turkey-france-christianophobia-turkish-protestants.html#ixzz3OI07BkYI>



Central African Republic: Bangui

Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE:** reported to have received death threats from the anti-balaka militia, replied "I am a Pastor who is ready to die for his flock")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37053->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC Archbishop of Bangui threatened with death while bringing assistance to the displaced#.VK3z2MJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37053-)



Nigeria: Baga, Borno state

Fr Patrick Tor Alumuku (**UPDATE:** reported on the latest Boko Haram attack in which as many as 2,000 people may have been killed "I received a message of the Christians Association of Nigeria, the association of Christian churches in Nigeria, which states that in that area Boko Haram has burned several churches and caused numerous victims. Though it is noted that in general the national media tend to reduce the number of victims not to further inflame the minds...One must bear in mind that the presidential election campaign for February has opened this week. The situation is particularly delicate...When those of Boko Haram arrive in a major city they make no distinction between Christians and Muslims, and the population flees, without distinction of religion. Boko Haram separates Muslims from Christians only in the smaller villages. Next to the combatants from Nigeria, Boko Haram has been strengthened by jihadist members from Libya and Mali. Their goal is to create a caliphate in northern Nigeria")

Fr Timothy Cosmas (**UPDATE:** described the attack in which hundreds were likely killed and possibly thousands "It was a massacre. Baga was a populated and active town, despite having already been attacked by Boko Haram. The majority of the victims were killed after the Boko Haram militants occupied the multinational force base in the town Saturday [January 3, 2015], which had been recently abandoned by a contingent deployed by Chad...the massacre confirms the incapacity of the government and Nigerian army to stop the Boko Haram advance")

Nigeria: Mubi, Adamawa state

Lucky John (disappeared after the [October 29, 2014](#) Boko Haram attack on his home, **UPDATE:** reappeared)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37071->

[AFRICA NIGERIA New violence committed by Boko Haram perhaps 2 000 dead several churches burned#.VLCa MJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37071-)

<http://www.misna.org/en/other/boko-haram-witnesses-of-a-massacre-09-01-2015-813.html>

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/01/teenager-recounts-seven-week-ordeal-boko-haram-den/>



Sierra Leone: Freetown

Moses (husband, father of two, church mission employee, **died of suspected Ebola**)

Br Themis Adams (Australian citizen, former rock musician; **UPDATE**: wrote a eulogy for his friend and co-worker Moses)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/ebola-strikes-at-orthodox-mission-sierra-leone-father-themi-loses-a-beloved-co-worker-to-the-deadly-virus/>



United States – Missouri: Marshall

Loyal Grandstaff (aged 12, reported that he was told by his public middle school teacher that he could not read a Bible during free time, the principal said that Bibles are not prohibited from school and would investigate)

<http://christiannews.net/2015/01/07/missouri-middle-school-student-prohibited-from-reading-bible-during-free-time/>

Saturday January 8, 2015



Poland: Warsaw

Jacek Kotula (aged 48, pro-life demonstrator, a judge has ruled on October 16, 2014 in a closed session that when he called abortion 'killing' he defamed the Rzeszow hospital that performs the abortions, ordered him to publicly apologize with words chosen by the court and to pay all court fees, the court refused to allow witness testimony and refused to release the legal reasoning for the decision; **UPDATE**: attended a demonstration of 150 persons at the Canadian Embassy to protest the December 24, 2014 arrest and continued detention of Mary Wagner)

Przemysław Sycz (aged 35, pro-life demonstrator, a judge has ruled on October 16, 2014 in a closed session that when he called abortion 'killing' he defamed the Rzeszow hospital that performs the abortions, ordered him to publicly apologize with words chosen by the court and to pay all court fees, the court refused to allow witness testimony and refused to release the legal reasoning for the decision; **UPDATE**: attended a demonstration of 150 persons at the Canadian Embassy to protest the December 24, 2014 arrest and continued detention of Mary Wagner)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/150-poles-protest-outside-canadian-embassy-to-support-mary-wagner>



Italy: Perugia

Don Scarda (pastor, described an attack by five Muslims on a parishioner at prayer, family photo taken, statue of the Virgin Mary smashed and urinated on)

<http://www.raymondibrahim.com/muslim-persecution-of-christians/italy-muslims-destroy-and-urinate-on-virgin-mary-statue/>

Friday January 9, 2015



Syria: Aleppo

Fr Krikor Milad (described his cathedral's partial destruction by Islamic Front artillery "If the bombing had taken place just two hours later, the church would have been full of worshippers")

<http://www.raymondibrahim.com/muslim-persecution-of-christians/old-armenian-church-bombed-in-syria/>



Sudan

Rev David Yein Reith (arrested by NISS secret police while returning home from a prayer meeting)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59175>



Mexico: Chilpancingo

Bishop Alejo Zavala Castro (denounced the continuing threats and attempts at blackmail against priests, two priests have been murdered in the last two months)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37065->

[AMERICA MEXICO The priests of Guerrero continue to preach the Gospel as always despite threats and blackmail#.VLCK_cJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37065-AMERICA_MEXICO_The_priests_of_Guerrero_continue_to_preach_the_Gospel_as_always_despite_threats_and_blackmail#.VLCK_cJTEfg)

Saturday January 10, 2015



China: Hami, Xinjiang

Officials raided a church service and administratively impose sanctions and fines

Pastor Miao Yuexi (aged 32, detained by police during a worship service, church sealed, released the next day but repeatedly questioned in the following days)

Qian Aili (aged 28, cited by police in their report for illegal Christian activity)

Hong Wanjin (aged 43, church property deed holder)

Pan Cha (aged 27, church property deed holder)

Li Guangming (aged 30, church property deed holder)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/05/xinjiang-church-members-succeed-in.html>



Egypt: Dalga

Sabrine Mushir (young girl, reported to have been abducted)

Egypt: Heliopolis

Rasha Salama Abdullah (aged 31, wife of Emad Makram Toma, abducted after work)

Emad Makram Toma (husband of abduction victim Rasha Salama Abdullah)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/cs-releases/3259-continued-kidnapping-of-and-indifference-to-coptic-christians>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59826>



Kosovo: Lipljan

Zoran Simijonovic (church president, commented on the vandalism of his church with KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] graffiti, said “We did not see something like this coming and we are worried about potential new incidents”)

Fr Slavisa Spasic (said the graffiti was 'distressing')

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/kla-graffiti-appears-on-serbian-orthodox-church-walls/>

Sunday January 11, 2015



China: Zhejiang

Zan Aizong (freelance journalist; **UPDATE:** said officials “use the legal system [as a pretext]. They go after crosses and building codes because it will not cause an uproar abroad. They want to turn Christianity into Chinese Christianity, controlled by the party”)

China: Beijing

Ling Cangzhou (blogger, said “Many Christians are scared of the government. In China you rely on the government for jobs, position, for money. Families and relatives are affected. Dissidents don’t get promotion or advancement”)

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2015/0111/In-China-a-church-state-showdown-of-biblical-proportions>



