

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Events – July 2017

**Saturday July 1, 2017**



### Iran

#### **A training session in "the region" allowed young Iranian Christians to meet**

Marjan (alias, aged 23, said “I don’t know any other young Christian in my city...When my parents came to faith, I myself was still a very strict Muslim. When we went to house church meetings, I just sat and cried in the other room. Then one day, a girl my age came to me and helped me with all the questions I had. That was the start of my own journey towards Jesus”)

Kyana (alias, aged 17, said “I lost some of my friends when they found out I was a Christian. They stopped inviting me over because they thought I was different from them and shouldn’t belong to their group...Our new house church was supported by a more experienced fellowship. They were mentoring us. But one day there was a series of arrests and we lost contact with them. It didn’t only make me scared, it also made me question God. Why did he leave us on our own?”, added that she now meets in homes with small groups of Christians We have to keep our voices down so the neighbors don’t report us to the police”)

Aref (alias, aged 25, music teacher, said “It is a dream to one day make music and sing in a church building”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/06/freeiran-movement-gathers-paris-young-iranians-talk-challenges-faith-presents/>



### Mali

#### **UPDATE: Al Qaeda released a video showing several abducted Christians**

Beatrice Stockly (social worker, missionary, Swiss citizen, abducted in [Abaradjou, Timbuktu](#) on [January 8, 2016](#))

Sr Gloria Cecilia Narvaez Argoti (Colombian citizen, abducted in [Koutiala](#) on [February 7, 2017](#))

Dr Kenneth Elliot (aged 83, husband of Jocelyn Elliot, Australian citizen, missionary, abducted in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on January 15, 2016)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62560->

[AMERICA COLOMBIA Even Sister Gloria Cecilia in the video released by Al Qaeda with those kidnapped in Mali#.WVpNIITyuM8](#)

**Sunday July 2, 2017**



**Egypt: Heliopolis**

Girgis Bushra (aged 55, jeweler, **shot dead** in his home)

**Egypt: Tala, Monufia province**

Dr Albert Fekry (aged 67, **killed** in his clinic, throat slashed)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/four-copts-killed-aggressive-campaign-history-modern-egypt/>

**Monday July 3, 2017**



**Nigeria**

**Church leaders ask secondary school students to boycott new mandatory Arabic classes**

Bishop David Oyedepo (claimed the new classes were an attempt to convert students to Islam)

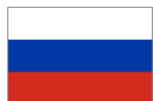
Pastor Enoch Adeboye (said the government could not force students to study the language)

Pastor William Folorunso Kumuyi (**UPDATE**: said the government could not force students to study the language)

Rev Felix Omobude (said "We are aware of orchestrated plans to subtly use this policy as a means of forceful religious indoctrination and we maintain our stand against it")

<https://www.premier.org.uk/News/World/Nigerian-Christian-leaders-urge-students-to-boycott-Arabic-classes>

**Tuesday July 4, 2017**



**Russia: Shumerlya, Chuvash Republic**

Avel Lukin (aged 18, conscientious objector, denied alternative civilian service by a [Chuvash Republic](#) military conscription office on [May 12, 2017](#), ordered to serve in the nuclear missile forces; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2297](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2297)

**Wednesday July 5, 2017**



**Mexico: de Los Reyes, Mexico state**

Fr Luis Lopez Villa (aged 71, bound and **stabbed to death** in his rectory)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/mexican-priest-found-bound-stabbed-to-death-in-his-room-44449/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62589->

[AMERICA MEXICO Another priest brutally killed in his parish#.WV-RJoTyuM8](#)

**Thursday July 6, 2017**



**United States - West Virginia**

Pastor Rich Penkoski (reported that his automobile was vandalized, had received rape and death threats, homosexual pornography, and mailed feces after stating he opposed use of the rainbow flag emoji on his Facebook page, has had to change his telephone number)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/pastor-receives-feces-mail-car-keyed-opposing-facebooks-rainbow-flag-emoji-191104/>

**Friday July 7, 2017**



**China: Beijing**

Xu Yonghai (**UPDATE**: home raided by police during a Bible study, 10 members questioned, police left after he called the national security office and complained)

**China: Hohhot, Inner Mongolia**

Zhang Kai (civil rights attorney, released on [December 29, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been detained 12 times and held up to 48 hours without any formal action taken, police have occupied the apartment under his and installed CCTV cameras near his home, is often followed)

**China: Xinxiang, Henan province**

Pastor Zhang Shaojie (husband of Wang Fengrui; **UPDATE**: health in prison in decline, described as a "bag of bones" and as having dark discolorations under his eyes, when asked if he had been beaten replied "Do you need to be beaten to become like this?")

