

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – January 2017

Sunday January 1, 2017



Sri Lanka

Ministers were threatened by local Buddhists

Rev Ranjan Palitha (said "Our car was blocked by the Buddhist monk of Gothamiramaya, who used foul language towards us. He then threatened more serious punishment if we continued to conduct liturgies")

Adrian De Vissar

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Buddhists-destroy-a-church-in-Sri-Lanka.-Christians-continue-to-pray-under-a-tree-39658.html>



Uganda: Bugayi village, Pallisa district

Sandra Summaya (aged 24, convert, coerced into taking poison, hospitalized)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/christian-woman-eastern-uganda-coerced-taking-poison/>

Monday January 2, 2017



India

Event: Christian leaders welcomed a court ruling prohibiting electoral campaigning on the basis of religion, but pointed out it left standing a 1995 Supreme Court ruling that Hinduism was not a religion with regard to such laws

Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas (**UPDATE**: said "The judgment could have been more complete and global had the court pronounced that seeking votes on the basis of the Hindu religion is against the secular ideals of India")

Fr Paul Thelakkat (**UPDATE**: said "The court's interpretation of Hinduism has today led to demands of homogenization and assimilation of minority communities into the Hindu way of life. What remains to be seen is how will this secularism be implemented when the court itself sees Hinduism as part of secular India")

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (**UPDATE**: said "This is going to create more confusion and not going to serve the purpose of a secular and democratic country")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/catholics-skeptical-over-indian-court-ban-on-use-of-religion-in-elections/78019>



Sudan: Khartoum

Rev Kowa Shamal (arrested by the NISS secret police without charge on [May 24, 2016](#); charged in court on [August 14, 2016](#) with espionage, complicity to execute a criminal agreement, waging war against the state, calling for opposition of the public authority by violence or criminal force, and inciting hatred between classes; **UPDATE**: acquitted, released)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/sudan-acquits-pastor-trial-christians-charged-capital-crimes/>



Uganda: Amuria

Bishop George Edweu (object of an assassination attempt on [December 4, 2016](#) by a Muslim sheikh, the sheikh abandoned his mission and converted and went into hiding with his family; **UPDATE**: attacked and beaten by six masked men who demanded he divulge the whereabouts of the former sheikh, said "As I fell down, a vehicle with bright lights flashed, which scared them away, and they disappeared into the nearby bush. The vehicle arrived and took me into the church compound. Inside the church building we found a letter with a threatening message: 'We are going to destroy your church unless you show us where [name withheld] is'")

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/pastor-uganda-attacked-sheikh-sent-kill-becomes-christian/>



Algeria: Tizi-Ouzou

Samir Chamek (aged 33, convert, father of two, theater actor, sentenced in [Wilaya de Bouira](#) on [July 3, 2016](#) to 5 years' imprisonment and fined US\$900 for his Facebook links, said “I had just been tried without knowing it. The judge of the court, in agreement with the attorney general, condemned me in my absence to five years in prison and to pay a fine of 100,000 Algerian dinars, accusing me of having infringed Islam and the person of the prophet.”; **UPDATE**: sentence reduced on appeal to one year's imprisonment, further appeal planned)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/christian-in-algeria-sentenced-to-prison-for-cartoon-on-facebook/>

Tuesday January 3, 2017



China

Huang Yan (aged 47, beaten by security officials in [2010](#), miscarried; beaten by security officials in [2012](#), miscarried, the beating continued while she was in the bathroom attending to the miscarriage; **UPDATE**: government officials reportedly have forced her doctors to cancel a procedure for ovarian cancer, is now in a 'safe location' but may not be able to afford the procedure, donations requested)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/urgent-christian-human-rights-defender.html>



India: Chhattisgarh state

Two men accused of the [June 20, 2015](#) drugging and rape of a nun were acquitted

Fr Sebastian Poomattathil (**UPDATE**: quoted the judge as saying that the police investigation was 'totally negligent')

Arun Pannalal (president of Chhattisgarh Christian Forum; **UPDATE**: said “The youths arrested and tried for the rape were not the real culprits. They are absolutely innocents. It was an attempt to cover up the crime. So the judgment is not surprising at all”)

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (**UPDATE**: complained of the "half-hearted attitude of the police”)

India: New Delhi

Fr Stanislaus Tirkey (said of the illegal conversion allegations made by the leader of the RSS paramilitary organization "The allegation is completely false. They do this occasionally. Since elections are nearing they want to divert the attention of the people from real issues like poverty")

Fr Vincent Ekka (said that conversions do occur "But conversion is never done forcefully or in any fraudulent manner", added that the Hindu caste system is to blame "In such circumstances, if people find a religion more meaningful and satisfying, they will naturally move toward it")

Fr Denzil Fernandes SJ (Executive Director of the Indian Social Institute said the RSS paramilitary stance is a "project under which they want to make India a Hindu nation...They rake up the conversion issue to create a Hindu vote bank, to distract people from real problems")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/conversion-allegations-irk-indian-catholic-leaders/78005>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4855667/>



Egypt: Alexandria

Youssef Lamei (aged 45, father of Tony Youssef, liquor store owner, **killed** while sitting outside his store)

Tony Youssef (son of Youssef Lamei, attorney, described the video recording of his father's murder "He [the killer] took less than half a minute, he knew what he was doing, he stood behind my father, quickly pulled the knife from the folds of his clothes, cut the vein of my father's neck two times with his knife to make sure that the vein was cut, and fled...[My father had been targeted] because he was a Christian. There is a shop nearby that sells alcohol and is owned by a Muslim man. Why they didn't kill this man as well?...My father was a very kind and respected man and everybody loved him; he had no enemies")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/4814383/>



Mexico: Coahuila

Fr Joaquin Hernandez Sifuentes (disappeared, personal items such as eyeglasses left behind in his rectory)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61473->

[AMERICA MEXICO Still no news after the disappearance of Father Joaquin#.WH OrFFMrKM8](#)

Wednesday January 4, 2017



Iraq

Sr Diana Momeka (reported on [April 30, 2015](#) to have been denied a visa to travel to the U.S. due to a U.S. government decision that she would likely overstay her visa, she was the only Christian in a delegation of Iraqi religious minorities who were to speak in the U.S. and the only member of the delegation to be denied a visa; decision reversed on [May 11, 2015](#), visa issued; **UPDATE**: reported to have described the damage done by ISIL "We went to see what happened to our hometowns, we could not believe the hatred and the revenge that ISIL has against us...It's a total mess. There was some hope to have a future, [but] we feel that there's no future left for the Christians. It's kind of a sign for us, 'you should leave, we've destroyed everything you have'")

Fr Behnam Benoka (**UPDATE**: reported to have said "So many families are leaving Iraq. The faith of the people is strong, even if they are leaving the country or they are staying there. But they're still praying, they still have hope in a big miracle for their lives")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20170103212952.htm>



Egypt: Cairo

Lorise Naguib (aged 62, injured in the [December 11, 2016](#) Sts Peter and Paul Church bombing, hospitalized; **UPDATE**: **died**)

Egypt: Wasti village, Beni Suef province

Fr Bishoy Youssef (automobile firebombed, reported on [January 22, 2015](#) to have been the second case of a priest's vehicle being firebombed within the past year in his village; **UPDATE**: reported to have **died, no cause of death reported**, had served his church for 48 years)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20170105215838.htm>