India

Sajan K George (President of the Global Council of Indian Christians; **UPDATE:** said "In secular India, freedom of worship is deteriorating for Christians. Two attacks on the same day, in two different states of the country, are proof that extremist groups feel encouraged to attack Christians because they are not restrained by the law")

India: Madhav Nagar, Bihar state

Rev Kamlesh (prayer service attended by 50 people disrupted by Bajrang Dal [the RSS paramilitary youth wing] militants, accused of forced conversions, pushed around, others beaten, furniture and musical instruments damaged)

India: Kushulanagar, Karnataka state

Rev K J Mathai (taken by police after services along with some of the 30 attendees and questioned on charges of forcible conversions while Hindus demonstrated outside the police station, released, warned to 'be careful')

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Religious-violence-increases-in-India-with-two-Christian-communities-affected-33165.html>



Pakistan: Peshawar

Farha Javeed (aged 26, severely injured in the September 22, 2013 twin suicide bombing of All Saints Church, had become bedridden and had a colostomy as a result, **died of her injuries**)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sister-farha-javeed-the-latest-fatality-from-the-2013-peshawar-twin-bomb-attack>



Kenya: Mombasa

George Karidhimba Muriki (aged 25, **shot dead** while arriving at his church in an assassination attempt on his pastor, the shooters were overheard to have mistaken him for the pastor)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/christian-shot-to-death-outside-church-in-mombasa-kenya/>



Colombia: Barranquilla and Teusaquillo

Several church leaders threatened with death by the Black Eagles neo-paramilitary group

Rev Milton Mejía

Rev Jairo Barriga

Elder German Zarate

Agustin Jimenez

Fr Fernando Sanchez

Fr Fernando Gary Martinez

<http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/global-christian-body-calls-for-colombia-churches-leaders-protection-28173>

Monday January 12, 2015



Iraq: Mella Baruan

Fr Youhanna Issa OAOC (aged 50, has been aiding refugees, said "Christians are suffering a lot. They live in abandoned, crumbling houses. Food is sometimes in short supply. There is no money to provide for everyday basic needs. The crisis is here to stay and will not be solved in a few weeks...With ISIL's arrival, they no longer believe that they can live with Muslims...there is no more trust")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Iraqi-priest,-the-Islamic-State-has-destroyed-Christians'-trust-in-Muslims-33159.html>



Kenya: Mombasa

Ngoro Nyaga (aged 70, shot in the shoulder while leaving his church, the two assailants were angry that he possessed a Bible, hospitalized)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/christian-shot-to-death-outside-church-in-mombasa-kenya/>



Israel: Haifa

Fr Dimitry Sammara (church vandalized)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/76543.htm>



Egypt: Minya

Sabrin Saad (aged 17, reported to have been abducted)

Semsem Fahmy (aged 23, reported to have been abducted at gunpoint, ransom demanded)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1289&A=17192>



Belarus: Aleksandrovka village, Grodno region

Aleksei Shchedrov (aged 30; **UPDATE**: homeless shelter inspected by the authorities and ordered closed despite their admission they had no authority to do so, has refused)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2035



United States - Illinois

Patriarch Dinkha IV (aged 79; **UPDATE**: hospitalized with influenza on [January 12, 2015](#), developed respiratory distress)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/02/holy-synod-statement-regarding-the-health-of-catholicos-patriarch-mar-dinkha-iv/>

Tuesday January 13, 2015



Pakistan: Peshawar

Majid Mushtaq (St Francis high school lab assistant, shot in the shoulder and hand, survived, no police report filed)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/undefined-person-fired-two-shoot-on-majid-mushtaq/>



Egypt: Nag Hassan village, Dabiya, Luxor province

Shahid Nesimis Saroufim (aged 38, husband of Farid, father of a son aged 6, a daughter aged 4, and an unborn child, **shot dead** one day after a court hearing on the murder of his cousin Emil Naseem Saroufeem, who was bludgeoned to death on [July 5, 2013](#) in a mob attack)

Safwat Samaan Yasaa (director of the human rights group Nation Without Borders; **UPDATE:** said "The court and the police have all the evidence against the killers and the attackers involved in the incident, and they are dragging their feet. Instead of doing their job and arresting the killers, they are leaving them out for a long time and allowing them to do more attacks instead of enforcing the law....The police seem to do their job very well when somebody likes a Facebook page [deemed unIslamic]. In a few days they are arrested, taken to court and given a six-year sentence, while a murder case [against Muslim perpetrators] with solid testimony and hard evidence takes forever to go through court")

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59066>

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/christian-in-egypt-gunned-down/>

Wednesday January 14, 2015



China: Asku, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

Ren Demei (invited other Christians to her home, arrested for creating a public disturbance when they joined in singing hymns, released after 5 days, has sued to reverse the arrest)

Zhao Qi (arrested for creating a public disturbance when leading Christians in singing hymns in the home of Ren Demei, released after 7 days, has sued to reverse the arrest)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/05/xinjiang-christians-sue-authorities.html>



India: Vikaspury district, New Delhi

Fr Balraj Lourduswamy (described the desecration of a grotto of the Virgin Mary by three men "While one person broke the grotto glass another pulled down Our Lady's statue")

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Delhi, said "We see a clear pattern in these attacks", the grotto attack being the fourth in seven weeks)

Mini John (secretary of the All India Catholic Union' women's commission, condemned the attack)

<http://mattersindia.com/delhi-reports-fourth-church-attack-in-45-days/>



Egypt

Fr Basilius Naim (fled from [Nag Hassan village, Dabiya, Luxor province](#) after the murder of Shahid Nesimis Saroufim)

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/02/article_3721551.html/

Thursday January 15, 2015



India: Delhi

Christian leaders criticized the continuing silence of Prime Minister Modi regarding the recent increase in church attacks

John Dayal (National Integration Council, **UPDATE:** said “I still feel the prime minister must openly denounce such attacks on religious minorities and denounce those involved...even if they belong to his own Sangh Parivar [the Hindu nationalist umbrella organization]”)

Samuel Jaykumar (National Council of Churches in India, said “The silence of the prime minister encourages those forces which want to create tension in society. Attacks even on places of worship are not taken seriously”)

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Delhi; **UPDATE:** said that an ecumenical group of Christian leaders met with the Prime Minister around Christmastime and he "refused to make a statement about attacks on Christians", claiming the attacks were "media hype")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-slam-indias-modi-for-not-condemning-church-attacks/72790>



Iraq

Archbishop Amel Shamon Nona (**UPDATE:** appointed to lead the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Sydney, the Chaldean diocese of Australia and New Zealand)

Iraq: Alqosh

Fr Josphe Abdel Sater (aged 57, said "Our church is on the border with the Islamic state [ISIL]...Here in Iraq the New Evangelization means being ready for martyrdom")

