

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – September 2017

Friday September 1, 2017



India

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE:** wrote following the assassination of writer and journalist Gauri Lankesh "Gauri represented the best of free and fearless India, respecting the rights of every citizen, celebrating pluralism and, above all, defending the highest values of democracy! Gauri had the courage to challenge the Sangh Parivar [the Hindu supremacist umbrella organization] and all sectarian people. She hated the caste system, struggled for the emancipation of women, fought for the poor and marginalized. Hers was an unstoppable crusade for the freedom of thought and expression. No one was spared when there was injustice in the center of the matter")

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE:** signed a statement by the Catholic bishops condemning the assassination of journalist Gauri Lankesh by likely Hindu nationalists "We salute her for the courage with which she wrote, the conviction with which she lived her life and the boldness with which she fought the forces of evil, hatred and corruption...The murder of this versatile and brave journalist follows other crimes of hatred of recent times: the murders of Sahitya Academy Award Winner and Writer M M Kalburgi in Dharwad, thinker Govind Pansare in in Kohlapur, thinker Narendra Dabholkar in Pune, the mob lynchings by Gau Rakshaks in the name of protecting cows, political killings in Kerala and other such hate crimes")

India: Rewa, Madhya Pradesh state

Fr Sebastian Panthalluparambil (aged 40, high school principal, charged with molesting a 17 year old student)

Bishop Joseph Kodakallil (said "This is totally a baseless and false complaint", added that a CCTV camera in the principal's office proves the incident did not happen: "It has been given as evidence to disprove the allegations")

Archbishop Leo Cornelio (**UPDATE:** said "It is an attempt to tarnish the image of the church. The real facts were distorted and a false case was registered against the priest")

India: Myleripalaya, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu state

Rev Solomon Raja (church closed by police following a complaint from the Hanuman Sena Hindu extremist group)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Indian-bishops-condemn-the-murder-of-'courageous'-journalist-Gauri-Lankesh-41707.html>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-priest-charged-with-molesting-student-bishop-cries-harassment/80169>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/'I-am-Gauri':-in-Bangalore,-15,000-demand-justice-for-the-murdered-journalist-41764.html>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Tamil-Nadu-authorities-stop-worship-in-ten-Protestant-churches-42215.html>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/officials-police-tamil-nadu-state-india-halt-worship-10-churches/>



Pakistan: Lahore

Archbishop Sebastian Francis Shah OFM (**UPDATE**: attacked in the press after the daughter of a former prime minister solicited votes from the pulpit, said "The Christian politicians called me two days ago and explained that her only objective was to pray for her ailing mother...We agreed upon a draft speech briefly mentioning her 11 years of studies at the Convent of Jesus and Mary school and the student career of the former prime minister at St Anthony's High School. Both institutes are operated by the Lahore Archdiocese. She was supposed to conclude with prayer requests for her ailing mother. We gave her the opportunity because of her faith and her acquaintance with ruling party...Maryam transgressed by asking for votes for her father. I wanted to stop her but millions were watching live on their television screens. At one moment, I decided to walkout as boycott, but then it could have been detrimental for Church relations with authorities. We need their aid to help persecuted Christians and take back our nationalized schools and properties...A directive has been issued to all churches. The Church microphone and pulpit will not be given to politicians"

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Deceived-by-Sharif's-daughter,-Lahore-archbishop-rejects-campaigning-from-pulpit-41687.html>



Egypt: Minya

Hlim Hanna (police officer, reported to have been **killed**)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1973&A=32083>



Greece

Metropolitan Nicholas of Fthiotida (reported to have said that the authorities “are subverting the spiritual foundations of society and trying to transform our eternal institutional values. Their end goal is the imposition of a secular status and godless state upon Orthodox Greece”, added that the authorities aim to “limit and weaken the Church” and expel it to the periphery of public consciousness, under the pretext of protecting religious minorities whose rights are already guaranteed by the Greek constitution)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/106112.htm>