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1809&A=29102>

Thursday January 5, 2017



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Pastor Li Guozhi aka Yang Hua (husband of Wang Hongwu, detained on [December 9, 2015](#) for 'illegally holding state secrets'; formally charged on [January 22, 2016](#) with 'obstructing justice' and 'gathering a crowd to disturb social order'; **UPDATE**: sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/prominent-pastor-sentenced-to-two-years.html>



Sri Lanka

Kamal Wasantha (convert, farmer, church destroyed by Buddhists, said "First, they threatened us verbally. Then they came with wooden sticks, iron bars and knives and destroyed everything. [We] begged the attackers not to damage the place of worship, [but] the Lord's house was pulled down in front of our eyes, as we asked God to forgive them.. We have not cursed them and shall not attack them in retaliation. Judgment belongs only to God...No attack can stop us. We shall continue to love God and pray under a tree")

Lakshan Dias (attorney, said police "know the names and facts about the culprits, who live in the same village. Sri Lanka has failed to uphold freedom of religion. The country's dominant ideology, that of Buddhist Sinhalese, undermines the minorities")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Buddhists-destroy-a-church-in-Sri-Lanka.-Christians-continue-to-pray-under-a-tree-39658.html>



Nepal

Pastor Chari Bahadur Gahatraj (**UPDATE**: reported that Christians have been burying their dead in forests at night due to the lack of approved cemeteries "If Christians refuse to dig out the bodies of their relatives, in some cases Hindu radicals have themselves dug out the bodies, and taken the bodies to the Christian relatives' home, and in other cases have just left the dead bodies on the streets")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/nepal-persecuted-christians-see-bodies-of-dead-loved-ones-dug-up-dumped-on-streets-172632/>



Azerbaijan: Gyanja

Jaarey Suleymanova (fined US\$1,166 on [November 17, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for her Bible discussions; **UPDATE**: fines upheld without a hearing)

Gulnaz Israfilova (fined US\$1,166 on [November 17, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for her Bible discussions; **UPDATE**: fines upheld without a hearing)

Ziyad Dadashov (fined US\$865 on [December 2, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for speaking of his faith and offering Bible literature to 4 men; **UPDATE**: fine upheld without a hearing)

Azerbaijan: Zakatala

Hamid Shabanov (husband of Hinayat Shabanova; home in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) raided by police during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service, 26 people detained for 5 hours; **UPDATE**: found guilty, fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed)

Mehman Agamammadov (detained at the home of Hamid and Hinayat Shabanov in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service; **UPDATE**: found guilty, fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2247



Belarus: Borisovo region, Minsk province

Mother Vasilisa Medved (aged 67, **stabbed to death** by a mentally ill woman)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/the-hegumeness-of-st-xenia-orthodox-convent-stabbed-to-death-in-belarus/>



Nigeria: Edumoga village, Okpokwu council area

Josephine Akioyamen (described the murder of 5 Christians, said “Our people are being hunted and hacked down in their sleep by these herdsmen”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/03/one-year-agatu-massacre-christians-continue-killed-benue-nigeria/>

Friday January 6, 2017



Egypt: Minufiyah

Gamal Sami (aged 60, husband of Nadia Sami, father of Marian and Kirolos, mobile phone salesman, **murdered**)

Nadia Sami (aged 48, wife of Gamal Sami, mother of Marian and Kirolos, sister of Magdy Amin Girgis, insurance worker, **murdered**)

Magdy Amin Girgis (brother of Nadia Sami, disputed the police report of his sister's and brother-in-law's murder, said that robbery was not a motive)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4852179/>



Turkey: Istanbul

Bishop Ruben Tierrablanca Gonzalez (Mexican citizen, said after recent terror attacks “Although we can move around freely, people are understandably afraid of coming to Mass and there’s been a drop in participation. But all churches have been given police guards since a coup was attempted last July, and security officials have shown great kindness to us. Christians, Muslims and Jews are talking together and sharing the same anxieties, although the future doesn’t depend on us”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/01/06/turkish-bishop-says-catholics-are-afraid-of-coming-to-mass-after-terror-attacks/>



United States – Florida: Ft. Lauderdale

Christians and others shot in an airport by a mentally ill man under Islamist influences

Olga Woltering (aged 84, wife of Ralph Woltering, great-grandmother, **shot dead**)

Ralph Woltering (husband of Olga Woltering, great-grandfather, shot, hospitalized)

Shirley Timmons (aged 70, wife of Steve Timmons, grandmother, **shot dead**)

Steve Timmons (aged 70, husband of Shirley Timmons, grandfather, shot, hospitalized in critical condition)

Terry Andres (aged 62, husband, father, grandfather, **shot dead**)

United States - New Jersey: Paterson

Fr Martin Rooney (Catholic hospital director of pastoral care, reportedly sued along with the hospital after denying surgery for gender reassignment)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/woman-launches-suit-to-force-catholic-hospital-into-doing-sex-change-surger>
<http://people.com/crime/ft-lauderdale-airport-shooting-victims/>

Saturday January 7, 2017

Christmas – Eastern calendar



China: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province

Senior Pastor Joseph Gu Yuese (husband of Zhou Lian Mei, was reported on [February 3, 2016](#) to have been arrested on embezzlement and corruption charges, sent to a black jail, had written that his church had been experiencing “unprecedented, chilling trials. Everyone must equally rely on the Lord’s grace to confront [this trial] and triumph over it”; released on [March 31, 2016](#), placed under travel and meeting restrictions; re-apprehended [before Christmas in December 2016](#); **UPDATE**: family notified of his arrest on embezzlement charges)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/authorities-arrest-highest-profile.html>



Egypt: Cairo

Samir Abdo (husband of Kamelya Naseem, grandfather of Magy Momen, said “There is no Christmas for us. The moment Magy was taken to the hospital [following the [December 11, 2016](#) church bombing], the clock just stopped...When I took her for an x-ray, I couldn’t look at her. How could one so vibrant and so animated lie on the bed so motionless?...What was her fault? What was her sin? Why would this happen to a 10 year old?”)

Samiha Tawfik (wife of Qelliny Farag, present near the explosion of the [December 11, 2016](#) Sts Peter and Paul church bombing; **UPDATE**: blinded in one eye, jaw broken, has difficulty breathing, has had two surgeries and is scheduled for more)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/01/08/with-bombing-victims-still-dying-its-a-somber-christmas-for-egypts-christians/>



Italy: Rome

Two priests were slashed in church by a mentally ill man with a broken bottle

Fr Adolfo Ralf F.I.