Iraq: Ankawa, Erbil, Kurdistan

Sr Sanaa Hana (said "Our sisters were just able to consume the Blessed Sacrament before they fled [Mosul]. They did not want it to fall into the hands of the jihadists", returned to Mosul with volunteers to retrieve church documents "I did not want to make anyone go with me. It was very dangerous, after all. Other nuns have been kidnapped by ISIL")

Fr Janan (monk, said "We fled from Bakhdida on August 6 [2014]. We even left our identity cards behind because everything had to go so quickly. We thought that the Kurdish fighters would protect us. However, when they suddenly pulled out, we dropped everything and fled")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20150115172317.htm>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Alqosh:-a-frontier-church,-stronger-than-the-threat-of-the-Islamic-State-33196.html>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20150115033250.htm>



Uganda: Kangado village, Butebo sub-county

Patrick Opadi (aged 21, convert from Islam, fellow Muslim students attempted to kill him after he received an outstanding Christian 'school pastor' award in November 2013, UPDATE: father attempted to kill him)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/06/widow-of-slain-christian-in-uganda-fears-for-her-life/>



Egypt: Nag Rizk Shenouda village, Tahta, Sohag province

Makari Zakaria (forced to worship in the open air, said "Copts suffer because the state does not want to issue a build permit for a church although villagers donated a piece of land in 1971")

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59081>



Ukraine: Simferopol, Crimea

Bishop Jacek Pyl (Polish citizen, told by Russian authorities that he will be allowed to remain)

Fr Krzysztof Kontek (spoke on the ouster of Catholic clergy and religious from Russian controlled areas "The sisters tried to get Russian papers to remain in Crimea but couldn't. Some chose not to apply for Russian papers – Migration Service officials had 'recommended' to them not to apply...Now we have only the bishop, six priests and five sisters")

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2028

Friday January 16, 2015



Philippines: Tanauan, Leyte province

Nuns travelling to join the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis detained, accused of being members of the communist New People's Army, released

Sr Noemi Degala

Sr Evangelina Labanda

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/harsh-security-sees-nuns-detained-over-papal-visit-in-tacloban/72803>



China: Liunan district, Liuzhou city, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

Event: The operators of a church based kindergarten are facing trial for illegal business operations for having printed kindergarten textbooks without identification numbers, the book printer has also been charged; **UPDATE: trial delayed after their defense attorneys refused to be subjected to an unauthorized security search upon entry to the court, the attorneys filed abuse of power charges against the chief judge and the deputy director of the court, defendants returned to detention**

Cheng Jie (wife of Pastor Du Hongbo, mother of two young children, kindergarten director, detained on [February 18, 2014](#))

Li Jiatao (wife of Ma Jiawen, mother of two, kindergarten teacher, detained on [June 24, 2014](#) by police)

Huang Qiurui (church elder)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/judge-defers-trial-of-4-charged-with.html>



India: Amritsar

Rt Rev P K Samantaroy (**UPDATE**: criticized Prime Minister Modi's refusal to give a clear statement against the 'Ghar Wapsi - Homecoming' campaign by the RSS paramilitaries "Keeping silent on such sensitive issues construes his silent approval")

Bishop Franco Mulakkal (said that the 'Ghar Wapsi' campaign is a tool to divide the Dalit [untouchable] community and to indulge in communal violence)

Major Manuel Masih (Salvation Army, said that Dalits belong to many faiths and added "Who can divide them on the basis of religion?")

Daniel B Das (said "We all are Indians and we never went away from home so there is no question of Ghar Wapsi")

India: Tador village, Mahabubnagar district, Telangana state

Pastor D Srinivas (church destroyed by arson, said "I have been serving as the pastor for the last six years in this village. We used to meet at church members' houses, till last year we built a temporary structure. Prior to this incident, on number of occasions, right-wing activists have threatened me and warned me not to continue the church in this village. The Hindu radicals have snatched the Gospel literature from me and destroyed them a number of times in the past")

Rev Ronald John (State Chairman of the Telangana Christian Joint-Action-Committee; **UPDATE**: said "The attacks have increased since the BJP formed the government at the center last year. Christians here are living as second class citizens")

India: Pudukadai, Kanyakumari district, Tamil Nadu state

Chellakani Umashankar (aged 51, convert, Indian Administrative Service member with 25 years in government administration, prohibited by police from holding a prayer meeting, attacked by a Hindu mob along with 100 other Christians, automobile damaged)

<http://www.christiantoday.co.in/article/church.leaders.want.ban.on.ghar.wapsi.unhappy.with.pm.modis.silence/17743.htm>

<http://www.persecution.org/2015/01/22/villages-only-church-torched-by-hindu-radicals-as-indias-christians-face-persecution/>

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/02/article_3663162.html/



Lebanon

Fr Paul Karam (**UPDATE**: said "Four people have died from hypothermia and concern increases, as a new drop in temperatures has been announced...official estimates speak of a million 200 thousand refugees registered, but according to our estimates the real figure

reaches one million 600 thousand. We are trying to do everything possible to distribute food, blankets, stoves, fuel, warm clothes. The international community has put the Syrian conflict in the shadow. And the most defenseless, those who pay the highest price are children and young people, who account for nearly half of this immense multitude of refugees”)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lebanon-syrian-refugees-falling-a-prey-to-frostbite-due-to-severe-snowfall-and-frost/>



Niger: Niamey

Pastor Zakaria Jadi (described the beginning of the mob attack on his church after the latest printing of Muhammad cartoons by the magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris "I just rushed and told my colleagues in the church to take away their families from the place. I took my family to take them out from the place. When I came back I just discovered that everything has gone. There's nothing in my house and also in the church", at least ten people were killed in the attacks on churches and Christian homes)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/muslim-mobs-burn-down-churches-pastors-homes-in-niger-for-charlie-hebdos-prophet-muhammad-cartoons-10-people-dead-in-protests-132757/>



Nigeria: Maiduguri

Dr Allen Mannaseh (said “President Jonathan made empty promises to us. He did not even say a word about Chibok girls, our daughters. It is unfortunate. We all understand the purpose of his visit to Maiduguri 277 days after our sisters were abducted. We have serious doubts if the federal government is doing anything to rescue those school girls...As a Director of Information of the Chibok community nationwide, I am short of answers when people call to ask me why the president has kept mute about the Chibok girls on his visit to Maiduguri”)

<http://thenationonlineng.net/new/chibok-community-angry-jonathans-silence-missing-girls/>



United Kingdom: Kent

Richard Page (Justice of the Peace, disciplined after he admitted that his Christian faith influenced his adoption rulings)

Bishop Emeritus Michael Nazir Ali (**UPDATE**: said that Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice "have declared war on even residual notions of the faith having any place in our legal process. The Government, and law officers, it seems are intent on preventing Christians from manifesting their belief in the public square. The implications are wider than that, for what is said about Mr Page could apply equally to Jews, Muslims and others")

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/family/lord-chief-justice-disciplines-christian-magistrate-for-belief-about-family>

