

Today's Martyrs – December 2015

Tuesday December 1, 2015



Pakistan

Parwasha (aged 8, niece of Iftikhar Masih, reported to have been abducted, stripped naked, and beaten by a Muslim family in retribution for her uncle's relationship with a female member of their family, police have refused to file charges)

Iftikhar Masih (uncle of Parwasha)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/pakistan-christian-girl-beaten-left-naked-muslim-family-attackers-151348/>



Palestine: Bethlehem

Ekram Juha (director of the mayor's office, commented on the Palestinian Authority's decision to limit the 2015 Christmas celebrations due to the dozens of recent deaths of Palestinians at the hands of Israeli security forces during attacks: "I'm truly disappointed...[Palestinians] have a difficult situation but we've lived with this situation for many years and celebrations have gone on. This is the place where Jesus was born and if you limit Christmas celebrations here you are limiting something spiritual and holy. I can understand limiting celebrations elsewhere, but not here in Bethlehem")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/88350.htm>



United States

Jan Markell (Olive Tree Ministries, spoke on her ministry's YouTube channel being suspended for a video interview with Tom Doyle, the author of the book *Killing Christians: Living the Faith Where It's Not Safe to Believe*, channel was reinstated after media inquiries)

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/53530-reports-youtube-cuts-the-cord-on-christian-channel>

Wednesday December 2, 2015



Pakistan: Chak number 38 Janubi, Sargodha district, Punjab province

Two Christian women abducted after a Muslim girl eloped with a Christian boy

Tahira Bibi (aged 20, daughter of Bashir Masih, sister of Reema Bibi, abducted, forced into an Islamic marriage)

Reema Bibi (aged 21, daughter of Bashir Masih, sister of Tahira Bibi, abducted, forced into an Islamic marriage)

Bashir Masih (father of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5803>



Uganda: Kashebai area

Patrick Ojangole (aged 43, husband, father of 5 children aged 16 to 7, foster father of 10, **stabbed to death** for Christian activities)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/suspected-hard-line-muslims-in-eastern-uganda-kill-christian-in-sword-attack/>



United Kingdom: Hornsea

Michael Jones (aged 66, street preacher, arrested in his home by police who refused to show identification, held and interrogated for eight hours, charged with religious harassment for anti-Islamic statements)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/freedom-of-speech/charges-dropped-against-pensioner-who-was-imprisoned-for-exposing-isi>



Cuba: Santiago de Cuba

Rev Alain Toledano (said "There is a witch hunt against churches in Cuba at this time, mainly against the churches of apostolic and prophetic ministry. The communists have intensified in their hatred and persecution of the church following the Pope's visit to Cuba and the re-establishment of relations with the United States...I request constant intercession on behalf of the churches in Cuba. In our case, this would be the second time that the racist communists have attempted to evict us from our house, throw us out on the street and demolish our temple, only now their diabolical hatred and fury is directed at other congregations too")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/witch-hunt-against-churches-in-cuba-despite-us-relations-151464/>



United States – California: San Bernardino

Fourteen people were killed and seventeen wounded in an Islamic attack on an office Christmas party

Abraham Amanios (brother of Isaac Amanios)

Arlen Verdehyou (widower of Bennetta Betbadal)

Bennetta Betbadal (aged 46, wife of Arlen Verdehyou, mother of three, health inspector, fled Iran in 1987 to escape Islamic extremism; **UPDATE: shot dead**)

Bruk (son of Isaac Amanios)

Damian Meins (aged 58, husband of Trenna, father of Tawnya and Tina, **shot dead**)

Emily Nguyen (aged 16, cousin of Tin Nguyen)

Ham Nguyen (uncle of Tin Nguyen)

Hiwet Amanios (widow of Isaac Amanios)

Isaac Amanios (aged 60, husband of Hiwet, father of Yosief, Bruk, Milka, health inspector, **shot dead**)

Jennifer Thalasinis (widow of Nicholas Thalasinis)

Pastor Jim Orate (uncle of Michael Wetzel)

Kailee Wetzel (aged 12, daughter of Michael Wetzel)

Kevin Ortiz (newlywed, health inspector, church youth group leader and video technician, shot five times in an Islamic attack, hospitalized)

Michael Raymond Wetzel (aged 37, husband of Renee, father of Kailee and five others, health inspector, **shot dead**)

Milka (daughter of Isaac Amanios)

Nicholas Thalasinis (husband of Jennifer, health inspector, **shot dead**)

Phu Nguyen (uncle of Tin Nguyen)

Renee Wetzel (widow of Michael Wetzel)

San Trinh (fiance of Tin Nguyen)

Sierra Sunshine Clayborn (aged 27, daughter of Wendy Womack-Smith, environmental health specialist, **shot dead**)

Tamishia (sister of Sierra Clayborn)

Tin Nguyen (aged 31, engaged, daughter of Vanessa Nguyen, health inspector, **shot dead**)

Vanessa Nguyen (mother of Tin Nguyen)

Wendy Womack-Smith (mother of Sierra Clayborn)

Yosief (son of Isaac Amanios)

Zeke Gebrekidane (nephew of Isaac Amanios)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151203202247.htm>

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/53625-shot-5-times-this-ag-member-miraculously-survives-san-bernardino-shooting>

<http://www.charismanews.com/us/53624-san-bernardino-victim-fled-islamic-persecution-only-to-die-by-it-in-us>

<http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-shooting-victims-20151204-story.html>

<http://www.latimes.com/local/california/la-me-sb-memorials-20151213-story.html>

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-victim-of-terror-attack-recalled-as-kindhearted-20151211-story.html>

Thursday December 3, 2015



United States – Colorado: Denver

Rita Tamur (aged 19, Iraqi refugee, friend of the family that recently drowned off Greece, reported to have said "It is hard to understand how they were able to escape the horrors of ISIS yet still end up dying this way", other girlfriends have disappeared "I pray for the young girls in Iraq. I want them to have an opportunity for freedom")

Fr Andre-Sebastian Mahanna (Lebanese native, had a gun held to his head by Palestinian terrorists when he was a two day old baby, now assisting Christian refugees)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151203050612.htm>

United States - District of Columbia

Rev Andrew White (former Vicar of Bagdad, Iraq, said "On a day after those events in California yesterday, those awful, terrible events, we realize that the destruction of religion is not just over there [in the Middle East], it's here where you are. What we are seeing going on, what we saw in Paris, what we saw yesterday in California, is, as far as I am concerned, the beginning of the third world war. It's unlike any concept of war we may have had before. Society is falling apart. It's not just Iraq that is broken - it is society")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/what-we-saw-in-san-bernardino-paris-is-beginning-of-a-third-world-war-vicar-of-baghdad-argues-151589/>

Friday December 4, 2015



Australia: Concord, New South Wales

Fr Rahal Dergham (parish web site hacked by ISIL, replaced with written threats and beheading videos, said "We have our families still under the threat of ISIL and the majority has been hurt, displaced or raped. I don't think at this stage we have any fear. We've lost everything. They feel a big loss has happened. We're always hoping that at one stage ISIL would be defeated and we would be back to our towns and churches and monasteries and villages and properties, and business as usual. People have lost hope")

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/isis-hacks-website-of-an-australian-church-posted-a-threatening-message-for-christians/>



Kazakhstan: Astana

Yklas Kabduakasov (aged 54, father of eight, arrested by KNB secret police on [August 14, 2015](#) for spreading 'religious discord' by discussing his faith with others and offering Christian books to others; sentenced on [November 9, 2015](#) to 7 years' restricted freedom, will not be able to travel or move without permission, banned from most public locations; **UPDATE:** sentence under appeal, prosecutor is asking that the sentence be changed to 7 years' imprisonment)

Pastor Andrei Teteryuk (reported on Yklas Kabduakasov's appeal)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2130

Saturday December 5, 2015



United States – Nevada: Las Vegas

Several churches invaded by men claiming to be Christian converts from Islam, Masses disrupted

Fr Gerald R Grupczynski SCHR

Fr Tomasz Ludwicki SCHR

Fr Richard Philiposki SCHR

<http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/muslim-turned-christian-protesters-disrupt-catholic-masses-in-las-vegas/>