Central African Republic: Zemio

Fr Jean-Alain Zembi (reported on [August 20, 2017](#) to have said of Moroccan UN peacekeepers “You were warned, but you deliberately decided to abandon this town. This community is being sacrificed, and I will hold you responsible for all those dead and preparing to die”, over 30 were killed, bodies have been left in the street in front of his rectory; **UPDATE**: fled his residence with 15,000 refugees to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, church looted)

Fr Desire Blaise Kpangou (reported on [August 20, 2017](#) to have wrote to the UN concerning Moroccan UN peacekeepers “If you don’t come soon to disarm these people, we will have to organize confessions and a final Mass and viaticum and prepare ourselves and the rest of the displaced people here for the worst”, added that the attackers appeared to be Sudanese; **UPDATE**: fled his residence with 15,000 refugees to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, church looted)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/catholic-priest-killed-another-injured-spate-attacks-car/>



Nigeria: Banana Junction, Amaifeke

Fr Cyriacus Onunkwo (abducted by armed gunmen while on the way to his father's funeral)

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/09/catholic-priest-kidnapped-murdered-in-imo/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62856->

[AFRICA NIGERIA A priest in southern Nigeria kidnapped and killed#.Wa7N0bK GOM8](#)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/09/catholic-priest-kidnapped-killed-nigeria/>

Saturday September 2, 2017



Philippines

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (**UPDATE:** said at an archdiocesan synod "We must teach even if our voices get hoarse. We must teach even if they threaten us. We must teach even if they kill us and if they kill us, our message will echo even more because the best way to teach is through martyrdom!...In the lights and shadows of life, in the stormy and sunny days, in the persecutions we endure and the triumphs we bask in – the Lord speaks...We dream not of status quo Church but an ever vibrant Church that is excited, not afraid to plunge into the deep")

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/filipino-archbishop-face-opposition-with-a-martyrs-courage-63919/>



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Fr John Wang Zhongfa (aged 86, sentenced as a seminarian to 12 years' forced labor in 1956; **UPDATE:** died of natural causes)

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (underground bishop; **UPDATE:** not allowed to attend the funeral of Fr John Wang Zhongfa but allowed to visit him in the hospital, sent to Beijing under guard for ear surgery)

Fr Paul Jiang Sunian (**UPDATE:** secretary to Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin, detained by police to prevent his attendance at the funeral of Fr John Wang Zhongfa)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mgr-Peter-Shao-Zhumin-under-guard-in-a-Beijing-hospital-41738.html>



Central African Republic: Zambagua village, near Zemio

Fr Louis Tongagnesi (retired priest, **hacked to death** on his farm by Seleka rebels)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/catholic-priest-killed-another-injured-spate-attacks-car/>



Nigeria: Omuma village, Imo state

Fr Cyriacus Onunkwo (abducted by armed gunmen while on the way to his father's funeral;

UPDATE: found murdered by strangulation)

Bishop Augustine Tochukwu Ukwuoma (reported on the murder of Fr Cyriacus Onunkwo)

<https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/09/catholic-priest-kidnapped-murdered-in-imo/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62856->

[AFRICA NIGERIA A priest in southern Nigeria kidnapped and killed#.Wa7N0bK GOM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62856-)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/09/catholic-priest-kidnapped-killed-nigeria/>

Sunday September 3, 2017



India: Arasur, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Suresh Kumar (church attacked on [May 7, 2017](#) with a planted explosive device, said “We were terrified when we found a petrol bomb on the church premises. We thank God that we noticed before it could explode and have massive damage as that day was a Sunday. We don’t know who planted the bomb. But we did know that prior to the planting of the bomb in our church, there was a brutal attack on an Assemblies of God Church by the members of the Hindu Munnani in the same suburb of Arasur”; **UPDATE:** church ordered closed by the local revenue office, said an officer from the revenue department came and told us that the revenue office received a complaint from Mr Murgeshan [a leader of the Hindu Munnani] regarding our church. He said I had to stop worship and close down the church. Despite this, we continued our worship as we did not get anything in writing from the officer concerned”)