Fr Angelo Gaeta

<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/kschiffer/priests-slashed-by-deranged-man-in-roman-basilica>



Nigeria: Kwayine village, Adamawa state

Bishop Joseph Danlami Bagobiri (**UPDATE**: said of a Muslim herdsmen attack on a Christian village that killed at least 10 "The Fulani are Muslim and the land they are attacking belongs mainly to ethnic groups that are Christian - now there is religious hatred driving the violence...the attacks on Christians meet with seeming indifference on the part of the country's leadership – either the police do not have the appropriate weaponry to intervene, or else they have not been given orders to do so")

Nigeria: Tsonje, Kaduna state

Village attacked by Muslim herdsmen, 2 killed, 2 missing

Ephraim Ezekiel (aged 19, **killed**)

Joshua Ladi (aged 41, **killed**)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Bloodbath-in-southern-Kaduna-peaceful-Christian-protests-in-Nigeria-call-for-end-to-the-killings>

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/nigeria-militants-burn-houses-in-a-christian-village-10-killed/>



Mexico: Rancheria El Encanto, Las Margaritas Municipality, Chiapas state

Juan Gabriel Lopez Perez (aged 28, husband of Eduvina Lopez Santiz, arrested for not supporting "traditionalist" [syncretic] Catholic festivals, told he would be held until he agreed to sell his home and move away, contracted bronchitis in jail, released after 3 days)

Eduvina Lopez Santiz (wife of Juan Gabriel Lopez Perez, took her husband's place in jail while he sought medical treatment for his bronchitis)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/02/christian-jailed-chiapas-mexico-told-to-leave-area-in-exchange-for-freedom/>

Sunday January 8, 2017



Iraq

Fr Thabit Mekko (**UPDATE:** said of the liberation of the al-Sukkar neighborhood of Mosul from ISIL "News from Mosul need our attention but the situation is still dangerous, there are snipers in roads and it is too early to think about a return of Christians who have fled from their homes. Such a case will be considered only when security is assured. Many families have not yet decided what they will do. Not all those who left Mosul in front of the advance of Daesh [ISIL] will return")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/61476-ASIA_IRAQ_Christian_neighborhood_of_Mosul_freed_Chaldean_priest_not_all_refugees_will_return#.WHOp2VMrKM8



Brazil: Sao Paulo

Pastor Valdemiro Santiago (aged 53, stabbed in the neck and back during a televised church service, hospitalized, required 25 stitches, said "I was imposing my hands, just hearing a miracle, a testimony, and someone came in behind, I do not know, I did not see who it was, and stabbed the neck, or a razor, I do not know. Pray for me. I forgive the person who did this")

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/evangelical.pastor.forgives.man.who.stabbed.him.during.church.service/103802.htm>



United States – Texas: Fort Worth

Pastor Fritz Ritsch (church damaged in an arson attack, suffered \$800,000 in damages, later said of the perpetrator "He had written something to make it seem like the damage was done by Muslims, but he misspelled Muhammad. It was disturbing that he was trying to make it seem like it was a terrorist act. It was all very disturbing")

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/man-who-set-fire-historic-texas-presbyterian-church-gets-40-years-prison-227010/>

Monday January 9, 2017



India: Chhattisgarh state

Fr Joseph Dhanaswami (aged 45, high school principal, arrested on [September 11, 2015](#) on sexual abuse charges at the instigation of Hindu radicals; **UPDATE**: acquitted for lack of evidence, said "I knew that one day I would be freed, but did not know when. I had full faith in my bishop, diocese and the judiciary..[jail was] a very hard experience and quite painful [but it brought me] closer to God and deepened [my] faith in Him. It also gave me a different kind of experience of how people live in jail")

Sr Christ Maria CSS (**UPDATE**: acquitted)

Philomina Kerketta (school maid, **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Bishop Patras Minj (**UPDATE**: said "We are relieved. It was a totally fabricated case aimed at tarnishing the image of the church. The attempts are to keep people away from the church")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-priest-jailed-on-rape-charges-released/78064>



Pakistan: Islamabad

Tayyaba (aged 9 or 10, domestic worker, beaten, tortured, and starved by her employer who happened to be the wife of a judge, locked in a storeroom at night, escaped, now in custody)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-activist-inveighs-against-inhumane-torture-on-child-maid/>



United Kingdom: Kilmarnock, Scotland

Gordon Larmour (street preacher, found not guilty of threatening or abusive manner aggravated by prejudice relating to sexual orientation" and "assault", had himself been assaulted by two young men after they asked him what the Bible taught and his answer angered them)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/freedom-of-speech/christian-evangelist-cleared-at-sheriffs-court>

Tuesday January 10, 2017



China: Hubei province

Six members of a women's Bible study were detained

Pastor Hao Zhiwei (detained)

Hong Ying (detained)

Long Yujie (detained)

Wang Qiufen (detained)

Wang Yourong (detained)

Yu Hongxing (detained)

Pastor Zhang (said "We rented a room in the county for regular gatherings. The religious affairs bureau posted a notice, accused us of illegally [gathering], and threatened to ban our church. We did not stop the gatherings, on the contrary, we kept on meeting. The officers from the government departments came and took away our doormat, but we managed to get it back. After about 30 or 40 minutes, they simply walked in and began to grab our chairs. The brothers tried to stop them, and the officers began to shove us away and beat us up. They took our stuff away in the end")

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/6-christian-women-face-charges-for.html>



Pakistan: Sindh province

Christians condemned the refusal of a provincial governor to sign the recently enacted law against forced religious conversions

Saleem Khursheed Khokhar (former member of provincial parliament)

Jacqueline Sultan (attorney)

Pakistan: Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

Yasir Bhatti ('young' activist said “Here in local bazars some shopkeepers are selling shoes which are blaspheming Christian faith as symbols of cross have been inscribed on their soles...I urge the provincial as well as federal governments to take notice of the desecration of Christian symbol. I call upon the Peshawar High Court to take action in this case”)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/former-christian-lawmaker-laments-revocation-of-minorities-protection-bill/>

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/peshawar-sale-of-cross-inscribed-shoes-vex-christians/>



Russia: Kemerovo

Pastor Andrei Matyuzhov (charged on [September 27, 2016](#) with illegal missionary activity; fined US\$63 on [October 17, 2016](#); verdict overturned on appeal on [November 30, 2016](#);
UPDATE: case closed at retrial due to statute of limitations but guilt upheld)

Russia: Pervomaisk district, Kirov

Aleksei Mokiyev (fined US\$83 for posting unapproved church information on the VKontakte social media site)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306



Mali

Beatrice Stockly (social worker, missionary, Swiss citizen, abducted in [Abaradjou, Timbuktu](#) on [January 8, 2016](#), had received death threats; **UPDATE:** video of her in captivity released, reported to be in good health)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/02/4302081/>

Wednesday January 11, 2017



Indonesia: Bantul regency, Yogyakarta special province, central Java

Yulius Suharto (government official, removed from his position after Islamist groups used social media to demand it on religious grounds)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Islamic-extremists-get-local-official-in-Yogyakarta-removed-because-he-is-Catholic-39630.html>



Russia: Svetly, Kaliningrad region

L G Pyshnaya (acquitted of illegal missionary activities on [December 8, 2016](#); **UPDATE:** prosecutorial appeal denied, acquittal upheld)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306



Nigeria: Dutse, Jigawa state

Rev Yakubu Musa (described the demolition of two churches “They just came in unexpectedly and they demolished everything. Nobody was allowed to remove any valuables in the church buildings and other nearby properties...It was a terrible experience, with so many Christians who witnessed the demolition crying. I felt so bitter because we were in a situation where you have been cheated and you cannot talk...I was very angry because there were two mosques in that same place, but none of these mosques were demolished. There is also another building belonging to a Muslim person, which was marked for demolition, but they only concentrated on the church buildings because we are not many and we don’t have anyone in the government to speak for us”, six more churches have been slated for demolition)

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

Thursday January 12, 2017



China: Tianjin

Li Chunfu (human rights attorney, husband, detained on [August 1, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: released on bail, was afraid to enter his apartment, had been held in a black jail where had been tortured and fed unknown medications, told his wife his heart was damaged and he expected to die soon)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/tortured-human-rights-lawyer-believes.html>