Saturday January 17, 2015



Italy: Cinisello Balsamo, Milan province

Giuseppe Berlin (municipal councilor, decried the desecration of a crucifix near a mosque, said "Before we put a show of unity with Muslims, let's have them begin by respecting our civilization and our culture. We shouldn't minimize the importance of certain signals; we must wake up now or our children will suffer the consequences of this dangerous and uncontrolled Islamic invasion")

<http://www.raymondibrahim.com/islam/italy-crucifix-near-mosque-destroyed/>



Niger: Niamey

Rev Jacques Kanginde (church destroyed in rioting)

Rev Samaila Labo (church and home destroyed)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/07/3942521/>

Sunday January 18, 2015



Indonesia: Besi Penitentiary

Marco Archer Cardoso Moreira (aged 53, Brazilian citizen, **executed** after conviction on drug smuggling charges, denied last rites)

Fr Carolus OMI (Irish national, denied access to give last rites to Marco Archer Cardoso Moreira before his execution, prison officials apologized but said the court had prevented them from allowing access)

Fr Charles Burrows (complained to prison officials about their denial of last rites to Marco Archer Cardoso Moreira before his execution)

Fr Paulus C Siswantoko (secretary of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference's Commission for Justice, Peace and Pastoral for Migrant-Itinerant People, said "Every convict on death row has the right to receive counseling according to their own religion. In this case, Marco truly was subject to a human rights violation in the last minutes of his life")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/brazilian-catholic-executed-in-indonesia-denied-last-rites/73049>

Monday January 19, 2015



Myanmar: Shabuk-Kaungka village, Kachin state

Two volunteer church teachers were tortured, raped, and killed apparently by army soldiers

Maran Lu Ra (aged 20)

Tangbau Khawn Nan Zin (aged 21)

Khon Ja Labang (former member of the Kachin Peace Network, called for an independent investigation into the murder of the two teachers)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Thousands-of-people-attend-the-funeral-of-Kachin-Christian-teachers-raped-and-killed-by-soldiers-33271.html>



Bhutan: Dorokha, Samtse district

Pastor Tandin Wangyal (aged 30 in April 2014, married, father of three, sentenced on September 10, 2014 to 3 years 11 months imprisonment for receiving US\$11,864 from a foreign Christian organization, released on bail; **UPDATE**: the appellate court reduced the sentence to two years four months, which means he will serve no additional time in jail, had fasted for three days on a mountaintop in anticipation of the verdict)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/prison-time-withdrawn-for-pastor-in-bhutan-sentenced-to-nearly-four-years/>



Kazakhstan: Sychevka

Yuri Morozov (director of a church operated drug and alcohol rehab center, fined US\$1,000 on December 15, 2014 for illegal religious activities, **UPDATE**: fine upheld on appeal)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2034



Central African Republic: Bangui

Fr Gustave CSSP (abducted along with a French relief worker by anti-balaka fighters)

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/01/article_3632658.html/

Tuesday January 20, 2015



China: Guangzhou

Fr Ye Yaomin (aged 105, **died after declining hospital care** with the words that "the Church is his home and he has to die in his home", had been banished to a farm from 1955 to 1980, gave his money to the needy regardless of their faith, had declined to emigrate because "China needs priests")

Sr Chen Jianyin (reported on the death of Fr Ye Yaomin)

China: Langzhong, Nanchong, Sichuan province

Nine Christians have been placed in administrative detention

Pastor Li Ming (sentenced to 15 days' administrative detention)

Pastor Li Mingbo (detained)

Pastor Liu Yong (visitor from Chengdu, detained)

Wang (church elder, detained)

Pastor Sun (husband of Ma Ying, missionary from Mianyang, detained)

Ma Ying (wife of Pastor Sun, missionary from Mianyang, detained)

Zhou Chunyan (detained)

Chen Yihui (detained)

Liang Renyan (detained)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/chinas-oldest-priest-dies-at-age-105/72842>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/sichuan-police-raid-gathering-of-house.html>



Pakistan: Jaranwala district

Ilyas Masih (father of Sehrish and Farazana, attempted to file a police report on his daughters' abduction and rape; **UPDATE**: wept as he thanked the donors who paid for the construction of an indoor toilet and shower in his home "I thank all the Christians of Britain for their generosity and prayers, you have made my faith stronger than before. We thought we had been forgotten, but you have provided protection to my daughters, as a father I cannot express my gratitude")

Sehrish (aged 18, daughter of Ilyas Masih, sister of Farazana, abducted and gang raped on December 4, 2014; **UPDATE**: spoke on the construction of an indoor toilet in her home "Our family could not afford such facilities, for so long we have had to suffer ridicule. Local Muslim boys are still taunting us and threatening to rape us again, but this toilet means we will be safe from their evil hands")

Farazana (aged 14, daughter of Ilyas Masih, sister of Sehrish, abducted and gang raped on December 4, 2014; **UPDATE**: spoke on the construction of an indoor toilet in her home "Although I will never forget the brutal treatment at the hands of the local boys, I feel safer now that we have our own bathroom. I thank God for the help Christians in Britain have given me")

Fr Babu Pervaiz (helped arrange for the construction of the indoor toilet for Sehrish and Farazana)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/tears-of-sadness-become-pools-of-hope-as-christian-victims-of-gang-rape-begin-to-see-bilding-of-new->

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5154>



Iran

Ebrahim Firouzi (convert, aged 28 in 2013, sentenced on July 15, 2013 in Robat-Karim for "evangelism activities" to one year imprisonment and two years internal exile to Sarbaz; **UPDATE**: prison term completed, still not released a week later, the authorities appear to be planning to make new charges of "propaganda and action against national security" against him)

http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9740:christian-convert-still-in-prison-although-his-prison-term-is-over&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279



Syria

Kenji Goto Jogo (convert, Japanese citizen, journalist, held captive by ISIL, threatened with death)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/One-of-the-two-Japanese-men-held-and-threatened-of-death-by-the-Islamic-State-in-Syria-is-Christian-33250.html>



Egypt

Bishoy Armiya aka Mohammed Hegazy (aged 31 in 2014, Egypt's 'most famous' convert;

UPDATE: attorney attempted to visit him in prison, found that he had been transferred to another prison without notice)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59151>



Niger

Pastor Sani Nomao (responded to the destruction of scores of Christian churches, homes, and an orphanage following the publication of the latest Muhammad cartoons in the French magazine Charlie Hebdo "I call on every single believer in Niger to forgive and forget, to love Muslims with all their heart, to keep up the faith, to love Christ like never before. Although it is painful, and what we are experiencing is really difficult, we are God's children. We must love our persecutors...Let no one seek revenge")

<http://www.charismanews.com/world/47954-70-churches-destroyed-in-anti-charlie-hebdo-protests>

Wednesday January 21, 2015



Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur

Archbishop Julian Leow (expressed "disappointment" at the Supreme Court's "not totally unexpected" ruling prohibiting non-Muslim use of the word 'Allah' despite 400 years of the word's use in local Bible translations, also said "I would like to believe this adverse decision is confined only to the Herald [the diocesan newspaper] and will not open a Pandora's box on curbing the rights of minorities in managing our own religious affairs")