India: Faridabad

Pastor Abraham Thomas (dragged to a police station by Hindu radicals after the radicals gave children leaflets stating 'Let us use guns to shoot all the Hindus' and photographed them, then told police that he had given them the leaflets, released but church closed, said “My church is shut down and I have not conducted any service since then. Do we as Christians ever enter a Hindu temple...levying allegations on the priest and demanding explanations from them? If not, then who gives them the right to treat us this way?”)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Newsdesk-28-September-2017>

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/11/16/a-new-and-dangerous-threat-for-house-churches-in-southern-india/>



Kazakhstan: Semei

Adilzhan Iskakov (**UPDATE:** excused from military service after the government reversed itself and accepted his status as a church minister)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2333



Central African Republic: Ndim

Fr Robert Wiczorek (Polish national, abducted by Seleka rebels, tortured, released, hospitalized for surgery and blood loss)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/catholic-priest-killed-another-injured-spate-attacks-car/>

Monday September 4, 2017



Vietnam: Xuan Tho commune, Xuan Loc district, Dong Nai province

Fr Nguyen Duy Tan (church attacked by government thugs who arrived on a bus, locked the church gate and rang the bell to summon parishioners who detained the attackers, said “I recognized Nguyen Trong Nghia of the Red Flags group. Commune security kept inviting them back to their office, and district security officers behaved the same way, refusing to do any work at the scene. They wouldn’t note down the registration numbers of the guns or count how many bullets they had”, declined to press charges because “they are all on the same side, the side of the Communist Party. There would have been no point in pushing for prosecution”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Dong-Nai,-armed-activists-raid-church-41704.html>



India: Kasganj district, Uttar Pradesh state

Sandeep Kumar aka Karan Anthony (aged 18, agricultural science college student, son of Shrinivas Gautam, brother of Kuldeep Kumar, arrested on [August 23, 2017](#) for posting anti-Hindu comments on Facebook, denied food in jail, said “I was not at all aware about the fake Facebook account. I was only focusing on my studies, and we have worship services on the campus also every morning and evening, so I was spending most of my time with Christian friends here and never felt the need to open a social media account...Before this Facebook row, they got me into trouble twice. They beat me severely, alleging, ‘You are Christian, you are from low caste’. It was my good friend who falsely framed me by joining hands with Rudra Sena activists”; **UPDATE**: released on bail, ill with malaria and typhus, said “When I was in jail, every day I was spending time in prayer: the other prisoners did not understand what was going on, they asked me many questions like, ‘What is this you are doing, why are you knelt, what are you murmuring?’ It was an opportunity the Lord had given me to share the gospel with them”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/10/christian-teenager-india-arrested-comments-fake-facebook-sources-say/>



Uzbekistan: Urgench

Khamza Artikov (sentenced in absentia to 15 days' imprisonment and fined US\$998, was outside the country)

Elmurod Beyliyev (fined US\$2,217)

Yelena Nazarov (wife of Pastor Ahmadjon Nazarov, **UPDATE**: fined US\$44,333, Bible and literature ordered to be destroyed)

Nilufar Isakova (fined US\$44,333, cell phone and memory chip ordered seized)

Madina Yokubova (fined US\$44,333)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2326

Tuesday September 5, 2017



India: Kavalapadoor village, Bantwal Taluk, Dakshina district, Kachada, Karnataka state

Mercy (arrested on forced conversion charges)

Roselina (arrested on forced conversion charges)

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: said the arrests demonstrate growing "intolerance towards the Christian faith. The renewed audacity of extreme right-wing groups is a serious threat to democratic India. Based on simple suspicions, nationalist activists capture, interrogate, and intimidate Pentecostal Christians. On the contrary, women were not doing anything illegal. Increasing religious intolerance is taking violent forms in India... 'Gau Rakshas' [cow watchers] or vigilantes, who also question what people are eating")