Sunday December 6, 2015



Vietnam: Quan Hanh, Nghi Loc district

Nguyen Van Dai (aged 46, attorney, husband of Khanh, beaten by police for having attended a human rights forum that covered freedom of religion, three others also beaten)

<http://www.csw.org.uk/2015/12/09/news/2890/article.htm>

Monday December 7, 2015



India: Arunachal Pradesh state

Toko Teki (general secretary of Arunachal Christian Forum, criticized the RSS paramilitary organization for its complaint of the growth of Christianity in the northeast states “The people of Arunachal are animists and not Hindus, as claimed by RSS. Yet, all the animists have been included among Hindus in census after census. Many of them are becoming Christians. That is why our numbers are growing. The pattern is the same in

the other north-eastern states...We not anti-nationals. We are no less patriotic than any other. RSS is trying to generate hostility towards Christians”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/12/4146705/>



Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan

Airspace has been closed to commercial aviation for 48 hours, stranding 150 Christian refugees

Fr Douglas Bazi (**UPDATE:** said “Russia is said to be sending missiles to several targets and therefore the airspace needs to be ‘free’. My people are a little bit disappointed, but they have been waiting for 15 months already and so two days does not make much difference”)

Nisan Hekmat (refugee, said “They told me that travel is delayed for 48 hours. In Iraq this is not unusual. In other countries it may be different but here it’s ‘normal’ to hear good news and bad news all at the same time...It is difficult for us all. Friends and family came to say goodbye and now the journey has been put on hold. We have everything packed and we’ve given away things like rice and oil that other families will need”)

Ramy (aged 22, refugee, said “It’s difficult for me to smile any more, but I want to, because I believe in goodbyes with a smile instead of with tears”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/12/4147384/>

Tuesday December 8, 2015



Uganda: Komodo area, Kadama sub-county, Kibuku district

Ismail Kuloba (aged 43, convert from Islam, police officer, **shot dead** with his own firearm when attacked by 20 Muslims while responding to a fictitious call)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/muslim-extremists-in-eastern-uganda-kill-christian-policeman-kidnap-three-children/>



Egypt: Rahmaniya village, Nag Hammadi, Qena province

Antonious Fam Bertie (aged 10, son of Fam Berty, abducted on the way to school by masked gunmen)

Fam Berty (father of Antonious Fam Bertie, reported his son's abduction)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65226>



United States

George Alexander (Secretary of the Orthodoxy Cognate web page, criticized comedian Stephen Colbert for calling Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem II a "Golden Snake Santa Pope" who could serve as King of Mardi Gras in his vestments)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45293>

Wednesday December 9, 2015



North Korea

Pastor Lim Hyeon-Soo (aged 60, Canadian citizen, disappeared after his [January 31, 2015](#) entry to the country; confessed on [July 31, 2015](#) in [Pyongyang](#) to attempting to overthrow the state; **UPDATE**: still under interrogation)

<http://directory.ucanews.com/news/canadian-pastor-still-being-interrogated-in-north-korea/2915>



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Pastor Su Tianfu (**UPDATE**: church raided by police during a prayer session attended by 200, church closed)

Zhang Tan (wrote a detailed history of the Huoshi Church including its persecution)

Pastor Li Guozhi aka Yang Hua (husband of Wang Hongwu, **UPDATE**: detained for "illegally holding state secrets")

Wang Hongwu (wife of Pastor Li Guozhi aka Yang Hua, said "Today, I went to pick up [my husband] Pastor Yang, but I failed. [I] saw four people pushing Yang Hua into a van without a license plate. Pastor Yang put on a black hood, and his mouth might have been

sealed. I called out to him, but he didn't respond. Those four people did not allow me to approach him. They pushed Pastor Yang into the car and sped away. I asked the detention center, and they only said that the department managing him took him away. They could not tell me which department [had taken him]. Then, I went home...I can only hand everything to the Lord!")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/china-christian-church-crackdown-guizhou-province-voice-america-communism-152202/>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/huoshi-church-member-writes-letter.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/church-pastor-charged-with-illegally.html>



India: Gujarat state

Archbishop Thomas Ignatius Macwan (said of religious freedom "Difficulties arise in the case of the baptism of catechumens because the draconian laws passed [in 2003 and 2006] by the then government of Narendra Modi prevent us from welcoming the newly baptized into our communities, unless a judge gives his consent", police go so far as to inspect baptismal records to ensure compliance)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Gandhinagar-on-the-Jubilee-of-Mercy-and-anti-conversion-legislation-36097.html>



Pakistan: Islamabad

The Capital Development Authority has announced that it will demolish several Christian-majority slums without the relocation plans that are required by law

Yaqub Masih (mason, cousin of Aamir, said "It is one thing being poor, but things are far worse if you are poor and Christian. Has the government even considered where I would take my family if they put us out on the street?...Our elders have been residing on this land since the inception of Islamabad in 1960. Most of us migrated to this city from other parts of Punjab, mainly Sialkot, Narowal and Faisalabad in search for a better life. But things have never been easy for us")

Aamir (cousin of Yaqub Masih, said "Life is much better for our Muslim neighbors in Islamabad, who at least manage to get better paid jobs, whereas we Christians have no other option but to earn a livelihood from cleaning jobs. Now they want us to just pack up and leave our homes just because they think that we will outnumber the Muslims. This is a ridiculous notion that amplifies the prejudice we have been suffering all these years")

Arif Bhatti (provider for a family of eight, said "There are no equal rights in Pakistan, not for Christians. We have been living in our colony [i.e. ghetto] for the last 15 years, and now

they are threatening to send us off in trucks ‘to wherever we have come from.’ But this is our home now, and we don’t have any other place to go”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/christian-slum-dwellers-fight- eviction-in-islamabad-pakistan/>



Uganda: Kabuna, near Budaka, Kaderuna district

Madengho Badir (aged 42, convert from Islam, father of Nabukwasi Shakira, Gessa Amuza and Wagti Musitafa, children abducted, said “I know the Muslims are doing this to frustrate my hope in Christ and to make me return to Islam. I know God will answer our prayer, and I will get back my three children, since my only hope is in Jesus”)

Nabukwasi Shakira (aged 5, child of Madengho Badir, abducted)

Gessa Amuza (aged 8, child of Madengho Badir, abducted)

Wagti Musitafa (aged 10, child of Madengho Badir, abducted)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/muslim-extremists-in-eastern-uganda-kill-christian-policeman-kidnap-three-children/>



United Nations: Geneva, Switzerland

Archbishop Silvano M Tomasi (**UPDATE:** said that international humanitarian law is "increasingly ignored and violated" and that "The short attention span of the communications media, and of many others in the international community, should be challenged by regularly calling attention to the ongoing emergencies that seem to be multiplying in intensity and complexity")

<http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/vatican.says.international.humanitarian.law.increasingly.ignored/36607.htm>

Thursday December 10, 2015



China: Jinhua, Zhejiang province

Municipal authorities forced the dismissal of the attorneys for a detained family

Pastor Bao Guohua (husband of Xing Wenxiang, detained on [July 26, 2015](#) on embezzlement charges after trying to prevent the demolition of a cross on a church, pastoral license revoked)

Pastor Xing Wenxiang (wife of Bao Guohua, detained on [July 26, 2015](#) on embezzlement charges after trying to prevent the demolition of a cross on a church, pastoral license revoked)

Deacon Bao Chenxing (son of Pastors Bao Guohua and Xing Wenxiang, detained on [July 26, 2015](#), tortured, hospitalized, still in custody)

Wang Zhaojun (detained on [July 26, 2015](#), released the following day)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/authorities-arrest-family-dismiss.html>



Bangladesh: Arjotpara, Mohakhli district, Dhaka

Rajesh Alexander D 'Cruze (aged 47, husband of Jessy D'Costa, brother of Ranjan Lawrence D' Cruze and Bipasha D'Cruze, banker, attacked by 5 armed men, hospitalized in critical condition, attack was similar to that against Fr Piero Parolaru)

Ranjan Lawrence D' Cruze (aged 37, brother of Rajesh Alexander D' Cruze and Bipasha D'Cruze, attacked by 5 armed men, hospitalized in critical condition, attack was similar to that against Fr Piero Parolaru)