Zhang Cuijuan (aged 40, wife of Jia Limin, younger sister of Pastor Zhang Shaojie, released from prison on [May 31, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: visited her brother in prison, said "It's painful to see such a good person being persecuted. I don't know how long he can persist")

Zhang "Yunyun" Huixin aka Esther Zhang (daughter of Pastor Zhang Shaojie and Wang Fengrui, U.S. resident; **UPDATE**: said of her father "He's unable to see the sun during the day. He's deprived of sleep for 24 hours at a time. The prison gives him only one steamed bun a day and intentionally starves him. According to people who have been released from that prison, my father is barely alive, suffering both mentally and physically")

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/christian-human-rights-lawyer-summoned.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/police-break-into-bible-study-demand.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/family-fears-for-barely-alive-chinese.html>

**Saturday July 8, 2017**



**Pakistan: Ara Basti, Bhawalpur**

**Three Christian sewer workers **died from toxic fumes**, had been denied protective equipment and training**

Saleem Masih (aged 50)

Danish Masih (aged 20)

Nadeem Masih (aged 18)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/three-christian-sewage-workers-killed-by-toxic-fumes-while-working-without-ppe>



**United Kingdom: London**

Charlie Gard (aged 11 months, son of Chris Gard and Connie Yates, terminally ill, hospitalized, denied access to experimental treatment, denied access to clergy)

Rev Patrick Mahoney (U.S. citizen, denied access to pray over Charlie Gard by the hospital, said "First they said they would have to check. Then they said we couldn't go. Then they gave permission and then when we were going with his mother into the room, they denied us. And then we sent the news release out [regarding the hospital's actions]" after which the hospital finally granted permission)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/hospital-wont-let-clergy-visit-charlie-gard-to-pray-for-him>

**Sunday July 9, 2017**



**Turkey**

Kuryakos Ergun (**UPDATE**: reported to have said after the appeal against the government's seizure of 2 monasteries and 20 churches was denied "Our churches and monasteries are what root Syriacs in these lands: our existence relies on them. While the country should be protecting this heritage, we instead see our culture is at risk")

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/07/09/turkeys-assyrians-fear-annihilation-after-government-seizes-church-properties.html>

**Monday July 10, 2017**



### **India: Goa**

Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrao (**UPDATE:** condemned the desecration of 40 crosses and several graves in a cemetery with heavy machinery, appealed to people of "all faiths to refrain from taking any retaliatory action or fanning the flame of religious hatred")

Mario Britto (said "If the police are really serious about unraveling the mystery of the desecration, they ought to start investigating the [government] ministers' links with fundamentalists organizations")

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** commented on the cemetery desecration "In June, the All India Hindu Convention met in Goa. The result was desecration and insecurity for the minority. During the meeting, Sadhvi Saraswati, president of Sanatan Dharma Prachar Seva Summit, said those who eat cow should be hanged in public, and said 'I ask Hindus to take up arms to defend our cow, our mother'")

### **India: Dindori district, Madhya Pradesh state**

Fr Leo D'Souza (aged 56, school principal, arrested on child abuse charges involving an eighth grade student who had been accepted at the school only 10 days earlier, no preliminary police investigation was performed prior to the arrest)

Bishop Gerald Almeida (**UPDATE:** said that Hindu radicals have created trouble for Christians: "Such hatred could be one reason for this heinous charge")

Richard James (**UPDATE:** said "police are hand in glove with the right-wing Hindu activists...[they] have been unleashing a reign of terror against minority groups, especially Christians")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/crosses-vandalized-graves-desecrated-in-goa/79748>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-priest-arrested-for-child-abuse/79736>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Crosses-broken-and-cemetery-desecrated-in-Goa-due-to-religious-hatred,-Mgr-Neri-Ferrao-says-41301.html>



### **Egypt: Ezbet al-Nakhl area, Cairo**

Nadra Jaber (reported to have been **killed** in her home, Christian books torn apart, police refused to investigate)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1934&A=31405>