Fr Lawrence Andrew (**UPDATE:** said "we pray that minority rights are not trampled on")

Jill Ireland (CDs containing the word 'Allah' reported to have been seized, case pending in court)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Kuala-Lumpur:-Ruling-on-the-word-'Allah'-threatens-religious-freedom-33257.html>



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang

Pastor Huang Yizi (aged 40, taken into custody on [August 2, 2014](#); reported on [August 26, 2014](#) to have been charged with 'gathering to assault a state organ', faces a possible sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, had said "I know I will be put in jail one day"; **UPDATE:** reported to still be in detention, has filed lawsuits against the police)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/lawyers-for-detained-zhejiang-pastor.html>



India: Mumbai

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** refuted VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] accusations that Hinduism is threatened by Christianity: "the last government census shows a decline in the proportion of Christians in the country, from 2.60 per cent in 1971, they dropped to 2.44 per cent in 1981, to 2.34 per cent in 1991, to 2.30 per cent in 2001")

Fr Errol Fernandes SJ (rhetorically said "there seems to be a rise of fundamentalism and other forms of domination in the world, even in our country. Where does that lead to?")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-national-anti-conversion-law-to-save-India%27s-Hindus-33247.html>



Uzbekistan: Yakkasaray district, Tashkent

Tanzilya Karkayeva (home raided by police without warrant, religious books and literature seized, later fined one month's minimum wage)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2036



Iran

Naghmeh Shariat Panahi Abedini (wife of Saeed Abedini, who has been sentenced to eight years imprisonment; **UPDATE**: met with President Barack Obama in [Boise, Idaho, United States](#), said "The president was focused and gracious — showing concern to me and my children. I know that this meeting could not have occurred without prayer, and I am grateful to the many people around the country and world who continue to pray for Saeed's release. The president repeated his desire to do all that he can to bring Saeed home. That means the world to me and my children and has given me a renewed sense of hope")

Iran: Rajai Shahr Prison, Karaj

Pastor Saeed Abedini (**UPDATE**: has reported increasing abdominal pain from injuries from prison beatings)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/obama-meets-saeed-abedinis-wife-naghmeh-and-children-in-boise-promises-to-do-all-he-can-to-free-pastor-to-be-home-by-sons-birthday-132941/>
<http://www.charismanews.com/world/48038-saeed-abedeni-reports-increasing-pain-in-iranian-prison>



Iraq: Mosul

Morteza Ablahad (clergy, **executed** by ISIL)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59155>



Syria: New Sabri neighborhood, Homs

Fr Hilal Ziad SJ (**UPDATE**: described a car bombing that killed 15 and wounded 50 "Most of them were students at the university, young people who had not left the city. So what sort

of message does this attack send out now? I believe they were deliberately targeted...the attack was staged very close to our church and our aid center")

Deacon Gabriel Bassam Gabro (petrochemical engineering student, **killed** in a car bombing)

Zahi Saad (**killed** in a car bombing)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/two-assyrians-in-homs-syria-killed-in-car-bombing/>

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/jesuit-laments-car-bomb-attack-in-syria-scorns-media-silence-90181/>



Egypt

Bishop Pachomius (former acting Patriarch of Coptic Church; **UPDATE**: underwent brain surgery, visited by Pope Tawadros II)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1296&A=17310>



Nigeria: Maiduguri

Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme (**UPDATE**: said that nearly 70,000 of the 125,000 Catholics in his diocese have fled, added “More than half of my diocese has now fled their homes. The threat we face presents a very bleak future for the Church. Many of our members are scattered and others have been killed. In some areas there are no Christians anymore. The [extremists] point a gun or a knife at them saying that if they do not convert they will be killed. Some of them have been killed for refusing to convert...The West should bring in security – land forces to contain and beat back Boko Haram. A concerted military campaign is needed by the West to crush Boko Haram...Among the [Nigerian] soldiers, there were sympathizers with Boko Haram – some of them were even Boko Haram members and many of them just ran away...The most important thing is to pray for our people; I know people are praying for us and I am very grateful”)

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1421795510.html>



United States - Louisiana

Fr Jeff Bayhi (ordered by the state supreme court to divulge the contents of a confession;
UPDATE: appeal declined by the U.S. Supreme Court, a hearing will now be held to determine if he must be compelled to testify)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/could-a-us-priest-face-jail-for-refusing-to-break-confession-seal-76133/>

Thursday January 22, 2015



India: New Delhi

Dominic Emmanuel (director of Sadbhavana Institute for Communication and Inter-religious Dialogue; **UPDATE:** said "We have come in support of this petition-signing campaign for President Obama to put it firmly on record during his meeting with Mr. Modi, that a democracy like India cannot allow the repression of religious minorities - particularly the Muslims and the Christians")

India: Dantewada district, Chhattisgarh state

Sadavir (husband of Jani, father of three, abducted by Maoist militants, tied to a tree, beaten in front of his wife, mother, and sister, **died when his chest was pierced with a trishula**, a Hindu three pronged spear)

Jani (aged 27, widow of Sadavir, mother of three, witnessed her husband's murder)

<http://www.bignewsnetwork.com/index.php/sid/229591795>

http://www.persecution.com/public/newsroom.aspx?story_ID=%3d373538



Egypt: Wasti

Fr Bishoy Youssef (automobile reported to have been firebombed, had been the second case of a priest's vehicle being firebombed within the past year in his village)

Egypt: Abu Tig, Assuit province

Soliman Aziz Soliman (property seized by a Muslim family, fabricated charges against him and his brother filed with police, has fled the province)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1297&A=17327>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59176>



Niger

The nation's bishops have suspended all church activities including Mass due to the continuing violence resulting from the recently published Muhammad cartoons in the Parisian magazine Charlie Hebdo

Bishop Ambroise Quedraogo

Bishop Laruent Lompo

Archbishop Michel Cartateguy (said “The Christian community in Niger is still in a state of shock: Almost all the churches [of the diocese], 12 to 14 of them, were completely plundered. Nothing remains, they were totally burned. Only the cathedral is still standing”)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/masses-suspended-in-niger-due-to-church-burnings-55922/>

Friday January 23, 2015



Egypt: Cairo

Abram Lewis (Association of Victims of Abductions and Forced Disappearances; **UPDATE:** said that the government is violating the law by delaying the official registration of his association)

Egypt: Faisal, Giza province

Waseem Abdel Gaber Saleh Samaan (husband of Hana Eshak Aziz, **killed** during a Muslim Brotherhood demonstration)

Hana Eshak Aziz (widow of Waseem Abdel Gaber Saleh Samaan)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59192>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59271>



Belarus: Minsk

Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti (Papal Nuncio; **UPDATE**: raised concerns with the government over its report that foreign clergy engage in a large range of violations of the law, government complaints that the Catholic Church is not training Belarusian citizens for the priesthood, and the government's repeated refusal to allow the construction of a Catholic seminary)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2040