Bipasha D'Cruze (aged 43, sister of Ranjan Lawrence D'Cruze and Rajesh Alexander D'Cruze, stabbed, hospitalized)

Jessy D'Costa (aged 32, wife of Rajesh Alexander D'Cruze, said "If they were robbers, they could have left with valuables. They attacked with knives and guns and they came to kill")

Fr Albert Thomas Rozario (**UPDATE**: said of the attack on the D'Cruze family "The attackers came to kill people. We guess their intention was to terrorize the Christian community. We have already talked to the Home Minister about the incident and he has assured us he will look into the matter")

Nirmal Rozario (general secretary of the Bangladesh Christian Association; **UPDATE**: said of the attack on the D'Cruze family "This seems like a preplanned attack as the assailants used guns and machetes. Recent attacks on Christians have remained unpunished, which might be emboldening extremists")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Dhaka,-brutal-attack-on-Catholic-brothers-leaves-them-fighting-for-life-36112.html>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/three-seriously-hurt-after-catholic-family-attacked-in-dhaka-home/74777>



India: Mumbai

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** said "The denial of justice to Dalit [untouchable] Christians goes against the letter and the spirit of Articles 14, 15, 16 and 25 of the Constitution of India on equal justice, equal opportunities and freedom of religion. It is a tragedy that nearly 75 per cent of India's Christians, some 20 million, belong to Scheduled Caste communities, and are denied statutory and constitutional benefits because of the 1950 Presidential Order. The worst thing is that when a Dalit decides to convert to Christianity, he or she loses all the advantages related to his social affiliation")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-leader-calls-for-an-end-to-discrimination-against-Christian-and-Muslim-Dalits-36110.html>



Pakistan: Youhanabad, Lahore

Christmas celebrations have been muted compared with past years due to the March 15, 2015 terror attacks on two churches

Fr Nasir George (said "New threats have given rise to a new wave of fear")

Nusrat Bibi (teacher, said how the city was "a symbol of the spirit of Christmas in the city...[people] decorate the streets, the houses, the churches", but now "everything is empty")

Luke Francis (street vendor, said "It doesn't not even look like Christmas, there are no events, no decorations, no participation by the people")

Xavier Williams (President of Life for All, said "For years, Pakistan has been fighting against terrorism that has hit the streets, squares, schools, mosques and churches. We will continue to pray unceasingly to God for the gift of peace, invoking the strength to overcome difficult moments like this. Terrorism is a challenge that affects us all. Christmas is a message of joy, hope and victory over death")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Bomb-threats-and-security-clamp-down-on-Christmas-festivities-for-Lahore's-Christians-36104.html>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/39020->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN_Threats_to_churches_for_Christmas_Christians_respond_with_prayer#.VmpORsJgkfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/39020-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Threats_to_churches_for_Christmas_Christians_respond_with_prayer#.VmpORsJgkfg)



Syria: Aleppo

Bishop George Abu Khazen OFM (**UPDATE**: wrote on the Year of Mercy "In recent years Syria has been living through a war that has cost hundreds of thousands of lives and millions of refugees...We have already suffered far too much from the consequences of violence and the absence of mercy of the various parties to the conflict. We have experienced the consequences of acting in the name and on behalf of a God that is far from "compassionate and merciful"! Therefore the time has come for us all to review our hard and merciless behavior!")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vicar-of-Aleppo:-Only-mercy-will-save-Syria-from-war-and-destruction-36109.html>



Lebanon: Bar Elias, Bekaa Valley

Radwan Mahmoud (Syrian refugee, provider for a family of twelve, deep in debt "Especially in wintertime. The jobs are getting less and less")

Younes Shereedeh (Syrian refugee, husband, father of three, former grocery store owner, owes more than \$500, said "No, I had no idea I'd be asking for credit like this...They're good people here")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151210170153.htm>



Belarus: Minsk

Sergei Lukanin (attorney, detained on [November 7, 2014](#) for reading the Bible aloud in a public park, **UPDATE**: has yet to receive clarification from the government that his actions are not legal)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2132

Friday December 11, 2015



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Cheng Chaohua (released from detention)

Huang Xiaoyuan (released from detention)

Zhou Jian (released from detention)

China: Poskum county, Xinjiang province

Fang Jianying (detained by police, still not released)

Chen Ai'e (detained by police, still not released)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/detainees-released-in-zhejiang.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/multiple-raids-in-xinjiang-5-detained.html>



Pakistan: Chak number 38 Janubi, Sargodha district, Punjab province

Two Christian women abducted on December 2, 2015 after a Muslim girl eloped with a Christian boy

Tahira Bibi (aged 20, daughter of Bashir Masih, sister of Reema Bibi, abducted, forced into an Islamic marriage, **UPDATE**: tortured, escaped)

Amjad Pervaiz (cousin of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrest warrant issued in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

Amir Shakeel (brother of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrest warrant issued in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

Arif Masih (uncle of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrested in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

Nazir Masih (uncle of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrested in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

Anwar Masih (uncle of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrest warrant issued in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

Irfan Masih (cousin of Tahira Bibi and Reema Bibi, arrest warrant issued in retribution after the escape of Tahira from her abductor)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5803>



Syria: Tel Tamar

A triple ISIL suicide bombing killed up to 60 people including some Christians

George Ballo (killed)

Hisham Bato (killed)

Milia Tolo (killed)

Slivo Isaac (killed)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45332>

Saturday December 12, 2015



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Wang Yunxian (released from detention)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/detainees-released-in-zhejiang.html>



Uzbekistan: Tashkent

Solomon Tuayev (relatives gave a Christian book to an undercover police agent)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2159

Sunday December 13, 2015



China: Hong Kong

Rev Lee Man-yuk (church construction demonstrated against by neighbors who believe it would affect the village's feng shui)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/rare-hong-kong-religious-protest-targets-protestant-church/74796>



Egypt: Rahmaniya village, Nag Hammadi, Qena province

Antonious Fam Bertie (aged 10, son of Fam Berty, abducted on [December 8, 2015](#) while on the way to school by masked gunmen; **UPDATE**: released)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65283>



Nigeria: Hwak Kwata-Zawan village, Plateau state

Fulani Muslim gunmen attack homes and a refugee center, killing 15 Christians

Rose Monday (aged 57, widow, grandmother of Happy Matthew, Monday Matthew, and Anna Matthew, **shot dead** while trying to protect her grandchildren)

Happy Matthew (aged 3, grandchild of Rose Monday, **shot dead**)

Monday Matthew (aged 1, grandchild of Rose Monday, **shot dead**)

Anna Matthew (aged 5, granddaughter of Rose Monday, shot, hospitalized)

Gyang Christopher Choji (father of Monday Gyang and Gbari Gyang, tried to help his family escape the attack, was the only member to survive)

Monday Gyang (aged 15, son of Gyang Christopher Choji, student, **shot dead**)

Gbari Gyang (daughter of Gyang Christopher Choji, wife of Kaneng Nyen Gbari, mother of Dorcas and Rose Timothy, **shot dead**)

Kaneng Nyen Gbari (aged 46, husband of Gbari Gyang, father of of Dorcas and Rose Timothy, **shot dead**)

Dorcas Timothy (child of Kaneng Nyen Gbari and Gbari Gyang, **shot dead**)

Rose Timothy (child of Kaneng Nyen Gbari and Gbari Gyang, **shot dead**)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/muslim-fulani-herdsmen-kill-15-christians-in-plateau-state-nigeria/>

Monday December 14, 2015



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Wang Yao (detained, accused of 'divulging state secrets')

Yu Lei (detained, accused of 'divulging state secrets')

Yang Hua (detained, accused of 'divulging state secrets')

China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Oan Liyue (detained on [September 7, 2015](#), **UPDATE**: still detained)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/detainees-released-in-zhejiang.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/09/christian-womans-trial-to-take-place.html>



Vietnam: Thanh Hoa province

Rev Nguyen Trung Ton (reported to have been detained by police)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/pastor-arrested-rights-protesters-beaten-in-vietnam/74790>



Uzbekistan: Yakkasaray district

Gleb Izmaytyev (home raided by 20 plainclothes police, 750 books, CDs and DVDs seized, detained for over two hours, charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution, of religious materials', parent's home then searched but nothing found)