United Kingdom

Bishops responded to a government official who told a parliamentary committee “It is not OK for Catholic schools to be homophobic and anti-gay marriage...I have a problem with the expression of religious conservatism because I think often it can be anti-equalities”

Bishop Philip Egan (**UPDATE**: said that restrictions on Catholic schools following church teaching would be Orwellian, added that teaching sexual morality has become “like arguing with an alcoholic. After a while, they won’t argue with you on grounds of reason, they just become furious and respond that way. There is something in our culture increasingly like that”)

Bishop Mark Davies (**UPDATE**: said that 'British values' were shaped by Christianity and “These values would be undermined if an ‘equalities agenda’ in schools became the vehicle for an increasing intolerance of Christian teaching...Strangely, it is the historic teachings of Christianity and the Christian vision of marriage which might be in need of toleration”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/01/12/bishops-respond-to-government-advisors-comments-on-catholicism/>



Mexico

Fr Joaquin Hernandez Sifuentes (disappeared in [Coahuila](#) on [January 3, 2017](#), personal items such as eyeglasses left behind in his rectory; **UPDATE**: **found dead**)

Bishop José Raul Vera Lopez OP (reported on the death of Fr Joaquin Hernandez Sifuentes, thanked the government for their assistance with the case, called on citizens to realize that they and clergy can all become victims of crime "We live in a wrecked environment, in a shattered society, and priests do not live under a bell jar")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61509->

[AMERICA MEXICO The priest who had been missing since 3 January found dead#.WHjiGIMrKM8](#)

Friday January 13, 2017



Uganda: Katira village, Budaka district

Eighty Christians at an evening church service were attacked and beaten by Muslims, 15 women raped, 9 disappeared

Pastor Moses Mutasa (disappeared)

Pastor Musa Mukenye (pleaded with parishioners to forgive their attackers and to not attack a mosque in retaliation, said "This act is evil, and police should not relent until the attackers are arrested and charged in a court of law")

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/pastor-eight-others-missing-uganda-muslims-beat-rape-congregation/>



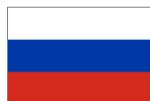
Egypt: Assyut

Dr Bassam Safouat Zaki (general surgeon, **died from multiple stab wounds** in his home)

Egypt: Cairo

Adel Ishak (aged 30, father of one, accountant, acquaintance of 3 victims of the December 11, 2016 church bombing in Cairo, said "Every time I go out, I am afraid of being the next victim. In the end, I am able to overcome this feeling of fear and I go to church")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Fear-grows-among-Egypt%E2%80%99s-Christians-after-a-Coptic-doctor-was-stabbed-in-the-throat-39667.html>



Russia: Shakhunya district, Nizhny Novgorod region

Vladimir Sukhanov (Ukrainian citizen, case dismissed, details unknown)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306

Monday January 16, 2017



Egypt: Cairo

Ishak Ibrahim Fayez Younan (aged 37, husband, father of two aged 10 and 12, brother of Magdy Younan, soft drink manufacturer, **found dead, throat had been cut**, police ruled robbery the motive although money and valuables were not taken)

Magdy Younan (brother of Ishak Ibrahim Fayez Younan, found his brother's body)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4878158/>



Greece: Kalavryta

Metropolitan Ambrose Lenis (aged 79, published a letter to Prime Minister Tsipras in which he accused the openly atheist politician of "the goal of destroying the Greek Orthodox Church" and of shameful behavior at Divine Liturgies in which he laughed and showed indifference, asked the Prime Minister "Perhaps it is worth it to recall the example of St. Ambrose of Milan's not allowing Emperor Theodosius the Great into the church?")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100281.htm>

<http://www.romfea.gr/epikairotita-xronika/12592-skliri-epistolii-mitropolitii-kalabruton-pros-ton-prothupourgo-a-tsipra> - with translation



Germany: Berlin

Rev Gottfried Martens (has baptized more than 1,000 Muslim immigrants, criticized the government for rejecting their applications for asylum in "kangaroo court" hearings where "Questions are put such as the names of the two sons in the parable of the Prodigal Son, or what Martin Luther died of, or the occasion of Queen Margarethe of Denmark's recent visit to Wittenberg", the officials "are manifestly clueless about the situation of Christians in Iran and Afghanistan, and, worse yet, they are utterly clueless concerning questions relating to the Christian faith, [the applicants] repeatedly undergo being mocked and laughed at when they relate how it is important to them that Jesus Christ died

for their sins on the Cross”, added that the government employs “almost exclusively Muslim translators” who deliberately give false translations to harm the converts)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4863711/>

Tuesday January 17, 2017



China: Henan province

Ding (church elder, locked in an office during a police raid on his church in which church property was destroyed and looted)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/on-eve-of-lunar-new-year-masked.html>



Iraq: Qaraqosh

Christians continue to return to their homes after the ouster of ISIL

Fr Sharbil Eeso (aged 72, said "We are not allowed to clear up the mess yet. First, the damage needs to be assessed carefully and documented thoroughly, and that can only start when the city is safe. Last week, a jihadist emerged from the tunnel system which ISIL has built underneath the city. The red brigade of the army immediately shot and killed him: the boy was about thirteen years old")

Yacoob Gewargis Yaco (Member of the Kurdistan Parliament; **UPDATE:** said "There is a lot of unrest among Iraqi Christians. The Kurds support Iraq in their battle against ISIL and the recapture of Mosul and the surrounding cities and villages. The inhabitants appreciate that, but many of the Christians suspect the Iraqi government of giving the Kurds land in return. The Kurds dig deep canals and build high fences that, according to them, are meant to stop ISIL. In the meantime, the Kurds and the Iraqi government deny being promised territory for support and they assure the Christians that no deals were made about the land. But the canals and fences are not built on Kurdish land, but on the Nineveh plain. Many Christians suspect that this border is not temporary, but the start of a permanent border correction")

Manal Matti (said "The jihadists used the church as a shooting range and the mannequins as targets. The mannequins are completely riddled! I do not know when I will ever be able to see the inhabitants of Qaraqosh coming again to my beauty salon")

Louis Petrus (security guard, said "I don't understand how people can harm each other so much")

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1484631436.html>



Ethiopia: Addis Ababa

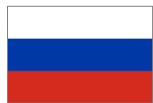
Three Protestants had been convicted in [Gulema Iyesus](#) on [October 28, 2014](#) and sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment for an arson attack on an Orthodox church; **UPDATE: acquitted, still awaiting acquittal of the order to pay the church compensation**

Belete Tilahun

Dawit Jemberu

Tibebu Mekuria (husband, kiosk owner)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4898876/>



Russia: Beloretsk, Bashkortostan

Pastor Konstantin Petrenko (fined US\$117 for unauthorized religious activities)

Russia: Kirov

A N Shustov (fined US\$1,563 in [Nolinsk, Kirov region](#) on [November 21, 2016](#) for distribution of banned religious literature; **UPDATE: appeal denied**)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2287

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306



Germany: Saarbrücken

Fr Eugen Vogt (church rector, said “The Christian faith also has the right to a respectful attitude” after a fines arts graduate crossed a rope and recorded himself performing push-ups on a church altar in [February 2016](#) as a work of art, the 'artist' was reported to have been convicted and fined)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100267.htm>