**Tuesday July 11, 2017**



**Niger**

Jeffery Woodke (aged 56, missionary, U.S. citizen, husband of Els Woodke, abducted in [Arcata](#) on [October 14, 2016](#) by armed men who forced him to strip to his underwear, guard and housekeeper killed; **UPDATE**: whereabouts unknown but believed to have been moved to Mali)

Els Woodke (wife of Jeffery Woodke, released a video that noted her husband's absence on the [July 1, 2017](#) al-Qaeda video of captives in Mali, asked for information about him)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/us-hostages-wife-asks-his-african-captors-to-contact-her/>

**Wednesday July 12, 2017**



**Yemen**

Fr Tom Uzhunnalil SDB (aged 58, Indian citizen, abducted when armed men attacked a nursing home in Aden on [March 4, 2016](#), killing 16 employees and residents including 4 nuns; **UPDATE**: confirmed to be still alive)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/church-relieved-as-yemen-confirms-kidnapped-indian-priest-is-alive/>

**Thursday July 13, 2017**



**China: Suqian, Jiangsu province**

Fr Wang Qingwen (reported to have sent a letter to the local Communist Party secretary protesting the closure of a church youth summer camp)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/state-security-bans-chinese-parishes-children-program/79749>



### **United Kingdom: Nottingham**

Andrew Frost (charged in [March 2017](#) with harassment of a homosexual couple when street preaching; **UPDATE**: reported to have been acquitted)

Rory Green (reported to have testified that the couple had harassed Andrew Frost)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/mike-overd/another-street-preacher-cleared-of-all-charges>

**Friday July 14, 2017**



### **Pakistan: Dinga town, Gujrat District, Punjab Province**

Shahzad Masih (aged 17, son of Hina Shafaqat, hospital janitor, abducted and taken to a madrassa [Islamic school] for questioning after a blasphemy allegation had been made against him, arrested, whereabouts unknown)

Shafaqat Masih (builder, husband of Hina Shafaqat , father of Shahzad Masih, in hiding after his son was arrested on blasphemy charges, said "We left the city same evening the clerics captured him. I switched off my phone fearing they will trace my family...We are poor people and I am out of work now. The clerics did not listen to our please, they will kill my son")

Hina Shafaqat (mother of Shahzad Masih)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/07/islamists-pakistan-accuse-christian-minor-blaspheming-islams-prophet/>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistani-catholic-family-flees-following-blasphemy-allegation/79776>



### **Tajikistan: Khujand**

Pastor Bakhrom Kholmatov (aged 42, husband, father of three, arrested on [April 10, 2017](#) by the NSC secret police on charges of 'extremism'; **UPDATE**: reported to have been sentenced



to 3 years' imprisonment for 'singing extremist songs in church and so inciting religious hatred', friends and family threatened with arrest if they disclose details of the trial)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2298](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2298)



## **Egypt**

### **Most churches have cancelled summer programs due to government reports of security threats**

Rev Andrea Zaki (**UPDATE:** said "[security] agencies have informed us about the discovery of attack plans")

Fr Bolous Halim (**UPDATE:** said "Due to security concerns raised among churches' officials against any gatherings of Copts in Egypt, the churches affiliated to the Coptic Orthodox Church consulted the main church to coordinate with the Interior Ministry to undertake any action")

Rev Mohsen Naeem (cancelled a church trip to a tourist resort, said "Join in prayer for the security and stability of our country")

Pastor Saeed Awad (has refrained from organizing church trips to religious sites for the past three years, said "We [in Ismailia] are on the front lines. We are the first city ISIL would come to")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Threat-of-attacks-forces-Evangelical-and-Coptic-Churches-to-shut-down-activities-41285.html>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20170713141353.htm>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/terrorist-threat-forces-egyptian-christians-to-cancel-summer-activities/>



## **Cuba: Guantanamo**

Pastor Ramon Rigal (reported to have been sentenced to one year at hard labor for removing his children from government schools to avoid anti-Christian teaching, sentence may be reduced)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/cuban-pastor-punished-1-year-labor-homeschooling-children-191992/>