Solomon Tuayev (relatives gave a Christian book to an undercover police agent in Tashkent on [December 12, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: house guest of Gleb Izmaytyev, detained for over two hours, charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution, of religious materials')

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2159



Azerbaijan: Gyanja

Rashad Niftaliev (aged 28, worship service raided on [November 14, 2015](#), nine worshippers fined US\$1,910 each, arrested on [November 19, 2015](#) for not paying his fines which now totaled US\$4,730, has been paying the fines in small installments, **UPDATE**: released after serving 25 days imprisonment)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2134



Sudan: Bahri

Pastor Hafiz Mengisto (being tried on a charge of interfering with a civil servant, charged after challenging the demolition of part of his church)

<http://www.meconcern.org/index.php/en/prayer-requests/992-sudan-pastor-and-lawyer-on-trial-following-destruction-of-church-building>



Egypt: Alexandria

Youhana Zakry Zaky (wife abducted in August 2014, said the chief prosecutor has not responded to his complaint and told him that it does not matter if a hundred Copts die)

Egypt: Al-Rahmaniah, Qena province

Fr Bakhom Adel (said that security forces have reversed their position and will not allow the reopening of a church)

Egypt: Minya

Tahani (aged 70, **stabbed to death** in her home)

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65293>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65295>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65301>



France: Grande-Synthe refugee camp

Mohammad (aged 19, convert, Iranian citizen, **stabbed to death**)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/02/4305685/>

Tuesday December 15, 2015



Kyrgyzstan: Kemin

Marat Niyazaliev (husband, father, Russian citizen, house church leader, church closed in [spring 2015](#); **UPDATE**: arrested on a charge of indecent assault of an 8 year old girl on [December 8, 2015](#), released)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Kyrgyzstan-church-leader-in-custody-as-authorities-take-apparent-revenge-for-churchs-court-victory>



Ukraine: Ptichaya village, Rovno region

Fr Nikolay Sisonyuk (yard and automobile reported to have been vandalized, apparently by supporters of the Kiev Patriarchate)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/88822.htm>

Wednesday December 16, 2015



North Korea: Pyongyang

Pastor Lim Hyeon-Soo (aged 60, Canadian citizen, disappeared after his [January 31, 2015](#) entry to the country; confessed on [July 31, 2015](#) to attempting to overthrow the state; **UPDATE**: sentenced to life imprisonment at hard labor)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pyongyang-sentences-Canadian-Christian-missionary-to-life-in-prison-36161.html>



Vietnam: Hanoi

Nguyen Van Dai (aged 46, attorney, husband of Khanh, beaten by police in [Quan Hanh, Nghi Loc district](#) on [December 6, 2015](#) for having attended a human rights forum that covered freedom of religion; **UPDATE**: arrested at his home on charges of 'propaganda against the state', computers, Christian and human rights materials seized)

Khanh (wife of Nguyen Van Dai, told the police: "We believe in Jesus. I told them that was our religion...but they ignored my words" and seized all of their Christian possessions)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Nguyen-Van-Dai,-a-Christian-lawyer,-detained-for-propaganda-against-the-state-36184.html>



India: Puttur, Karnataka state

Eight Christians arrested in September 2007 on accusations of proselytism were acquitted in court and released

K Varghese

M Thomas

S Babu

T Alexander

T James

T Joseph

T Sebastian

V Baby

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Karnataka:-eight-Christians-acquitted-in-forced-conversion-case-36169.html>

Thursday December 17, 2015



India

Rev Ronald John (**UPDATE:** said “Mahabubnagar District has experienced severe persecution in the last 11 months. Apart from countless minor incidents in the district, there have been reports of severe incidents where churches were torched or vandalized. In one case in Pebber, we saw one of the most shocking incidents of Hindu radicals mercilessly stamping children and women, causing serious injuries. It is the Christian unity that can counter this systematic infiltration of hate by the communal forces in the district”)

<http://www.persecution.org/2015/12/17/christian-persecution-reaches-new-heights-in-indias-telangana-state-as-country-debates-rise-in-intolerance/>



Pakistan: Islamabad

Salma (alias, wife, mother of three, reported to have been accused of blasphemy, husband beaten when he refused to convert to Islam, in hiding)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/accused-of-blasphemy-catholic-family-flees-islamabad/74805>



Tanzania

“Ally” (Christian leader, **UPDATE:** said of the government's campaign to close Non-Governmental Organizations: “Our main worry is that most of the local churches and mission-based organizations are registered as NGOs and last year more than 37 were closed on this account. They pay their fees, they report their work, but they were closed for breaking the [prohibition] of interfering with other faith affairs - converting a Muslim, preaching to a Muslim, or even [allowing] a convert [from Islam] to run and hide in their homes”)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Christian-organisations-targeted-as-Tanzanian-government-bans-hundreds-of-NGOs>



Egypt

Maheer al-Gohary (catechumen, reported to have filed suit to change his religion on his national id card from Islam to Christianity, said he and his daughter have suffered persecution for years)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1533&A=21533>



Mali: Timbuktu

Hamar Oumar Dicko (Christian radio station employee, **killed**)

Samuel Dicko (Christian radio station employee, **killed**)

Dr Mohamed-Ibrahim Yattara (President of the Baptist Church, **UPDATE:** described an attack in which a gunman killed two employees of a Christian radio station and a visiting friend,

said “We are trying to find out what happened, but for now we don’t have any explanation. It’s a Christian radio station that was broadcasting messages of peace lately. One of the young men who was shot last night, he had just finished broadcasting and his last words were about peace”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/12/4166261/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/01/4215120/>

Friday December 18, 2015



Thailand

Twelve members of an extended Pakistani refugee family are reportedly living under one roof despite one having untreated infectious diseases

Shahrooz Masih (aged 20, brother of Mafia Bibi, in failing health due to tuberculosis and a liver infection)

Mafia Bibi (aged 35, wife of Raju Bashir, mother of Andrew Isaac, Mather Hidden, and Adam Booker, sister of Shahrooz Masih, fled Pakistan after being accused of blasphemy, said "We are very grateful to God that we escaped persecution in Pakistan, but it's been very hard as my family have continued to suffer since our arrival here. Thailand is our only hope for a new life and a future to our children, but with their father detained I don't know what to do. Since my husband's arrest the children are terrified and very easily upset. My brother Sharooz is very sick and we are desperately worried about him as he needs urgent treatment, but we have no way to pay for this. I pray every day that God will move in our situation")

Raju Bashir (aged 34, husband of Mafia Bibi, father of Andrew Isaac, Mather Hidden, and Adam Booker, arrested by Thai police after illegally seeking work to support his family, bail denied after recent terror incidents)

Andrew Isaac (aged 6, son of Raju Bashir and Mafia Bibi)

Mather Hidden (aged 5, son of Raju Bashir and Mafia Bibi)

Adam Booker (aged 18 months, son of Raju Bashir and Mafia Bibi)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sufferer-with-debilitating-tb-seeks-help>



Pakistan: Rawalpindi

Two brothers have gone into hiding after their Muslim tenant accused them of blasphemy in an apparent attempt to occupy their property

Nasir Yousaf

Nisar Yousaf

Kathreen Yousaf (aged 65, widow of Yousaf Masih, mother of Nasir and Nisar Yousaf)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5780>



Sudan: Khartoum Bahry

Rev Kowa Shamal (**UPDATE:** arrested by the NISS secret police)

Sudan: Omdurman

Rev Hassan Abdelrahim Tawor (arrested by the NISS secret police)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/two-more-pastors-arrested-in-khartoum-sudan/>



Uganda: Kachomo village, Kachomo sub-county, Budaka district

Eight Bible study members poisoned by a pesticide in a Muslim majority village

Hajii Suleiman Sajjabi (convert, had hosted the Bible study, poisoned, one son who did not convert from Islam is the leading suspect in the poisoning)

Katooko Aisha Sajjabi (aged 22, convert, poisoned)

Mwanje Husain Sajjabi (aged 24, convert, poisoned)

Eric Ali Sajjabi (aged 29, convert, poisoned)

Musa Namusongi Sajjabi (aged 26, convert, poisoned)

Mariam Kurumu (convert, expectant mother, poisoned)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/pastor-hacked-to-death-bible-study-members-poisoned-in-eastern-uganda/>