United Kingdom

Aisleen Hubert (aged 23, as of [October 27, 2014](#) has brought a private prosecution against 3 doctors implicated in illegal gender-selection abortions after Crown prosecutors refused to prosecute; Crown prosecutors announced on [March 13, 2015](#) that they would take over and then drop the prosecutions as 'not in the public interest', have refused to release her video recordings of the doctors agreeing to abort females, which is a crime under UK law; **UPDATE**: ordered to pay court costs totaling £36,000 - US\$44,555 by August 18, 2017, must now raise the money to pay the costs, said "These little girls' lives are infinitely valuable, so in a sense the costs mean nothing. This case has shown that doctors are willing to kill innocent girls not just abroad, but right here in the UK, and do it for money. Yet nobody is prosecuting them. The costs awarded against me are unjust, but I hope to raise the funds and continue to stand up for preborn girls. I'm glad that this case has now reached its end but the fight is not over. I will continue to seek justice for the most vulnerable members of our society")

United Kingdom: Rosyth, Scotland

Fr Kevin Dow (pelted with eggs and anti-Catholic abuse along with other parishioners after Mass by a youth gang, said "It's dreadfully sad that in today's Scotland we still have young people who seem to be brought up or encouraged from elsewhere to be anti-Catholic and to do so in an open, intimidating and violent way")

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/eggs-and-anti-catholicism-hurled-at-churchgoers-in-scotland-83764/>

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/abortion/court-rules-aisling-hubert-must-pay-huge-costs>



United States - District of Columbia

Rev Franklin Graham (son of Rev Billy Graham; **UPDATE**: denounced as a 'notorious Islamophobe' by an Islamist organization which also demanded that his invitation to the presidential inauguration be rescinded)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/muslim-trump-drop-islamophobe-franklin-graham-inauguration-cair-173100/>

Wednesday January 18, 2017



China: near the North Korean border

Hwa-Young (aged 40-plus, alias, underground North Korean refugee worker, said “They are still prisoners in a jail called ‘North Korean women’. They don’t know the outside world. Whenever I tell them stories about things happening outside North Korea and north-east China, they cannot grasp what I tell them. They feel like victims all the time. If I give them something, they don’t receive it as a kind gesture. To them, it feels like somehow I’m taking advantage of them...They go to pre-school at about five, but they are still forced to watch public executions. Sometimes friends or neighbors are murdered in front of them. Even when they are older and leave the country, they still experience fear. There is much more freedom here in China, but the women are not safe and continue to live in fear...Most of them have been abused in North Korea and in China. They feel numb, not even feeling the hurt anymore. They grow up in severe poverty, always going hungry. All of them know what it is like to worry about every meal, to eat from the rubbish and beg for food...Sometimes, in our group meetings, I invite them to forgive others. I ask: ‘Do you know any people whom you can’t forgive?’ Everyone knows at least one person”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4869392/>



Kazakhstan: Astana

Asaf Gadzhiaga ogly Guliyev (aged 43, husband, Azeri citizen, arrested for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants)

Teymur Sultan ogly Akhmedov (aged 60, husband, father of three sons, arrested for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants, held in pre-trial detention, denied cancer treatment)

Kazakhstan: Novotroitse village, North Kazakhstan region

Roman Pugachev (**UPDATE**: arrested for handing out religious literature)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2252

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281



Iraq

Fr Luis Montes (Argentine citizen; **UPDATE**: reported to have said “Approximately 60 percent of the homes on the Nineveh Plains were burned down. The terrorists not only seized all of their belongings. They riddled the region with land mines, put bombs in with children’s toys. It is true that some people were able to return to their houses. However, they were only able to determine that they still exist. Because it is impossible to live there. The mines first need to be cleared out of the entire region. Only then can the villages be restored, and from the ground up. Everything still needs to be done, the people

have nothing left...Despite everything, Iraqis have lost neither their smiles nor their hope”)

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1484703686.html>



Nigeria: Jol village, Riyom local government area, Plateau state

Rifkatu Emmanuel Pam (injured in a Fulani attack)

Nigeria: Samaru-Kataf, Kaduna state

Bishop Aaron Tanko (**UPDATE**: reported on a Fulani terror attack on a market that killed 3 Christians and injured 5, the attack occurred after security measures including a curfew were imposed "They came in and started shooting. People were going about their normal business. The unfortunate thing is that there were security men in the town, what were they doing? What is the curfew for after the attacks have happened? I don't understand. With the previous curfew imposed on the other parts of Southern Kaduna, villages were still attacked during the curfew!")

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/01/18/attack-on-nigerian-market-leaves-three-christians-killed-by-fulani-militants/>

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/08/herdsmen-plateau-state-nigeria-quietly-seizing-christians-property-pastors-say/>

Thursday January 19, 2017



Vietnam: Nghe An

John Nguyen Van Oai (aged 32, husband, **UPDATE**: arrested on fabricated charges of violating probation)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/As-Hanoi%E2%80%99s-crackdown-continues,-Christian-activist-Nguyen-Van-Oai-arrested-again-39760.html>



Russia: Konakovo, Tver region

R G Gasanaliyev (fined US\$84 for proselytizing drug addicts and alcoholics in a rehabilitation center)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306

Friday January 20, 2017



Philippines: Mindanao

Fr Sebastiano D'Ambra PIME (**UPDATE**: said that Islamic persecution against Christians "is becoming alarming")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-in-mindanao-face-dangerous-situation/78147>



China: Shanghai

Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin (**UPDATE**: has rejoined the Patriotic Association, which has addressed him as "Father" Ma Daqin)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Msgr.-Ma-Daqin-reinstated-in-Patriotic-Association,-but-as-a-priest%E2%80%9D.-Disillusionment-of-Catholics-39768.html>



Kyrgyzstan

Kanygul Satybaldiyeva (aged 76, mother of Zhyldyz Azayeva, **died of natural causes** on **October 13, 2016**, burial in **Sary-Talaa village, Ala-Buka district** prevented by a Muslim mob on **October 14, 2016**, taken to **Oruktu village, Ala-Buka district** and buried, body exhumed by a mob under the watch of NSC secret police; reburied in the **Ala-Buk district's** central cemetery as close to the Orthodox section as possible on **October 15, 2016**; exhumed a second time by a mob on **October 17, 2016**; **UPDATE**: whereabouts of her body still unknown)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2248



Russia

Donald J Ossevaarde (U.S. citizen, husband of Ruth, convicted on [August 14, 2016](#) on illegal missionary charges after hosting prayer meetings and Bible study in his home, fined US\$700; appeal denied [September 30, 2016](#); second appeal denied on [November 15, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: Supreme Court appeal denied)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306



Nigeria: Abuja

Fr Gabriel Oyaka CSSP (abducted on [September 7, 2015 on the Okene-Auchi road, Kogi state](#); **UPDATE**: still missing)

Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan (**UPDATE**: spoke on the abduction of Fr Gabriel Oyaka "This is a tragedy that has overtaken our land and the name keeps on recurring that Fulani herdsmen are behind all these killings, kidnappings and destructions of lives and property in the Country")

Nigeria: Mere hamlet, Rahoos village, Riyom local government area, Plateau state

Victoria Monday (injured in a Fulani attack)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61556->