Bosnia and Herzegovina: Visoko

Fr Marko Jakovljevic (church reported to have been desecrated with graffiti)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/the-orthodox-church-of-st-procopius-in-visoko-bosnia-and-herzegovina-attacked-and-desecrated/>



Central African Republic: Bangui

Fr Gustave CSSP (abducted along with a French relief worker by anti-balaka fighters, **UPDATE**: both released)

Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: negotiated the release of Fr Gustave and the French relief worker)

Rev Nicolas Guerekoyame-Gbangou (**UPDATE**: negotiated the release of Fr Gustave and the French relief worker)

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/01/article_3632658.html/



Niger: Niamey

Rev Mai'aki Kadaidai (said "This is the first time we are witnessing violence of this magnitude against the church and Christians. In all, 68 churches were destroyed across five regions of Agadez, Damagaram, Diffa, Maradi, Zinder, and in our country's capital city of Niamey. The Muslim rioters destroyed five of our [EERN] churches, destroyed four homes of our pastors and many of our members were adversely affected")

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/faith-of-christians-in-niger-grows-stronger-in-face-of-unprecedented-violence/>



Nigeria: Bantaje, Taraba state

Pastor Joshua Adah (husband, father of two aged 6 and 8, **hacked to death** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen suspected to have support from Boko Haram, another minister said “Not too long after he got born again, he left the comfort and ‘luxury’ of city life for a remote village on a hill without light nor potable drinking water, not even a well in sight”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/slain-ministry-leader-in-nigeria-mourned-as-dedicated-servant-to-the-poor/>

Saturday January 24, 2015



India: Tamil Nadu state

Chellakani Umashankar (aged 51, convert, Indian Administrative Service member with 25 years in government administration, prohibited by police from holding a prayer meeting, attacked by a Hindu mob along with 100 other Christians, automobile damaged;

UPDATE: told in writing that his Christian preaching and evangelical conventions are a violation of the service rule that 'every member of this service shall at all times maintain absolute integrity and devotion to duty and shall do nothing which is unbecoming of a member of this Service', has cancelled an upcoming three day convention and said “The government is acting at the behest of some groups. To please them they are infringing my fundamental right. I have every right to preach my faith...This is nonsense. I am going to challenge it in the court”)

India: Nalasopara, Mumbai

Pramod Sahu (aged 38, convert, welder, beaten in his workshop by 25 members of the Bajrang Dal [the youth wing of the RSS paramilitary organization] when he refused to pray to a Hindu god, said “The attackers abused me in foul language and used the picture of Jesus Christ in my garage as an excuse to beat me up”, police initially refused to file a report, being treated for chest and back injuries)

Rev Vijayesh Lal (Religious Liberty Commission national director; **UPDATE:** said “It was only when interventions were made by lawyers and Christian leaders that an FIR [police report] was finally registered on Jan. 29. Pramod Sahu had to approach a private hospital by himself to take care of his injuries. Had the police taken the case seriously, the medical examination would have been sooner...I spoke to Sahu while he was getting his treatment done at the private hospital, and he was in much fear. He complained that

people who beat him up were continuously following him and watching him closely. He feared for his life”)

https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/02/article_3663162.html/
<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/02/hindu-extremist-mob-beats-christian-house-church-leader-near-mumbai-india/>



Germany: Hamburg

Matthias Ebert (Concerned Parents member, demonstrated with 150 other parents against mandatory sex education, said "We go to the street because we care about our children, who are confronted too early with sexual issues", parents attacked by 600 LBGT activists and anarchists, police intervened, one 15 year old girl hospitalized with head injuries)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/german-parents-attacked-as-they-protest-early-sexualization-of-children>

Sunday January 25, 2015



Egypt: Maadi

Three Christians were shot dead in a Muslim Brotherhood attack on a church, 18 rioters were killed by police

Mina Maher (aged 10, **shot dead**)

Peter Rafat (merchant, **shot dead**)

Ashraf Ibrahim (merchant, married, father of two including one not yet born, brother of Akram Ibrahim, **shot dead**)

Akram Ibrahim (brother of Ashraf Ibrahim, wants justice for his murder)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17372>

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17373>



Vatican City

Pope Francis aka Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ (**UPDATE**: said in [Rome, Italy](#) “In this moment of prayer for unity, I would also like to remember our martyrs, the martyrs of today. They are witnesses to Jesus Christ, and they are persecuted and killed because they are Christians. Those who persecute them make no distinction between the religious communities to which they belong. They are Christians and for that they are persecuted. This, brothers and sisters, is the ecumenism of blood”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2015/01/26/pope-francis-says-ecumenism-of-blood-is-uniting-christians/>

Monday January 26, 2015



China

'Veritas Vincit' (alias of a major Chinese Catholic figure, wrote that the government's plan to move forward with unsanctioned ordinations of bishops in the Patriotic Church will just drive the church underground and cause it to lose control)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Opposed-to-new-unlawful-ordinations,-Chinese-Catholics-are-united-for-religious-freedom-33291.html>



Pakistan: Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

Fredrick Farhan Das (Christian secondary school principal, described an attack by 300 Muslim students on his school in which four of his students were injured in a stampede and hospitalized, the attack was prompted by the publication of cartoons of Muhammad by the Parisian magazine Charlie Hebdo)

Rt Rev Sarfarz Humphrey Peters (**UPDATE**: said of the attack on the secondary school “After our efforts, the police have now deployed six armed policemen at the school, which remained closed on Tuesday in protest against the attack and reopened on Wednesday. Almost 50 per cent of our students didn’t show on Wednesday because of the fear resulting from Monday’s incident”)

<http://directory.ucanews.com/news/hebdo-protesters-attack-christian-school-in-pakistan/1889>

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/charlie-hebdo-protestors-ransack-christian-school-in-pakistan-demand-closure/>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5159>



Kazakhstan: Uralsk, West Kazakhstan

Kenzhetai Baytinov (**UPDATE**: detained for street preaching, warned, released)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2043



Iran: Adel-Abad prison, Shiraz

Vahid Hakkani (**UPDATE**: conditionally released from prison)

http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9824:christian-convert-conditionally-released-after-three-years-in-prison&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279



Egypt: Mallawi Village, Minya province

Botrous Yacoub Shehata (aged 18, abducted from his home, US\$134,400 ransom demanded)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59244>



Belarus: Minsk

Yakov Timofeyev (seminary rector, said that invited foreign professors are often denied visas, though visas for short seminars are often approved)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2040



Nigeria: Damaturu, Yobe state

Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme (**UPDATE**: said "Boko Haram tried to enter Maiduguri twice last weekend: the first time on Friday 23 and the second yesterday, Sunday 25 January...The guerrillas of Bolo Haram were rejected by the military and the civilian militia that defend

the city. The fights were very intense. Boko Haram has lost several men. At the moment the situation in Maiduguri appears calm...We risk seeing Boko Haram conquer the entire north-east before the end of the election [in February]..."