Egypt: Assiut

Issac Mosad (aged 55, reported to have been freed by police, had been abducted for ransom and held for 5 days)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1534&A=21550>



Turkey: Yozgat

Christian refugees from Iraq have reportedly been forced to hide their religious identity

Anonis Alis Salciyan (wife, mother of two, said "My husband and I fled with our two children one year ago with around 20 other families. There was pressure on us in Iraq. We have relatives in Europe. Only thanks to their support are we getting by. Our children cannot go to school here, they cannot speak Turkish")

Linda Markaryan (wife of Vahan Markaryan, fled Iraq after an ISIL raid on their home, said "My daughter, Nusik, seven, stopped talking that day. She has not spoken since. We are working hard to provide her treatment, but she still will not speak... We are pious people, but we have to conduct our sermons and prayers at home. This is hard")

Vahan Markaryan (husband of Linda, father of Nusik, electrical technician)

Nusik Markaryan (aged 7, daughter of Vahan and Linda Markaryan)

<http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/christian-refugees-face-difficulties-hide-religion-in-turkey-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=92719&NewsCatID=339>



Nigeria: Obior, Aniocha North local government area, Delta state

Fr Franklyn Odiaka (abducted)

Fr Moses Nwaonwochei (abducted)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/39103-AFRICA_NIGERIA_Two_priests_kidnapped_in_the_Delta_State_have_been_released#.VnodNsJgkfg

Saturday December 19, 2015



China

Five Christian university students were expelled for praying together in a private room, had been secretly photographed

Li Binbin

Zhang Yaqi

Chen Huiyun

Ni Wangjie

Chen Ping

Jia Rong (prayed with the expelled students but was not expelled)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/shandong-students-to-be-expelled-for.html>



Thailand

Sanina Faisal (aged 30, wife, mother, Pakistani refugee, arrested on a visa violation, denied medication)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christmas-and-new-year-tragedy-detained-pakistani-christian-mother-dies-in-custody>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5742>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5741>



Uganda: Kachomo village, Kachomo sub-county, Budaka district

Eight Bible study members poisoned on December 18, 2015 by a pesticide in a Muslim majority village

Katooko Aisha Sajjabi (aged 22, convert, poisoned; **UPDATE: died**)

Mwanje Husain Sajjabi (aged 24, convert, poisoned; **UPDATE: died**)

Eric Ali Sajjabi (aged 29, convert, poisoned; **UPDATE: died**)

Musa Namusongi Sajjabi (aged 26, convert, poisoned; **UPDATE: died**)

Mariam Kurumu (convert, expectant mother, poisoned; **UPDATE: died**)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/pastor-hacked-to-death-bible-study-members-poisoned-in-eastern-uganda/>

Monday December 21, 2015



Iran: Rajai Shahr Prison, Karaj

Pastor Farshid Malayeri Fathi (aged 36, in jail since [December 2010](#); **UPDATE**: released)

<http://www.persecution.org/2015/12/22/pastor-farshid-fatih-released-from-iranian-prison/>



Eritrea: Asmara

Patriarch Abune Antonios (**UPDATE**: still under house arrest, his government appointed replacement Patriarch Dioskoros has passed away after a long illness)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45451>



Kenya: Elwak

Meshack Owino (aged 43, welder, church elder, husband of Shillah, father of Nicholas and others, **shot dead** while trying to flee al-Shabaab terrorists who had stopped his bus)

Bishop Joseph Alessandro OFM Cap (Maltese national; **UPDATE**: said in response to an al-Shabaab terror attack on a bus in which the Muslim passengers saved most of the Christian passengers from death by refusing to be separated from them "It is a very good thing; a concrete sign that Kenyan Muslims are against violence...The Shabaab now know that they do not have the support of the Muslim community. We hope that we continue in this direction, because a year ago there was a similar attack that caused a massacre")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/39098->

[AFRICA KENYA Muslim Passengers protect Christians from the Shabaab a very positive thing says the Bishop of Garissa#.Vnod6MJgkfg](#)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2016/01/non-muslims-targeted-in-islamic-extremist-attacks-in-mandera-kenya/>



Ukraine: Pticha village, Rivne region

Iryna Horodchuk (aged 35, hospitalized in serious condition after being besieged in her church by Kiev Patriarchate and Right Sector militants who heckled her when she was removed on a stretcher, police have taken no action, a second parishioner was later hospitalized)

Archpriest Viktor Zemlyanoy (reported on the church siege)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/89070.htm>

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/89069.htm>



Nigeria: Obior, Aniocha North local government area, Delta state

Fr Franklyn Odiaka (abducted; **UPDATE**: released)

Fr Moses Nwaonwochei (abducted; **UPDATE**: released)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/39103->

[AFRICA NIGERIA Two priests kidnapped in the Delta State have been released#. VnodNsJgkfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/39103-)

Tuesday December 22, 2015



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Tu Yulei (detained by police along with his daughter, whereabouts unknown)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/more-house-church-members-detained-in.html>



Bangladesh

Nirmal Rozario (general secretary of the Bangladesh Christian Association; **UPDATE**: received a death threat, said “In Bangladesh, the churches are not engaged in any aggressive evangelical activity. They are well-known in this country for their service to the society.

Some militant groups have robbed the spirit of this Christmas by unfairly targeting the Christian leaders. Many Christians fear that the militants are aiming to launch identical terror attack on churches... This is the first time in my life that I find Christians celebrating Christmas with such panic and fear")

<http://www.voanews.com/content/bangladeshi-christians-skip-traditional-christmas-midnight-mass/3117525.html>



Pakistan: outside Islamabad

Falak Sher (resident of the H-9 colony [ghetto], reportedly will be homeless after its scheduled demolition, had moved to H-9 after the 2013 Mehrabadi pogrom)

Pakistan: Punjab province

Prof Anjum James Paul (**UPDATE:** wrote a letter to the provincial Chief Minister [governor] concerning the November 9, 2015 abduction, forcible conversion to Islam, and forcible marriage of 13 year old Sana Shahid, pointed out that compulsory education is mandated by law until 16 and so her abductors are in violation of that law as well, attached a copy of her birth certificate to prove the age of 18 on the marriage certificate was fraudulent)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5734>

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/cm-punjab-urged-to-take-steps-to-recover-a-christian-teenage-girl-forcefully-given-in-marriage-to-a-muslim/>



Uzbekistan: Fergana

Raisa Kuznetsova (mother of Boris, home raided by police without warrant on [November 22, 2015](#), 15,453 Christian items seized; detained on [November 23, 2015](#), questioned for 3 hours, charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution, of religious materials'; detained on [November 24, 2015](#), questioned for 7 hours; **UPDATE:** fined US\$230, seized materials not returned)

Boris (son of Raisa Kuznetsova, home raided by police without warrant on [November 22, 2015](#); detained on [November 23, 2015](#), questioned for 3 hours, charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution, of religious materials'; **UPDATE:** fined US\$230)

Uzbekistan: Yakkasaray district

Gleb Izmayev (home in Yakkasaray district raided by 20 plainclothes police on [December 14, 2015](#), 750 books, CDs and DVDs seized, detained for over two hours, charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution,

of religious materials', parent's home then searched but nothing found; **UPDATE:** fined US\$136, seized religious materials ordered destroyed)

Solomon Tuayev (relatives gave a Christian book to an undercover police agent in [Tashkent](#) on [December 12, 2016](#); house guest of Gleb Izmestyev in [Yakkasaray district](#), detained for over two hours on [December 14, 2015](#), charged with 'Illegal production, storage, or import, with the intent to distribute or actual distribution, of religious materials'; **UPDATE:** fined US\$136)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2159



Belarus: Gorki

Mikhail Shulgan (husband of Liliya Shulgan, home raided on [December 22, 2015](#) by police during a Bible study, accused of holding an illegal meeting)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2146



United Kingdom

Rev Arun Arora (Church of England Director of Communications, **UPDATE:** said "Many families will be looking forward to going to the cinema during the Christmas holidays. It is astonishing that Digital Cinema Media refuses to show a short film focused on the Holy Family. This is not so much no room at the inn but a refusal by the innkeepers to take in any family who are religious")