[AFRICA NIGERIA A year after the kidnapping Cardinal Onaiyekan recalls Fr Oyaka whose fate we know nothing#.WIMKOFMrKM8](#)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/08/herdsmen-plateau-state-nigeria-quietly-seizing-christians-property-pastors-say/>

Saturday January 21, 2017



India: Hyderabad, Telangana state

Kusuma Anjeneya Swamy (aged 47, husband of Sujatha, father of two daughters, engineering professor, verbally attacked by three Hindus for handing out Bibles, dragged to a police station, released without charge, collapsed with a cerebral hemorrhage, hospitalized in a coma)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/christian-india-suffers-brain-hemorrhage-hypertension-confrontation-sources-say/>
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4877077/>



Pakistan: Parachinar

Bishop Earnest Jacob (condemned the terror bombing of a market in which 20 were killed and over 40 injured, the intended targets were Shia Muslims, said "The government claims to hold off terrorism, but incidents like these happen every month...pray for the wounded")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pakistan,-Taliban-hit-a-Shiite-market-in-revenge-against-Assad.-The-condemnation-of-the-Church-39726.html>



United Kingdom

Fr Gavin Ashenden (aged 62, arrested in [January 1982](#) while entering [Russia at a Moscow airport](#) while smuggling Bibles; **UPDATE**: forced to resign as a Queen's Chaplain after criticizing the Church of Scotland for allowing the reading of a Quran chapter on the birth of Jesus in Glasgow cathedral during the Epiphany because the chapter explicitly denied the divinity of Jesus, wrote on his blog "After a conversation instigated by officials at Buckingham Palace, I decided the most honorable course of action was to resign. I have held the position for the last nine years. But over the last few years people who objected to my defending the Christian faith in public wrote to both Lambeth Palace and Buckingham Palace to try to get the association ended. When I was confronted with these attempts to silence or defenestrate me, my reaction was to ask 'in what way is a priest defending the faith on behalf of a monarch who was Defender of the Faith, incongruous or improper?' ...Because I think it a higher and more compelling duty to speak out on behalf of the faith, than to retain a public honor which precludes me doing so at this time, I resigned my post")

<https://ashenden.org/2017/01/21/resignation-form-the-office-of-chaplain-to-the-queen/>
<http://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/757321/Queen-chaplain-Rev-Gavin-Ashenden-Glasgow-cathedral-Koran-Jesus-Muslim-worship>



United States - District of Columbia

Kerrigan Skelly (street preacher, spat upon by a participant of the Women's March on Washington)

Michael Corral (street preacher, pushed against a wall by several participants of the Women's March on Washington, speaker wire cut)

Joseph Neigh (described the attack on Kerrigan Skelly "I don't remember exactly what she said but she spat in his face...There have been a lot of people who have done dirty dancing around us, flicked us off, cursed at us but we are not going return evil for evil. We say, 'God bless you.' We are not out here casting stones, we are throwing life preservers")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-street-evangelists-met-with-anger-spat-on-at-womens-march-on-washington-173302/>

Sunday January 22, 2017



South Sudan: Lomin

Lino (catechist, **killed with five others** in a chapel by an armed gang)

Fr Jesus Aranda CMMJ (reported on the murder of Lino and companions)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/61591-AFRICA_SOUTH_SUDAN_A_catechist_of_Kajo_Keji_parish_killed#.WIqu2VMrKM8

Monday January 23, 2017



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Deacon Zhang Xiuhong (church board chairwoman, detained in **late July 2015**, church bank accounts totaling US\$15,660 frozen; formally arrested on **September 1, 2015** on 'illegal business operations' charges; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment, later reduced to 3 years on appeal)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/08/false-accused-christian-emerges-from.html>



Vietnam

Fr Anton Le Ngoc Thanh CSSR (head of the Association to Protect Freedom of Religion;

UPDATE: issued a report on religious persecution of all faiths "We recorded 59 violations of religious freedom by the government in 2016, an increase of nine from 2015...The instances of religious persecution got increasingly worse")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/religious-believers-in-vietnam-experience-increasing-repression/78138>



Pakistan

Tania (aged 12, daughter of Nadeem Gill, sister of Johnson and Sheela, abducted, apparently drugged and raped, thrown into a canal, **drowned**, police ruled the death a suicide)

Johnson (aged 21, brother of Tania, had dropped her off at school before she was abducted)

Pakistan: Bahadur Pura, Kasur

Rehmat Masih (aged 68, father of Sajida, grandfather, home destroyed by arson)

Sajida (daughter of Rehmat Masih, sexually assaulted on **October 16, 2016**, police refused to register a case; **UPDATE:** home destroyed by arson)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/kasur-vandals-torch-house-of-a-christian-over-property-dispute/>

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pakistani-christian-school-girl-raped-killed-and-thrown-into-a-canal>



Serbia

Patriarch Irinej aka Miroslav Gavrilo vic (aged 85, **UPDATE:** called upon Catholic Christians in Croatia to stop the desecration of Orthodox churches and attacks on Orthodox Christians, and decried a pro-Ustashi sign at the Jasenovac concentration camp memorial, called for historical enmities to be overcome)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100391.htm>



Venezuela: Caracas

Auxiliary Bishop Jesus Gonzalez de Zarate (aged 56, pleaded with pro-government demonstrators who invaded a church during Mass, shut the doors to prevent parishioners from leaving, and subjected them to an anti-Catholic rant)

Archbishop Diego Rafael Padron Sanchez (**UPDATE:** later said in a radio broadcast “These are not isolated occurrences but rather, one gets the impression that these are premeditated events meant to intimidate the Catholic Church...[The Church has become a target because it] has taken a very clear position before the government, noting its difficulties, problems, and the crisis the nation is currently in”)

<http://www.breitbart.com/national-security/2017/02/02/venezuela-chavistas-shut-mass-force-catholics-listen-socialist-rant/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diego_Padr%C3%B3n

https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jes%C3%BA_Gonz%C3%A1lez_de_Z%C3%A1rate - with translation

Tuesday January 24, 2017



Egypt: Naj Jneidi village, Nusairat, Sohag province

Moussa al-Deeb Saeed (reported to have been shot during a land dispute, hospitalized)

Zaghloul Awad (reported to have been shot during a land dispute, hospitalized)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/01/24/copts-in-sohag-attacked-to-seize-their-land/>



Greece: Piraeus

Metropolitan Seraphim Mentzenopoulos (told the Minister of Education in writing that the schools under his jurisdiction would not comply with the ministry's latest orders regarding sex education)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100443.htm>

Wednesday January 25, 2017



Iraq: Telkeif

Georgette Hanna (aged 60, reported to have been discovered by Iraqi soldiers, had been hidden from ISIL by a Muslim family for two and a half years)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61589->

[ASIA IRAQ Muslim family in Telkeif secretly hosts a Christian woman in the years of the jihadist regime#.WIqw2VMrKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61589-ASIA_IRAQ_Muslim_family_in_Telkeif_secretly_hosts_a_Christian_woman_in_the_years_of_the_jihadist_regime#.WIqw2VMrKM8)



Russia: Naberezhny Chelny

Pastor Victor-Immanuel Mani (husband, father of a 12 month old son, Indian citizen, convicted of illegal missionary activity on [December 20, 2016](#) only 2 hours after prosecutors filed their case and so was illegally denied legal representation, fined US\$488; **UPDATE:** deported in violation of a 2013 Supreme Court ruling that prohibited the deportation of spouses and parents of Russian citizens after his conviction was upheld by the Tartarstan Supreme Court, said he will continue to appeal his case)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2261