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37160->

[AFRICA NIGERIA The Bishop of Maiduguri Boko Haram could conquer the entire north east before the end of the election#.VMcjUsJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37160-)



United Kingdom

Chris Gray (Principal of Durham Free School, reacted to government inspectors from OFSTED interrogating students and using the replies to withhold government funds and force the Christian school to close: "Several parents complained to me about what they saw as intrusive and deeply personal questioning of their children in the group sessions. It has been reported back to me that children aged 6- 9 were asked whether they knew anything about Diwali and whether they were familiar with the Torah. In addition, I have also heard reports of primary school children being asked if they knew of any boys or girls who thought they were in the 'wrong body'. Another parent has complained to me in writing that her ten year old daughter was asked if she knew what lesbians did. Pupils were embarrassed and surprised to be asked questions about sexuality...It is now well known that the manner in which inspectors questioned our pupils in November was hostile, inappropriate and raises serious safeguarding issues. OFSTED's approach to us was negative at every stage, as if the data collected had to fit a predetermined outcome...The questioning by inspectors makes clear that their idea of a balanced curriculum is for us to force pupils to celebrate non-Christian religious festivals. This would breach our Christian foundation which stipulates that we are a Christian school")

John Denning (chairman of governors at Dunham Free School, said "The school is in the process of taking legal advice and will take whatever action necessary to protect the interests of its pupils and their families")

Simon Calvert (Christian Institute, commented on the government agency OFSTED's hostility to Durham Free School and Grindon Hall Christian School: "The government's 'British values regime' is twisting OFSTED's priorities out of all proportion. Inspectors are asking all kinds of invasive questions and then issuing reports that the parents whose children attend the school don't recognize")

<http://christiannews.net/2015/01/26/uk-christian-school-shut-down-for-having-discriminatory-views-toward-other-faiths/>

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/christian-schools-gear-up-for-legal-action-against-ofsted>

Tuesday January 27, 2015



Egypt: Kom Ombo, Aswan province

Fr Polous Monir (church attacked with an explosive device, planting was seen, police called and the device was deactivated)

Egypt: Alexandria

Maggie Girgis (aged 25, reported to have been abducted and forced into an Islamic marriage, family accused the police of collusion with her abductors)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17375>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59253>



Venezuela: Ciudad Guyana

Bishop Mariano Jose Parra Sandoval (robbed at gunpoint along with fifty parishioners during a parish meeting, said "I spoke with the governor to tell him that we cannot continue like this. Money is spent on many things, but not on citizen safety... We cannot close the churches, we need to teach children to live without violence. But one thing is certain, we do not live well in the Venezuelan society")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37195->

[AMERICA VENEZUELA Mgr Parra robbed during a parish meeting Money is spent on many things but not on safety#.VMxeXMJTE5s](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37195-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_Mgr_Parra_robbed_during_a_parish_meeting_Money_is_spent_on_many_things_but_not_on_safety#.VMxeXMJTE5s)

Wednesday January 28, 2015



Eritrea

Patriarch Abune Antonios (disappeared, reportedly detained by the government in a darkened room, health declining, diabetic condition requires medical attention; as of May 23, 2014 has begun his seventh year in detention; **UPDATE**: still in detention, the U.S.

Commission on International Religious Freedom in [Washington DC, USA](#) has called for his release and that of 2,000 others held for their religious faith)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/uscirf-calls-for-the-release-of-patriarch-abune-antonios-of-eritrea/>



Egypt: Mallawi Village, Minya province

Botrous Yacoub Shehata (aged 18, abducted from his home on [January 26, 2015](#), US\$134,400 ransom demanded; **UPDATE**: released after a ransom of US\$3,300 paid)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59286>



Russia: Krasnodar

Pastor Alexei Kolyasnikov (prayer service in a rented coffee shop room in [Khostinsky district, near Sochi](#) raided by FSB agents on [September 28, 2014](#), detained; fined US\$480 on [October 10, 2014](#); fine overturned on appeal on [December 2, 2014](#); fine reinstated on [December 12, 2014](#); **UPDATE**: reinstatement of the fine upheld on appeal)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2044



Nigeria

Archbishop Nemuel A Babba (**UPDATE**: called for a "stronger global Christian voice against the Boko Haram violence...Arewa and Shall-Holma dioceses are the most severely affected; the bishops had to move out of the diocesan headquarters two months ago. Like thousands of other displaced people, we don't know when they can go back. Many Lutheran churches and institutions including the Gombi and Arewa cathedrals have been burned down or pillaged. Around 50,000 of our members in Arewa and Shall-Holma had no organized Lutheran worship for the Christmas and New Year seasons because of the violence...As Christians we have also made the government aware that we see Christians as being specifically targeted by Boko Haram. This is not to deny that Muslims are being attacked and killed, but Christians suffer the highest casualties")

<http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/nigerian-lutheran-bishop-wants-stronger-global-christian-voice-against-boko-haram-28146#ixzz3QH8YyljZ>

Thursday January 29, 2015



Myanmar: Hakha, Chin state

Two Christians threatened with up to 2 years' imprisonment for harvesting trees for lumber and using it to erect a cross without permits

Tial Cem (had not applied for a permit to erect the cross because he knew it would not be granted, said "We will have to face whatever it takes. If the authorities say I have to go to jail, I am not afraid; I am ready to go to jail for this case")

JP Biak Tin Sang (owner of the harvested trees)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/37186->

[ASIA MYANMAR Remove a cross in the state of Chin the order worries Christians#.VMr70cJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37186-ASIA_MYANMAR_Remove_a_cross_in_the_state_of_Chin_the_order_worries_Christians#.VMr70cJTEfg)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Chin-Christians-ready-to-go-to-jail-to-stop-cross-removal-33322.html>



Iran

Pastor Saeed Abedini (U.S. citizen, **UPDATE:** wrote a letter to U.S. President Barack Obama thanking him for meeting with his wife and for stating he will work to secure his release from Iranian prison)

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/saeed.abedini.to.obama.you.have.my.prayers.from.inside.these.walls/46998.htm>



Egypt

Mary Nabil Atia (aged 18, disappeared)

Date: January 29, 2015

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1309&A=17531>



United Kingdom

Dennis Sewell (wrote an article on the government's OFSTED agency's investigation of Grindon Hall school in which he criticized the OFSTED report for stating 'The Christian ethos of the school permeates much of the school's provision. This has restricted the development of a broad and balanced approach to the curriculum')

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/january-30th-2015/i-was-wrong-ofsted-is-a-real-menace/>

Friday January 30, 2015



China: Jianhu county, Yancheng city, Jiangsu province

Pastor Zeng Zhengliang (**UPDATE**: reported to have been illegally denied a permit to travel to Hong Kong for a Gospel conference)

China: Baoding

Bishop Cosma Shi Enxiang (aged 94, arrested at his niece's home on [April 13, 2001](#); disappeared while in police custody; **UPDATE**: **family notified of his death**, no body or ashes have been produced)

Shi Chunyan (aged 42, grandniece of Bishop Cosma Shi Enxiang)