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/12064735/No-room-at-the-cinema-for-the-baby-Jesus.html>

Wednesday December 23, 2015



Bangladesh

William Proloy Samadder (organizing secretary of the Bangladesh Christian Association, escaped an attempt on his life, said "We convened meetings and all church leaders agreed

that the fears of the church members were not unfounded. All churches in the country have been placed under unusually heavy police security this Christmas”)

<http://www.voanews.com/content/bangladeshi-christians-skip-traditional-christmas-midnight-mass/3117525.html>



India: Maharashtra state

The state government has again decided to hold 'Good Governance Day' on Christmas, including the National Service Scheme [NSS] camp for which students gain credits

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (**UPDATE**: said “Holding programs to promote Good Governance is good, but such a celebration should be avoided on Christmas Day...There might be a strategy behind it”)

Rev Dr Roger Gaikwad (National Council of Churches in India; **UPDATE**: said “There is definitely a deliberate attempt to undermine the importance of Christmas. The move cannot be seen in isolation from what is happening in the country. The BJP government has been keen on suppressing the minorities, their culture and icons at different levels”)

Bishop Thomas Dabre (**UPDATE**: said the government “should be sensitive, especially to religious minorities”)

Dolphy D’Souza (said the action “raises suspicion about the government's intentions”)

Fr George Paramel (said that the NSS camp was scheduled to keep Christian teachers and students at the camp on Christmas day)

P K Antu (school headmaster, said “Since the NSS camp is scheduled from December 19th to 25th, the students can return home only on the Christmas afternoon. So, I wrote to the NSS coordinator and to Kerala chief minister to prepone the camp so that the students can return on the Christmas Eve”, was told the dates could not be changed)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/12/4181866/>



Iran

Misem Hojatti (**UPDATE**: arrested in his parent's home by MOIS officers, hand-cuffed and slapped, religious items, electronics, and a Christmas tree seized, whereabouts unknown)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=2740>



Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan

Christians will be celebrating their second Christmas in a refugee camp

Nabela Salim (mother of Marvin, refugee)

Marvin (aged 2, refugee)

Habiba Daud (refugee)

Majida Sabali (mother of Dima, Fadi and Nafa, refugee, said "I have a strong faith...")

Dima (child of Majida Sabali)

Fadi (child of Majida Sabali)

Nafa (child of Majida Sabali)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151222210330.htm>



Syria: on the road between Lattakia and Yacubiyah

Fr Dhiya Azziz OFM (aged 41, Iraqi citizen, slightly injured when a missile hit his monastery on [July 20, 2014](#) in [Yacubiyah](#), room destroyed in the explosion; abducted in [Yacubiyah](#) village, [Jisr ash-Shugur](#) district, [Idlib](#) province on [July 4, 2015](#) possibly by Al-Nusra; released on [July 10, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: abducted by persons unknown while returning from visiting his parents who are refugees in Turkey, all other persons in his taxi also missing)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Syria:-no-news-on-fate-of-Fr.-Aziz,-a-Franciscan-kidnapped-at-Christmas-36252.html>



Uganda: Nansololo village near Mazuba, Namudumba district

Pastor Bongo Martin (aged 32, husband, father of two, **beheaded** by members of a mosque during a land dispute)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/pastor-hacked-to-death-bible-study-members-poisoned-in-eastern-uganda/>



Belarus: Minsk

Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz (**UPDATE:** described how officials are unprepared to grant a license for a religious radio broadcast station "The Justice Ministry told us that these are religious affairs, go to the Committee for Religious and Ethnic Affairs. This registers religious organizations which conduct worship, but on the radio the Mass is not held")

Fr Yury Sanko (Bishop's conference spokesman; **UPDATE:** said "Officials don't know which of them should take responsibility, as radio is a special service")

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2157

Thursday December 24, 2015



Philippines: villages in Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato

Fr Sebastiano D'Ambra PIME (**UPDATE:** described attacks by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters that left 2 dead in a Christian chapel and 9 dead on a rice plantation, 14 total were killed including some Muslims)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/PIME-missionary:-lack-of-agreement-between-Muslims-and-government-behind-Mindanao-attacks-36254.html>



China: Guangzhou

Pastor Sun Weili (said of Christmas "Christmas is a time of rejoicing for us, and we are all preparing our activities. I have heard that other churches have run into harassment, but so far we haven't. Perhaps it's because we are too small...we are being very cautious, and we won't be doing anything too ambitious")

China: Beijing

Zhang Shengqi (**UPDATE:** said of Christmas "Churches in Beijing are keeping a low profile and only informing their own members [about Christmas services]. They won't be inviting too many outsiders to join them")

Xu Yonghai (**UPDATE:** said of Christmas "In the past, we would get up early to spread the gospel and hand out leaflets, but the police found out about our plans this year, and have

told us not to do that in future. They said they would have to start detaining us if we didn't stop that")

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/christians-12242015104323.html>



Thailand

Asia Johnson (aged 38, wife of Johnson Masih, mother of Eashal, Reemal, and Rumaisa, Pakistani refugee, detained)

Reemal Johnson (aged 7, daughter of Johnson Masih and Asia Johnson, Pakistani refugee, detained)

Eashal Johnson (aged 3, daughter of Johnson Masih and Asia Johnson, Pakistani refugee, detained)

Johnson Masih (aged 40, husband of Asia Johnson, father of Eashal, Reemal, and Rumaisa, Pakistani refugee)

Rumaisa Johnson (aged 6, daughter of Johnson Masih and Asia Johnson, Pakistani refugee)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/idc-victim-released-after-staying-2-months-in-idc>



Bangladesh

Bishop Sebastian Tudu (**UPDATE**: said "Several church leaders in Dinajpur have received death threats over the past weeks. Police advised us to remain as cautious as possible. All Catholic churches in this diocese decided not to hold Mass at midnight this Christmas")

<http://www.voanews.com/content/bangladeshi-christians-skip-traditional-christmas-midnight-mass/3117525.html>



Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan

Sr Ban Saaed (refugee, **UPDATE**: has been living in a shipping container, said "Our identity is very difficult...in our country. We would like to live our lives in peace, but we haven't seen peace since we've been born")

Nissan Botros (husband of Bernadette, refugee along with his children and grandchildren, said his family told the ISIL terrorists when they called from their home "Sit back then and make yourselves comfortable. But know that God will bring all this to judgement!")

Bernadette (wife of Nissan Botros, refugee along with his children and grandchildren)

Fr Daniel Behnam (refugee, spoke of his parishioners being driven out from their homes by ISIL
“We closed the door behind, knowing there was no turning back. But one thing we would not do! We would not submit!...A church that is not suffering is not a church”, and quoted Patriarch Ignatius Zakka's alternate reading of the Creed "one holy catholic, apostolic and *persecuted* church")

Firas (husband, teacher, refugee, said: “Don’t ask me what I’ve lost. Ask me what I’ve gained!”)

Iraq: Kirkuk, Kurdistan

Imad Yokhana Yago (Member of Parliament; **UPDATE**: reported on the desecration of a Christian cemetery)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151224035913.htm>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/12/4183271/>

<http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65404>



Syria: Sadad

Youssuf (aged 65, said of Christmas “Dozens of people have died in this village; how could I put up decorations or hand out holiday sweets?”)