**Saturday July 15, 2017**



## China

Xu Zhiyong (aged 44, attorney, new father, sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment in [Beijing](#) on [January 19, 2014](#), said ‘...I believe in the power of faith, and in the power of the truth, compassion and beauty that exists in the depths of the human soul...’; **UPDATE:** released from prison)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/china-releases-christian-human-rights-activist-prison-xu-zhiyong-192088/>



## India: Salem Tabri, Punjab state

Pastor Sultan Masih (aged 47, husband of Sarbjit, father of Anoop, Ali Shah and Hanok, brother of Raj Kamal Masih, **shot dead** by two assailants on motorcycles outside his church, had no known enemies, police initially refused to perform a full investigation)

Sarbjit (widow of Pastor Sultan Masih)

Ali Shah (aged 26, son of Pastor Sultan Masih)

Hanok (aged 18, daughter of Pastor Sultan Masih)

Anoop Masih (son of Pastor Sultan Masih, discovered his body)

Pastor Vishnu Dev (**UPDATE:** said after the murder of Pastor Sultan Masih “He and his family are serving Christ for decades and they are at peace with everyone. But four days before he was shot, I met him, and he told me, “Please pray for us, as we continue standing for Christ, many enemies are standing up against us. Please pray for us”)

Raj Kamal Masih (brother of Pastor Sultan Masih, said “Anoop Masih heard the noise of shooting and came out of his room on the first floor. Seeing his dad lying on the road, he screamed and alerted everyone in the church building...My brother was a peace loving man. We don't have any enmity towards anyone. Since over two decades my brother is serving Christ”)

Pastor Balwinder Kumar (said that Pastor Sultan Masih may have been targeted for a public celebration of the church's 25th anniversary “RSS [paramilitary] activists arrived there and started accusing the pastor of forced conversions. They came to him to quarrel twice after the event, too. The feud was not so very serious that he had to be killed like this. The RSS activists accused him that, ‘You Christians get paid for converting people. How much do you pay the converted?’ They were stiff and were not listening when Pastor Masih tried to explain it is not true”)

Pastor Paul Tamizharasan (said “Pastor Sultan Masih was my neighbor and my friend” after his assassination, added "The state of Punjab is very safe in India for Christians. There are Sikhs living here – they are also a religious minority in India. We are also a minority, but never before have we had any threats. But unfortunately this has happened and we are all shocked about how this is possible”)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pastor-shot-dead-outside-church-in-india>  
<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/07/pastor-punjab-state-india-shot-dead/>  
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/india-christians-shock-pastor-shot-dead-safe-punjab/>



### **Egypt: Alexandria**

Mina Zakhary (church security guard, stabbed while at the church, hospitalized)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1943&A=31561>  
<https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/07/16/muslim-knifeman-attacks-egypt-church-guard/>

**Sunday July 16, 2017**



### **Eritrea: Asmara**

Patriarch Abune Antonios (disappeared in 2007; as of May 27, 2017 has passed 10 years' in house arrest; **UPDATE**: allowed to attend a public Divine Liturgy at the cathedral, returned to house arrest)

<http://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/32999>  
<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/patriarch-abune-antonios-of-eritrea-detained-again/>  
<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/eritrean-synod-organises-a-sham-reconciliation/>



### **Venezuela: Catia, outside Caracas**

Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino (**UPDATE**: mediated the safe exit of a crowd that had taken refuge in a church after armed civilian supporters of the government had fired on them, killing one)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/shots-fired-at-people-voting-outside-church-in-venezuela-24718/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62654->

[AMERICA VENEZUELA Cardinal Urosa Savino after the attack in the parish enough violence against the people#.WW4NdoTyuM8](#)

**Monday July 17, 2017**



### **Vietnam: Quang Binh province**

Fr Truong Van Thuc (led about 1,000 Catholics in protest over the government's year long delay in disbursing compensation for an environmental disaster which had already been paid by the polluting corporation)

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/catholic-villagers-in-vietnam-protest-lack-of-compensation-for-formosa-disaster-07032017144316.html>