Bolivia: Cochabamba

Helena Kmiec (Polish citizen, missionary, **stabbed to death** in an attempted robbery)

http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2017/01/26/polish_missionary_murdered_in_bolivia_/1288412

Thursday January 26, 2017



Myanmar

Assistant Pastor Dom Dawng Nawng Latt (aged 65, cousin of La Jaw Gam Hseng, disappeared on [December 24, 2016](#), had told media of the December 3, 2016 bombing of the church in [Mongkoe township](#); **UPDATE**: reported to be tried for 'illegal association')

La Jaw Gam Hseng (aged 35, cousin of Dom Dawng Nawng, church youth leader, disappeared on [December 24, 2016](#), had told media of the December 3, 2016 bombing of the church in [Mongkoe township](#); **UPDATE**: reported to be tried for 'illegal association')

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Two-Kachin-Christians-arrested-by-Myanmar-military-set-to-go-to-trial-39765.html>



India: Kondhapally village, Karnataka state

Pastor Basanna (prayer meeting attacked by 70 Hindu radicals, worshippers severely beaten including women and children, not present because he was meeting Pastor Rudresh at the bus station to bring him to the meeting, the radicals found him at the station and beat him, said "The general public remained as silent spectators. Nobody tried to rescue us despite the several pleas from myself and my wife. They even pushed my wife to the ground which caused her severe pain due to the stitches she had from a recent C-section. The said while beating me, that they will kill me if I try to run a church in their village...Even if I have to die, I will stay in this village", found that the Hindus had filed an illegal conversion complaint against him with the police)

Pastor Rudresh (beaten at the bus station on his way to speak at a prayer meeting)

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/06/pastor-in-india-defies-radicals-by-continuing-ministry-despite-persecution/>



Egypt: Esna

Hanan Adly Girgis (aged 18, sister of Rezeiky and Romany, abducted from her home, police have taken no action)

Romany Adly Girgis (said "At about 10.30pm our neighbors – cousins of [suspect] Soliman – told my brother Rezeiky that they saw a thief close to our livestock shed. Rezeiky took a blanket and headed to the shed to guard it for the night. At 3am, when my brothers and I returned, we found the door open. Our mother was sleeping but Hanan wasn't in her room. We thought she might be asleep with my sister-in-law and woke her, but Hanan wasn't there. We searched everywhere and went to relatives to see if she had gone to them but none of them had seen her...They [the police] promised us many times that they would help return Hanan but they have done nothing. We don't know why they don't

help us. Is it because we are Christians, or do they connive with kidnapers to take Christian girls to convert to Islam? We accuse them of apathy and complicity")

Rezeiky Adly Girgis (said "There was no disagreement between us, she was very happy. She was engaged to a man she'd chosen to be with. They had planned to go and buy jewelry together the following day; and she had just bought new clothes for her cousin's wedding on Sunday")

Barsoum Wahba (attorney, said "There is a state of police indifference towards the case of Hanan. They did nothing to help the brothers...They said 'give us two days and we will bring her back,' but these are words without actions. They aren't serious even though they know they have the capability to know where Hanan is and who kidnapped her. Because the victim is a Christian girl we see inaction. It is a farce. We want people to deal with us as human beings and not deal with us as second-class citizens. We feel we have no rights")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4929839/>

Friday January 27, 2017



India: Medipally village, Telangana state

Rev Gandham Padma Rao (aged 49, father of Samuel Mark, assaulted by 10 Hindu extremists while walking to his automobile after praying for healing with an elderly parishioner, said "They spoke to me in vulgar language: 'You must never come to our village to pray. You should never enter our village' ...I could not balance myself and fell in a pit nearby. They picked me up, threw me on the road and started battering me again. I tried hard to regain my strength and run, but they followed me quickly held my collar, pushed me off with their feet. When I fell down again, they began kicking and beating me again", police altered his statement to hide the attackers' membership in the Vishwa Hindu Vahini, hospitalized two days later with hypertension after feeling light-headed)

Mariamma (parishioner, came running with her relatives when she saw the attack on Rev Gandham Padma Rao, the attackers fled)

Samuel Mark (son of Rev Gandham Padma Rao, said "My dad went to visit the families who had been attending our church over years now. He had no business to do with the assailants. He didn't bother anyone. He didn't even respond to them when they shouted at him. All of a sudden, they began kicking him on the road. Don't you see it was all planned?")

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/02/pastor-india-assaulted-hindu-extremists/>



Pakistan

Dr Nazir S Bhatti (**UPDATE**: protested in writing the television show “Baji Irshad” which has attacked Christianity)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6287>



Ukraine: Katerinopol, Cherkasy region

Fr Viktor Katkalo (hospitalized after a bottle was broken over his head during a fight with 3 other priests from another church)

<http://uoj.org.ua/novosti/sobytiya/tri-svyashchennika-uaps-izbili-nastoyatelya-svyato-mikhaylovskogo-khrama-uaps-v-katerinopole> - with translation

<http://vikka.ua/novini/21436-plyashkoyu-po-golovi-na-cherkaschini-pobilisya-chetvero-svyaschenikiv-foto.htm> - with translation

Saturday January 28, 2017



Pakistan: Lambanwali village, near Gujranwala

Mukhtar Masih (aged 70, father of Shaima Masih and Anjum Mukhtar, grandfather of Romilla, Nehmeeia, and Shaima, arrested on blasphemy charges after a note was found at a mosque, beaten)

Shaima Masih (aged 38, daughter of Mukhtar Masih, arrested, released)

Anjum Mukhtar (aged 40, son of Mukhtar Masih, arrested, beaten, said "These charges are completely false my father is innocent. We tried explaining this to the police but they still arrested us and they beat my elderly father and I with their lathi trying to force a confession. I am sure that if you look at the letters the writing will not match my fathers. He would never dare enact such an offensive crime knowing it would endanger his family. Some men have been chasing us for our property and were offering a very low price. They threatened to kill us if we did not leave and now this has happened. There is never any peace for Christians in Pakistan Muslim's hate us)

Romilla (aged 14, child of Anjum Mukhtar, grandchild of Mukhtar Masih, arrested, released)

Nehmeeia (aged 10, child of Anjum Mukhtar, grandchild of Mukhtar Masih, arrested, released)
Shaima (aged 8, child of Anjum Mukhtar, grandchild of Mukhtar Masih, arrested, released)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/70-year-old-christian-man-arrested-and-detained-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-gujaranwala>



Kazakhstan: Stepnogorsk, Akmola region

Ruslan Sadvakasov (arrested for handing out religious literature)

Valery Zhigalov (arrested for handing out religious literature)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281



Egypt: Cairo

Fadi (aged 15, son of Hanaa, convicted of sexual assault, sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, appeal filed)

Hanaa (mother of Fadi, said “The judge convicted my son to 15 years because he is a Christian. If he was a Muslim boy, the judge would acquit him when he saw the forensic report, because the forensic report absolved my son, but the judge wasn’t convinced of it because my son is Christian, so he believed the speech of [the Muslim boy’s] father instead of the forensic report...I want to know what my son did to be sentenced to 15 years. What is the crime he committed? Where are our rights? Our rights are lost in this country. The forensic report said that my son did nothing, so why is the court verdict 15 years? It’s because we are Christians.”)