Fr Mtanyos Melhem Stouf (said “our youth, who at this time of year used to be busy decorating a big tree in the middle of the village, but who are now busy protecting our front lines”)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christians-in-syrian-town-celebrate-christmas-amid-extreme-fear/>



Lebanon: Beirut

Joseph Kourieh (aged 57, husband of Noura, Syrian refugee, said "I want to keep my family together, even if that means we stay here and starve to death")

Noura Kourieh (aged 50, wife of Joseph, Syrian refugee, said "There's nothing here for us - just emptiness")

Huda Kourieh (aged 34, daughter of Joseph and Noura Kourieh, said "We're being pulled apart by a war that has turned our lives black")

Hani Kourieh (aged 26, son of Joseph and Noura Kourieh, has considered paying smugglers to take him to Greece, his father has begged him to not go)

Fadi (aged 26, relative of Joseph and Noura Kourieh, disappeared after leaving Turkey on a smuggling vessel bound for Greece)

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/a-christmas-of-despair-for-syrian-christian-refugees-in-lebanon/2015/12/24/d035f3a2-9d07-11e5-9ad2-568d814bbf3b_story.html



Turkey: Sanliurfa

Pastor Eyup Badem (convert, reported to have been beaten, eight year old daughter has been beaten at school)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151224015543.htm>



Egypt

Nader Shukry (**UPDATE**: criticized the government for scheduling college exams on Christmas Eve, saying it prevented students from celebrating with their families)

Imad Khalil (said that the government continues to schedule exams on Christian holidays despite years of protests)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1538&A=21619>

Friday December 25, 2015
Christmas – Western Calendar



Vietnam: Dak Lak, Dak Mon municipality, Dak Glei district, and Xe-Dang, Kon Pia village, Tumoron district

Fr Dominic Tran Van Vu (**UPDATE**: confirmed that authorities prevented Christmas Mass from being celebrated in two parishes for 8,000 parishioners)

Theresa Hoa (said "the authorities prevented the priests from saying Mass, have thus violated the Constitution and the laws of Vietnam")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vietnamese-authorities-prohibit-thousands-of-Kontum-Christians-from-celebrating-Christmas-36255.html>



Pakistan: Rimsha colony [ghetto], outside Islamabad

Nargis Masih (aged 33, housewife, has been forced to travel three kilometers away to get water after the Capital Development Authority capped the three well in her colony [ghetto])

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/afp/article-3373907/Islamabads-Christian-slum-dwellers-pray-Christmas-miracle.html>



Iran: Shiraz

MOIS agents arrest nine Christians who were celebrating Christmas

Ahmad Golshani-Nia

Alireza Ali-Qanbari

Elaheh Izadi

Mahmoud Salehi

Mohammad-Reza Soltanian

Mohsen Javadi

Moussa Sari-Pour

Reza Mohammadi

<http://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/19715-iran-s-regime-arrests-christians-on-christmas-day>



Iraq: Bagdad

Mariam (aged 29, teacher, said "Christians who left Iraq don't wish to return and some of them are even nagging us to leave, saying that even if we make it through this ordeal, the next one will be the end of it")

Abu Fadi (aged 51, Zayuna refugee camp worker)

Said Jalal (aged 31, Zayuna refugee camp volunteer, said "Christmas is in our hearts religiously, but I am depressed because it is not the same socially. Most of my family and acquaintances are either displaced or have left")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151225153311.htm>



Syria: Tel Tamer

ISIL released 25 Christians from captivity, all had been held since [February 23, 2015](#)

Sammy Awisha Malham (aged 41)

Fadi Michael Eesa (aged 41)

Juliet Yourish Talya (aged 40, mother of 2)

Stella Farid Joseph (aged 10)

Tony Farid Joseph (aged 7)

Ghada Moshe Baram (aged 40, mother of 1)

Maria Akram Odisho (aged 8)

Hanan Youkhana Enwiya (aged 46, mother of 4)

Francis Walid Sawa (aged 11)

Aurinya Walid Sawa (aged 9)

Ashurina Walid Sawa (aged 7)

Nahren Walid Sawa (aged 4)

Muna Marcus Adam (aged 41, mother of 5)

Louise Ashur Gabriel (aged 9)

Lamasu Ashur Gabriel (aged 7)

Ankidu Ashur Gabriel (aged 6)

Amilio Ashur Gabriel (aged 4)

George Ashur Gabriel (aged 2)

Lena Nawaf Marjan (aged 39, mother of 3)

Ninos Elias Youkhana (aged 10)

Ishtar Elias Youkhana (aged 7)

Junior Elias Youkhana (aged 3)

Laila Odisho Odisho (aged 47, mother of 1)

Alexander Samih Simon (aged 11)

Jamila Kako Kako (aged 41)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45537>



Turkey: Yalova province

Fr Bishare al Shemani (Iraqi refugee, said "They took our areas, our house, the places that we used to hold so dear")

Meryem Salim (Iraqi refugee, said "My last Christmas was in my family's house. It was me, my mom, and my dad and my brother. We were all together. And we hope to be united as one family in one place just once more")

Johnson Razgin (Iraqi refugee, said "This Christmas, it is sad to be far away from our country, it is sad to be away from our neighbors, from our friends, from our families. It is not easy. But something is better than nothing. Thanks for God, we have a priest here, that we are gathering here. I hope that everything will be OK")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151225201004.htm>



Uganda: Kachomo village, Kachomo sub-county, Budaka district

Hajii Suleiman Sajjabi (convert, had hosted the Bible study after which he was poisoned on December 18, 2015, one son who did not convert from Islam is the leading suspect in the poisoning; **UPDATE**: currently in a coma)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/pastor-hacked-to-death-bible-study-members-poisoned-in-eastern-uganda/>



Egypt: Assiut

Kyrolos Reda (student, abducted in front of his school by masked gunmen)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1539&A=21637>

Sunday December 27, 2015



Nigeria: Jos, Plateau state

Gloria Kwashi (wife of Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi, has been operating an orphanage for 400 children orphaned by the Islamist violence)

Rt Rev Benjamin Kwashi (archbishop, husband of Gloria Kwashi; **UPDATE**: leads night prayers at the orphanage)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/international-persecution/christians-in-nigeria-having-nothing-but-everything>

Monday December 28, 2015



Bangladesh

Aldrick Biswas (Catholic newspaper executive director, reported to have received a death threat)

Bishop Bejoy N D'Cruze OMI (**UPDATE**: reported to have received a death threat “Fulfil your last dream because your life is in last stage. Very soon you are going to be killed by us”)

Br Binoy (reported to have received a death threat)

Fr Boniface Subrata Tolentino (reported to have received a death threat)

Rev Edward Jagadish (reported to have received a death threat)

Bishop Paul Panen Kubi (**UPDATE**: reported to have received a death threat)

Fr Ujjol Rozario (**UPDATE**: reported to have received a death threat)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fear-at-Christmas-in-Bangladesh-as-two-bishops-receive-death-threats-36257.html>



Kazakhstan: Astana

Yklas Kabduakasov (aged 54, father of eight, arrested by KNB secret police on [August 14, 2015](#) for spreading 'religious discord' by discussing his faith with others and offering Christian books to others, ordered held on [August 15, 2015](#) in a two-month pretrial detention; sentenced on [November 9, 2015](#) to 7 years' restricted freedom, will not be able to travel or move without permission, banned from most public locations; **UPDATE**: sentenced amended after a KNB prosecutorial appeal to 2 years' imprisonment in a labor camp)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2136



Egypt: Luxor

Bishop Youhannes Zakaria Badir (aged 65; **UPDATE: died of natural causes**)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1541&A=21676>



Ukraine: Odessa

Metropolitan Agafangel Savvin (wrote "There have been around 20 robberies or attempted robberies of churches in our city and across the Odessa region over the past month. The donations, brought in by the parishioners, little by little, for the beautification of the houses of God, for helping the refugees from the conflict in Donbass and the wounded, for supporting those of our neighbors whom no one helps—all these were stolen...")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/89300.htm>

Tuesday December 29, 2015



Eritrea

Helen Berhane (Gospel singer, locked with 17 other Christian women in a shipping container filled with fleas and lice for 32 months, given one bathroom break a day in an open field, beaten for singing hymns, freed in 2006 after she became deathly ill; **UPDATE:** reportedly at a conference in [Rome, Italy](#) called on people to help the persecuted: "You cannot do anything by yourself. We need many kinds of people. It doesn't matter what kind of religion they have or which doctrine; we must be united and pray for the voiceless")

<http://www.religionnews.com/2015/12/29/eritrean-gospel-singer-helen-berhane-tortured-beliefs-now-shes-speaking/>



Syria: Damascus

Riad Sargi (husband of Rouba Farah, father of Leila, Elias, and Michael, mechanical engineer in the pharmaceutical industry, said "we have tried to experience the atmosphere of Christmas and respect its values despite the conflict that goes on unabated around us. We went to church, attended Mass, saw plays, watched young people sing and play hymns, whilst only two kilometers away from our church, war rages on in an area controlled by terrorists...it will not be possible to put an end to the Syrian crisis without mercy, love and reconciliation, completely lacking in the hearts of those who fight in the name of God, as they see Him and shape Him to their own ends...I am excited by the chance to show the ideal of love that is inherent in Christianity, which has no place for hatred to fuel of war and fighting in our country")