### **Iran: Rajaei-Shahr prison, Karaj, Alborz province**

Ebrahim Firouzi (convert, aged 32, welder, reported on [May 1, 2015](#) to have been sentenced to five additional years' imprisonment for "action against national security through collusion and gathering", the gathering in question was a meeting where he met with friends to say goodbye before the beginning of his original prison term; **UPDATE**: had begun another hunger strike, wrote "Following the mistreatment of new Christian believers and converts by the judicial authorities, refusing Christian prisoners access to Christian literature, and issuing unjust and hefty verdicts and sentences against new Christian believers and converts to the point that in the recent months tens of Christians have been sentenced to long years of imprisonment, I hereby announce going on hunger strike, commencing on 17 July 2017, for a period of 10 days, in support of the rights of fellow Christians")

<http://www.meconcern.org/2017/07/21/iranian-christian-on-hunger-strike/>



**Greece**

Haroon Maqbool (father of two, Pakistani refugee, arrived on Lesbos in August 2016, along with other Christians was threatened by Muslims, all did not complete registration due to fear and left the refugee camp; **UPDATE**: reported to be homeless on the Greek mainland, denied UN refugee status due to having left the Lesbos refugee camp)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/christians-barred-asylum-leaving-refugee-camp-harassment-muslim-migrants-192257/>



**Congo, Democratic Republic: Bunyuka, North-Kivu province**

Fr Pierre Akilimali (abducted by persons unknown)

Fr Charles Kipasa (abducted by persons unknown)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62655->

[AFRICA DR CONGO Two priests kidnapped The Bishops condemnation Hurting them means harming the community they serve#.WW4N5oTyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62655-)



**Nigeria: Maiduguri, Borno state**

Fr Gideon Obasogie (**UPDATE**: said following recent suicide bombings "Boko Haram is an enemy of humanity and does not hesitate to kill faithful Muslims. Its tactics is to commit atrocities against innocent civilians in order to maximize the terrorist impact on the population...Over the last few months, Boko Haram attacked crowded places of Maiduguri and its suburbs, such as markets and hospitals. The jihadist group attacks civilians also because the latter have organized self-defense militias to try to limit their assaults...Unfortunately, some politicians are involved in the phenomenon of Boko Haram. If there were no political interests, Boko Haram would no longer be a problem")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62650->

[AFRICA NIGERIA Boko Haram attacks a mosque It is an enemy of humanity says the Social Communications Director of the Diocese of Maiduguri#.WWzAVoTyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62650-)

**Wednesday July 19, 2017**



## **Egypt: Cairo**

Jamal Kamal Aweidah (aged over 40, arrested on fraud charges, **died in police custody** after having likely been tortured)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62680->

[AFRICA EGYPT A Copt dies while being detained in a police station Relatives and friends he was tortured to death#.WXH8soTyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62680-)



## **United States – California: San Francisco**

David Daleiden (aged 29; investigative journalist, home in Orange county and office raided on [April 5, 2016](#), video recordings seized; indicted on [March 28, 2017](#) on 15 felony counts for having secretly recorded Planned Parenthood officials negotiating the illegal sale of tissue harvested from aborted children, despite the fact that the state never prosecuted animal rights groups and NBC for doing the same with other subjects [and in the NBC case a civil case resulted in their exoneration under the law]; all counts dismissed in San Francisco on [June 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: found in contempt of court for having released videos of abortionists publicly discussing abortion details, fined over \$137,000, judge has connections to Planned Parenthood but refused to recuse himself)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/judge-orders-daleiden-to-pay-137k-to-abortion-group-for-violating-gag-order>

**Thursday July 20, 2017**



## **China: Jiangmen, Guangdong province**

Pastor Li Wanhua (detained [on June 14, 2017](#), accused of cult activity; **UPDATE**: released on bail for one year, under travel restrictions)

Ruan Haonan (husband of Luo Caiyan, detained on [June 12, 2017](#), accused of cult activity; **UPDATE**: released on bail for one year, under travel restrictions)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/wrongly-charged-christians-released-on.html>



### **India: Imphal, Manipur state**

Bishop Dominic Lumon (said after the Supreme Court ordered an investigation into extrajudicial killings by the police and military "We welcome the decision and hope the probe will be impartial, devoid of political goals, and bring justice to the victims")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-bishop-welcomes-extra-judicial-killings-probe/79798>



### **South Africa: Capetown**

Archbishop Stephen Brislin (aged 60, said "The recommendation that new laws be introduced to enforce registration of pastors and ministers is overkill and a response that one would expect more from a totalitarian state than a constitutional democracy...We fully understand and share government's unhappiness with certain practices done in the name of religion, such as requiring adherents to drink petrol or eat grass. However, we believe that there is sufficient existing legislation that can be evoked to deal with most of these harmful practices")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62677->