Dr Naguib Gabriel (attorney; **UPDATE:** said of Fadi's trial “The two medical examiners who examined the Muslim child are Muslims and absolved Fadi from this false allegation...What did Fadi do to get such a harsh verdict? If Fadi was a murderer, the sentence wouldn’t be this long. He is a child and didn’t commit any crime...The judge’s verdict wasn’t related to law, but faith. He said he was not convinced about the forensic report and believed the allegation of the father of the Muslim child”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4906705/>



Nigeria: Jol village, Riyom local government area, Plateau state

Dachung Maichibi (object of an attempted abduction along with his wife and son by Fulani herdsmen)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/08/herdsmen-plateau-state-nigeria-quietly-seizing-christians-property-pastors-say/>



United States - New Jersey: Newark

Auxiliary Bishop Manuel Cruz (struck in the face at the beginning of Mass, motive unknown)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/newark-auxiliary-bishop-assaulted-during-mass-33964/>

Sunday January 29, 2017



India: Chhattigarh state

Pastor Jacob Joseph (church attacked by Hindu radicals, had previously been ordered by police to close his church, said "It is very painful that we had to shut down the church that we have been running for more than 13 years. Even praying in our own homes with our family is restricted and treated as crime")

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/15/chhattisgarhs-christians-face-challenges-on-multiple-fronts/>



Sudan: Khartoum

Petr Jasek (aged 52, Czech citizen, arrested in [December 2015](#) for making a video for Voice of the Martyrs on Christian persecution and financially aiding a wounded Christian;

UPDATE: convicted of 'waging war against the state, violating restrictions in military areas, spreading rumors to defame the state, and inciting strife between communities', sentenced to 23 and a half years' imprisonment)

Abdulmonem Abdumawla Issa Abdumawla (convert, held in jail as of [May 24, 2016](#); **UPDATE:** convicted, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment)

Rev Hassan Abdelrahim Tawor (husband, arrested in Omdurman on December 18, 2015 by the NISS secret police; charged in court on August 14, 2016 with espionage, complicity to execute a criminal agreement, waging war against the state, calling for opposition of the public authority by violence or criminal force, and inciting hatred between classes; **UPDATE:** convicted, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment, mother fainted when the verdict was read)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4874643/>



Egypt: Nobaria

Salwa Nazmy (disappeared along with her 3 children)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1830&A=29518>

Monday January 30, 2017



Pakistan: Lambanwali village, near Gujranwala

Anjum Mukhtar (aged 40, son of Mukhtar Masih, arrested on January 28, 2017, beaten, said "These charges are completely false my father is innocent. We tried explaining this to the police but they still arrested us and they beat my elderly father and I with their lathi trying to force a confession. I am sure that if you look at the letters the writing will not match my fathers. He would never dare enact such an offensive crime knowing it would endanger his family. Some men have been chasing us for our property and were offering a very low price. They threatened to kill us if we did not leave and now this has happened. There is never any peace for Christians in Pakistan Muslim's hate us; **UPDATE:** released)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/70-year-old-christian-man-arrested-and-detained-for-alleged-blasphemy-in-gujranwala>



Iraq: Bagdad

Patriarch Louis Raphael I Sako (**UPDATE**: reported to have criticized any change in U.S. immigration policy that would give precedence to Christians over Muslims "Every reception policy that discriminates the persecuted and suffering on religious grounds ultimately harms the Christians of the East, because among other things provides arguments to all propaganda and prejudice that attack native Christian communities of the Middle East as 'foreign bodies', groups supported and defended by Western powers. These discriminating choices create and feed tensions with our Muslim fellow citizens. Those who seek help do not need to be divided according to religious labels. And we do not want privileges. This is what the Gospel teaches, and what Pope Francis pointed out, who welcomed refugees in Rome who fled from the Middle East, both Christians and Muslims without distinction")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/61622-ASIA_IRAQ_Chaldean_Patriarch_the_selective_reception_of_migrants_based_on_religion_announced_by_Trump_is_a_trap_for_Christians#.WJLBsVMrKM8



Russia: Chernyshevsk district, Zabaikalsk region

T I Sukhanova (fined US\$84 for illegal missionary activity)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306

Tuesday January 31, 2017



Pakistan: Lahore

The Anti-Terrorism Court exonerated 115 defendants from the **March 9, 2013 arson attacks in Johnson Colony [ghetto] in which 125 Christian homes were destroyed for 'lack of evidence', one Muslim leader said "our faith in legal system has shattered. The political leaders of Punjab province and the ruling elite have strong alliances with jihadi groups. There is no justice for minority who continue to be victimized"**

Roger Randhawa (Operations Management at Caritas Pakistan Lahore, said "It's a sheer disappointment. The message is clear for us; those who attack minorities and openly preach hate can go spot-free. Perhaps the pictures and video footages clearly showing faces was not enough evidence")

Ijaz Farhat (former President of Christians Lawyers Association of Pakistan CLAP; **UPDATE**: said "The victims are hijacked by NGOs, many try to flee the country and nobody

pursues the case. The Church leaders only visit the day court passes judgments. Christian lawyers are at high risk when taking up cases of minority persecution. Nobody provides us security from the crowd of hundreds waiting outside the court”)

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/en/pakistani-christian-leaders-disappointed-at-acquittal-of-arsonists-of-joseph-colony/>



Kazakhstan: Oral, West Kazakhstan region

Serkali Kumargaliyev (sentenced to 3 days' imprisonment)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281



Syria: Aleppo

Archbishop Antoine Audo SJ (**UPDATE:** reported to have criticized any change in U.S. immigration policy that would give precedence to Christians over Muslims "We Christians of Syria and the Middle East do not like any speeches that make differences between us and Muslims when justice, peace and aid to those in need are at stake. Who makes these differences, feeds fanaticism and extremism")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/61633-ASIA SYRIA Are US borders open only to Christians Who makes these differences feeds fanaticism says Chaldean Bishop of Aleppo#.WJK5DIMrKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61633-ASIA_SYRIA_Are_US_borders_open_only_to_Christians_Who_makes_these_differences_feeds_fanaticism_says_Chaldean_Bishop_of_Aleppo#.WJK5DIMrKM8)

January 2017, date unknown



Laos

Yeng (alias, church leader, home destroyed by arson)

Pastor Shu (alias, attacked by a relative with a gun, fled, arrested when he tried to file a complaint)

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



India: Chhattigarh state

Pastor Jacob Joseph (ordered by police to close his church, church later attacked by Hindu radicals, siad "It is very painful that we had to shut down the church that we have been running for more than 13 years. Even praying in our own homes with our family is restricted and treated as crime")

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/15/chhattisgarhs-christians-face-challenges-on-multiple-fronts/>



Ethiopia: Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples' Region

Biruk (alias, son of Tutu, beaten for refusing the invitation to Islam)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/04/ethiopian-state-considers-restricting-christian-activity-church-buildings/>



Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai

Attia Shehata ("officer", husband of Angele Attia, father, **killed** in the bombing of a checkpoint)

Wael Milad (merchant, **killed** by militants in his shop in [late January 2017](#))

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/16/coptic-christian-teacher-shot-dead-in-egypt/>
<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/02/27/egypts-christians-flee-terror-in-north-sinai-security-void/>

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