Rouba Farah (wife of Riad Sargi, mother of Leila, Elias, and Michael, medical researcher)

Leila (aged 14, daughter of Riad Sargi and Rouba Farah, sister of Elias and Michael)

Elias (aged 5, son of Riad Sargi and Rouba Farah, brother of Leila and Michael)

Michael (aged 5, son of Riad Sargi and Rouba Farah, brother of Leila and Elias)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Damascus:-Christmas-of-Mercy-not-far-from-terrorists-and-bombs-36269.html>



Sudan

Pastor Hafiz Mengisto (as of [December 14, 2015](#) has been tried on a charge of interfering with a civil servant, charged after challenging the demolition of part of his church; **UPDATE:** acquitted)

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/sudanese.pastor.acquitted.of.obstructing.church.demolition/75776.htm>



Turkey: Mardin

"Myriam" (cousin of "Kinda", Syrian refugee, reported to have said of another cousin's abduction in Syria "My cousin, in his 50s, was beaten badly and given only dry bread to eat for two months", cousin was freed after a ransom of US\$63,554 was paid)

"Kinda" (cousin of "Myriam", Syrian refugee)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151228191855.htm>



Belarus: Gorki

Mikhail Shulgan (husband of Liliya Shulgan, home raided on [December 22, 2015](#) by police during a Bible study, accused of holding an illegal meeting, **UPDATE**: charged with 'not using living premises for their designated purpose')

Liliya Shulgan (wife of Mikhail Shulgan, charged with 'not using living premises for their designated purpose' despite the fact she was not present during her husband's Bible study)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2146

Wednesday December 30, 2015



China: Shenzhen, Guangdong province

Guo Yongfeng (**UPDATE**: spoke on the government's coercion of a landlord to terminate the lease of a house church "...they must unconditionally move out by January 2016. If they don't move out, [the officials] could carry out enforcement methods...There are many churches that have registered, but there are also other house churches that refuse to register. However, they suffer the government's [persecution]. It is more than they can bear; they don't have any means to go to the [correct government] departments and register. Some are churches that have more than 10 or 20 people. They all must complete the registration and become Three-Self churches. If we, [activists and dissidents], go to a church or a house church, they will be asked to close. Furthermore, I am not permitted to go to the church that takes the initiative to greet me. Shenzhen's Domestic Security Protection Bureau said to me, 'You cannot go to any house churches right now, [but] you can go to a Three-Self church')

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/12/officials-terminate-churchs-lease-order.html>



Thailand

Sanina Faisal (aged 30, wife, mother, Pakistani refugee, arrested on a visa violation, denied medication; **UPDATE**: **died in custody**, family denied access to her body due to their visa status)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christmas-and-new-year-tragedy-detained-pakistani-christian-mother-dies-in-custody>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5742>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5741>



India: Mumbai

Sr Bertilla Capra (aged 77, Italian citizen, director of the Vimala Dermatological Center, denied a visa to stay in the country, has cared for people with leprosy for 44 years)

Sr Tessie (said "Until 2010 her [Sr Bertilla Capra's] visa was renewed every five years, then annually. This time, last November, her request for renewal was refused. She asked for at least a temporary visa for three months to find a solution, but was denied this")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/After-almost-40-years-caring-for-leprosy-sufferers,-India-denies-Sister-Bertilla-Capra-a-visa-36273.html>



Syria: Qamishli

Thirteen Christians were among the 20 killed in ISIL suicide bombings on three restaurants

Aboud Hagiki (killed)

Anton Joseph (killed)

Danny Hanna (killed)

Eli Kaspo (killed)

Eliamo Malke (killed)

Issa Hanna (killed)

Jack Tuma (killed)

Marwan Shamoun (killed)

Nedal Abdo (killed)

Ramy Tarzi Bashi (killed)

Robert Hegame (killed)

Robert Krio (killed)

Shabo Malke (killed)

Fr Touni Hannah (condemned the ISIL suicide attacks on three Christian-owned restaurants that killed 16 and wounded more than 45)

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem Joseph III Yonan (**UPDATE**: said "Most victims were young people willing to welcome the New Year with hope and joy. In tears and gloomy hope, Christians of Qamishli welcomed 2016...It was a sinister message the terrorists wanted to send to the Christians of this city, sowing death and tears...a message of horror...We pray to the Lord to end this tragedy: Enough of this terrorism, enough is enough")

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem II (aged 50; **UPDATE**: wrote "The old people weep, the young are losing hope and the children's joy is wiped away...The enemy of humanity is spreading its power everywhere in our beloved Middle East, seeking to destroy the homes of the children of God and to lead them astray. What god do these suicide bombers worship? What religion do they follow? They use blood, slaughter, and killing as a way to please their god. Where are the people of good conscience to act against these attacks? Is it not time to wake up from their deep sleep and to do all that is possible to protect the remaining people in this region, whose sole concern is to live in peace in their homeland? Is it not the fit time to unite and collectively fight all forms of terrorism and extremism?")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151231185522.htm>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20151231183957.htm>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20160104154804.htm>

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45660>

Thursday December 31, 2015



India: Bannur Jodukatte Puttur, Karnataka state

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: reported on a Hindu attack on a Christian prayer service in which the Christians were arrested to 'calm tempers': "The police should have only dispersed the mob that had gathered outside the church...they [instead] acted against people who were praying in a private place")

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Hindu-extremists-disrupt-Christmas-and-New-Years-Eve-services>



Norway

Marius Bodnariu (husband of Ruth, father, five children seized on [November 16, 2015](#) and placed in foster care after the oldest sang about Jesus at school, charged with 'Christian indoctrination'; **UPDATE**: children are being put up for adoption despite no court ruling)

Ruth Bodnariu (wife of Marius, mother, five children seized on or before [November 16, 2015](#) and placed in foster care after the oldest sang about Jesus at school, charged with 'Christian indoctrination'; **UPDATE**: children are being put up for adoption despite no court ruling)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/norway-five-christian-children-seized-government-foster-care-adoption-process-153771/>

December 2015, date unknown



Laos: Baan Hua Phu Cha

Lhang (alias, sentenced to 8 months' imprisonment along with his brother and another Christian, all later released, brother unable to properly walk after they were confined to a cell too small to stand or lie down, family has allowed neighbors to steal their food)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/03/15828/>



Thailand

Sabir (husband of Laila, Pakistani refugee)

Laila (wife of Sabir, Pakistani refugee, detained)

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-35654804>



India: Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh state

Pastor Rampal (aged 55, convert, bicycle repair shop owner, forced into a Hindu temple and forced to bow before idols in [October 2015](#); **UPDATE**: threatened with death by Hindu radicals who had invaded prayer meeting, bicycle shop vandalized)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2016/03/persecuted-pastor-in-uttar-pradesh-india-keeps-sights-on-christ/>



Turkmenistan

Kerven Kakabayev (sentenced to prison for refusing military service)

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



Sudan

Elshikh Kadoud (convert from Islam, arrested in [early December 2015](#), charged with apostasy, had been turned in by his own father)

Petr Jasek (aged 52, Czech citizen, arrested for making a video for Voice of the Martyrs on Christian persecution)

Sudan: Bahri

Telahoan Nogose Kassa (aged 36, church worker, arrested in the [second weekend in December 2015](#))

<http://morningstarnews.org/2015/12/another-christian-leader-arrested-in-sudan/>

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/91079.htm>

<http://www.bosnewslife.com/36089-sudan-detains-christians-churches-demolished>



Zimbabwe: Victoria Falls

Pastor Patrick Mugadza (aged 45, arrested on a charge of criminal nuisance for silently holding a sign that read 'Mr. President, the people are suffering. Proverbs 21:13' outside the Zanu PF party conference, ordered held on an excessive bail of US\$500)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Pastor-arrested-after-peaceful-protest-in-Zimbabwe>



Nigeria: outside Maiduguri

Maria Saidi (aged 26, abducted by Boko Haram, whipped, forcibly married, escaped)

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/23/world/africa/boko-haram-nigeria-samantha-power.html?_r=0