[AFRICA SOUTH AFRICA The Bishops No to the registration of pastors and ministers of religion#.WXH MITyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62677-)

**Friday July 21, 2017**



### **China: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province**

Zhang (reported to have said "For a long time, teenagers and students have not been allowed to participate in religious activities. However, the Three-Self [official] Churches and [underground] house churches would usually hold summer camps during the summer vacation. The government then emphasized...that even the Sunday schools would be closed down. The government's major intention is to shut down the Sunday schools...he government is trying to control ideology. During [Chinese Presidents] Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao's time, the government was tolerant toward preaching and missionary work. After Xi Jinping came into power, the government's grip on religion has strengthened")

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/provinces-seek-to-eradicate-sunday.html>



### **Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan**

Haitham Behnam (aged 34, reported to have said he will not return to his home in Mosul  
“There’s no security, no protection for Christians back there. It’s better for us to stay here  
and keep our mouths shut”)

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/no-security-no-protection-for-mosuls-christians-after-islamic-state/>



### **United Kingdom**

Tim Dieppe (wrote that a Foreign Office report "urges reinterpretation of scripture and the imposition of LGBTI ideology on evangelical Christians in the Global South... What this report advocates is a kind of neo-colonialism which imposes an ideology on other countries, regarding their existing morality as backwards. Whist blaming colonialism for the legacy of Biblical morality, the report sees no irony in seeking to impose an LGBT agenda on Global South nations in a patronizing manner. This is also done by British embassies which are being used to 'marry' same sex couples in countries where same sex marriage is illegal. Over the last year, more than 200 same sex 'weddings' took place in British embassies and consulates in countries where same sex 'marriage' is illegal. Imposing an ideology on evangelical Christians in the Global South appears to be the stated aim of the Foreign Office according to this report. This works against freedom of religion and human rights more generally. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office should immediately disassociate itself from this report and make clear that it does not represent UK government policy. The government should be working to promote freedom of religion around the world, not undermining it")

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/freedom-of-speech/foreign-office-agency-says-biblical-morality-is-hateful>

**Saturday July 22, 2017**



### **Iraq: Karamles**



**The first Christian family has been reported to have returned to their home town after the defeat of ISIL, had been refugees since August 2014**

Labib Rammo (aged 55, husband of Nedal Yousif, father, said "The time of exile was difficult, without a home, with broken affections and ties, a part of the family distant. Our routines and customs were upset, all this has created difficulties and made us feel like foreigners in our land. We have cultivated a vegetable garden. We have found our home, we want to add a room, our young children are growing up and are now have marriages of their own...We have to feel that this is our land and this is the place to witness the Christian faith today more ever...We have lost homes and property, but our faith has remained")

Nedal Yousif (aged 46, wife of Labib Rammo, mother)

Taher (aged 24)

Maher (aged 23)

Myron (aged 22)

Marsen (aged 21)

Firas (aged 15)

Barbara (aged 14)

Merna Rammo (aged 4 months)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Karamles,-welcomes-home-first-Christian-family,-after-Isis:-Like-letting-go-of-a-heavy-weight.-41352.html>

**July 2017, date unknown**



**United Kingdom: York**

Andrea Minichiello Williams (**UPDATE**: booed at the [July 7-11, 2017](#) Church of England General Synod when she asked the delegates and bishops to consider the Bible in their deliberations on gender issues)

Rev Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE**: said of the [July 7-11, 2017](#) Church of England General Synod "One of the saddest moments was when our doughtiest public campaigner, Andrea Minichiello Williams, who is the director of Christian Concern, she stood up and invited people to consider the demands of Scripture. She wasn't listened to in respectful silence. She was booed. Well, when you have the Synod of the Church of England booing somebody who has an extraordinary reputation for standing up for the Gospel in the public space, who was inviting the Synod to consider the claims of Scripture, when someone like that was booed, you know that things have gone too far, there's been a sea change")

[https://youtu.be/ttHFDXH\\_BQE?t=245](https://youtu.be/ttHFDXH_BQE?t=245)

## **Today's Martyrs**

**2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455**

**Fairfield CT 06825-2400**

<http://todaysmartyrs.org/events/>

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