Bishop James Su Zhimin (disappeared while in police custody in 1997; **UPDATE**: still missing)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/public-security-bureaus-deny.html>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-prelate-held-in-secret-for-14-years-dies-at-age-94/72910>



India: New Delhi

John Dayal (**UPDATE**: wrote "India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, does not like to be told that he, his government, his political party or the cadres of his old group, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh [RSS], have done something wrong...US President Barack Obama made international headlines with his 'town hall' speech in Delhi as he concluded a three-day visit to India for its Republic Day. The speech offered a rather sharp lesson on what makes a country great — not economic progress or military might, but the unity of its people brought about by a shared destiny, the hope of progress among the most marginalized and a sense of security among its religious minorities...But it was the Indian president, the 79-year old Pranab Mukherjee, who delivered a homily that was the strongest caution yet about the threat posed to unity and progress in India from the

religious nationalism of the RSS [paramilitaries]...Mukherjee touched on a point that has worried many among those who voted for Modi...This was the increasing cacophony of many in the Bharatiya Janata Party, including several ministers and members of parliament, who were supporting a demand that India mark itself out as a Hindu Rashtra or Nation, and stop appeasing Muslims and Christians. Both minority religious groups are seen as enemies of the nation and the majority...The so-called "Ghar Wapsi", or homecoming campaign, launched by the Sangh Parivar just after the general election to forcibly convert Dalit and Tribal Christians and Muslims to Hinduism was put on hold a week before Obama's state visit. It was never in doubt that the campaign, and violence targeting religious groups, would resume. And resume it did, the day after Obama left India...")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/modi-is-reminded-that-religious-minorities-are-not-for-killing/72900>



Iraq: Bagdad

Youssef Hawil Curcas (killed)

<http://indefenseofchristians.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Genocide-report.pdf>



Syria: Aleppo

Archbishop Jean Clement Jeanbart (**UPDATE:** said during a visit to [Monreale, Sicily, Italy](#) "As pastor of this church, I will never leave this people. I will die but I will not abandon my flock. I am convinced that the Lord will ask me an account of my commitment, my courage and my hope for this portion of his people that He entrusted to me. I have to admit that there was a time, early in the war when I thought of leaving, but the Lord stood by me, and now at 71 years of age, I feel at least 15 years younger, and I do not fear disappointment and discouragement. I know that the Lord takes care of me and my flock...Christians here suffer because they have lost their homes, their relatives and even their churches. What was the middle class no longer has enough to live on. Everything has been corrupted, especially the press, which no longer tells the truth [but now engages in] a true act of disinformation...Christians are a sort of thorn in the side. Christians are the only ones who have some type of relationship with the West, and are able to uncover the great scam that underlies this war and the many interests that are being protected")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20150130195204.htm>



Egypt: El-Arish, Sinai

Nabil Mahrous (aged 50, husband of Enas Reda Boulos, **killed** by gunmen in front of his family during a home invasion)

Enas Reda Boulos (widow of Nabil Mahrous, said “My husband was killed because he is a Christian”)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59318>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59402>



Belarus: Minsk

Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti (Papal Nuncio; **UPDATE**: again raised concerns with the government over its report that foreign clergy engage in a large range of violations of the law, government complaints that the Catholic Church is not training Belarusian citizens for the priesthood, and the government's repeated refusal to allow the construction of a Catholic seminary)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2040



Nigeria

Henry (alias, 'boy', escaped from Boko Haram, reported on the terrorists' response to the worldwide reaction to their abduction of the Chibok schoolgirls “we disturbed the world by abducting these girls. If we'd known, we would have been doing this before. One time we killed a bunch of schoolboys at Buni Yadi and let the girls go after warning them to leave school. We should have taken them then and we will from now on”)

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2015/01/30/face-to-face-with-a-boko-haram-escapee-a-christian-boy-tells-his-story/>



Venezuela: Merida, Merida state

Fr Luis Sanchez (reported on an attack against four churches with gasoline bombs)

Villca Fernandez (University Movement member, issued a statement condemning the "vile and cowardly attack" against the churches "The attack tries to sow terror and fear among the population in Merida. An attack against a place of worship is an attack on religious freedom and against the historical heritage of Merida")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/37202-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_Four_churches_attacked_in_Merida#.VM2jDMJTE5s



United States: Iowa

Christian owners of a gift shop and bistro have decided to no longer host weddings because they would have to host same sex weddings, said they would continue to serve same sex couples for non-wedding events

Betty Odgaards

Richard Odgaards

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/48113-we-are-definitely-making-a-sacrifice-for-our-convictions>

Saturday January 31, 2015



Syria

Kenji Goto Jogo (convert, Japanese citizen, journalist, held captive by ISIL; **UPDATE: beheaded**)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/isis-beheads-second-japanese-hostage-kenji-goto-obama-condemns-heinous-murder-133393/>



Egypt: Senouras district, Fayoum province

Sarah Fahmy Latif (aged 15, abducted)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59385>



Nigeria: Kaduna, Kaduna state

Archbishop Matthew Manoso Ndagoso (**UPDATE:** read a communique signed by the Catholic bishops of the north of the country which stated that the government should have crushed Boko Haram when it began in 2003, and added "the growth of the Boko Haram group is as a result of failure of government, because we have allowed them to build up to become a monster group that is now difficult to contain...Today, the destructive violence of Boko Haram and the state of uncertainty surrounding our democracy is the cumulative impact of these years of blind ambition, mismanagement and squander that have brought our nation almost to its knees...Ordinarily after four controversial but successfully concluded elections since our return to democracy, we would expect our country to be showing signs of growth and consolidation. Rather, we find ourselves tightly in the clutches of fear, anxiety and near despondency")

<http://thenationonline.net/new/boko-haram-crushed-2003-says-catholic-bishops/>

January 2015, date unknown



Turkmenistan

Timur Baltayev (sentenced to prison for refusing military service)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2196



Iran

Nazila Hamidov (Azeri citizen, arrested on espionage charges. beaten, nose broken, forehead lacerated)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3045>



Kenya: undisclosed location for security reasons

Ahmed Ali (convert from Islam, Egyptian citizen, fled in 2012 to a sub-Sahara country after being beaten and tortured by his family in Cairo, Egyptian Embassy personnel have hunted him down and encouraged local Islamic militants to beat him, in hiding after the latest assault)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/02/islamic-extremists-in-sub-saharan-africa-pursue-convert-from-islam-who-fled-egypt/>



Turkey

David Byle (aged 45, Canadian-U.S. citizen, missionary, husband and father of five; **UPDATE:** as of [late January 2015](#) has been granted a residency permit after a 5 year court battle)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/02/u-s-evangelist-wins-five-year-battle-for-residency-in-turkey/>



Nigeria: Matazu, Katsina state

General Ishaku Ahmed Dikko, Retired (described an attempted church demolition that was stopped by media reports “It is pure religious persecution, the compound is owned by us and has been there for over 99 years. The decision is a continuation of the marginalization and persecution of Christians in the north”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4874256/>