India: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Rev Dr Manmassih Ekka (said after the Chief Minister [Governor] signed a new anti-conversion law "There is a danger to the social harmony in the state of Jharkhand. The passage of the bill is clearly an attempt to polarize tribal community by the ruling BJP... We have already seen the aggression of the Hindu fundamentalists misusing the bill as four Christians were falsely charged under forcible conversions and were sent to jail in Simdega district of Jharkhand... We are asking the government to take back their decision in the interest of people of Jharkhand. On behalf of the All Church Committee of Ranchi, we are organizing a public meeting in Ranchi along with progressive groups, including the Hindu community")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Karnataka,-two-Pentecostal-Christians-arrested-for-forced-conversions-41713.html>

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/09/20/jharkhands-state-governor-in-india-approves-anti-forced-conversion-law-despite-opposition/>



Russia: Ekaterinburg

Bishop Tikhon Shevkunov (commented on the movie Mathilde "The director Uchitel, who I don't personally know and whose films I've never seen, called me, and asked, 'Would you like to become a consultant for the film?' I said, 'Give me an official request. I will look at the request and then answer you.' The director Uchitel said, 'The script is already ready.' I said, 'The script?... First you make a request to consultants, and then you develop the script.' He said, 'The film is already almost ready.' I said, 'That's great! You want a consultant on a film that's nearly ready. Why?'" "... Why do they make audiences believe in the historicity of these contrived heartbreaking scenes of a 'love triangle' in which [Tsar] Nicholas, both before and after marriage, is melodramatically torn between Mathilde and Alexandra? What is that? The author's vision? No—it is slander against real people")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/106191.htm>

Wednesday September 6, 2017



Kenya: Bobo and Silini villages, Hindi

Hillary Njuguna (carpenter, abducted and **killed** by al-Shabaab militants, failed to hear their arrival due to his power saw)

Joseph Kinuthia (primary school teacher, son of Agnes Kimani, **shot and beheaded**)

Jared Maiko (businessman, **shot and beheaded**)

Gushi Peter (**shot and beheaded**)

Joseph Muchemi (described the murders, said “The reason many people weren’t killed like in 2014, when 15 people were killed and houses torched, is because we are always alert at night. This, however, doesn’t mean that four people deserved to die. We will continue to ask the government to set up at least one police post in every three villages”)

Pastor Bernard Baya (said “Since morning, the people here have been protesting the state of insecurity where only Christians are killed. Roads have been blocked and tires are being burned everywhere as the police try to calm the residents. I have heard some protesters say that they would break into the mosques and burn them down because the Muslims have been killing their friends like chicken”)

Agnes Kimani (mother of Joseph Kinuthia, later said her son was “a dedicated young man who had given up a lot to take up a teaching job at Bobo primary school. He always wanted to see the pupils excel and proceed to good secondary schools...He is now rest in the Lord, and we for God’s justice to prevail”)

Ruth Wagunyi (later said “I am very bitter and worried about how I will live without [my husband]. I treasured him because he loved me and provided everything that I needed. I am still in shock from what I saw that night: blood all over, his body lying lifeless and the head a few meters away. Why did they kill my husband?”)

Pastor James Marete (later said “some villagers of Silini and Bobo have fled their homes and are living in Hindi town. Nobody wants to be found by the al-Shabaab at night or during the day in the farms. We have also opened our school to shelter villagers where they sleep and wake to go to the farms in company of a few police officers”)

Pastor Moses Nzayi (later said “Hindi alone has about 30 churches, but you will notice that the number of members has gone down to half compared to the time before the Hindi and Mpeketoni massacres in 2014. This trend is worrying. Some pastors are almost giving up. We have persistently asked the authorities to give sufficient security to the people of Lamu west whose main occupation is farming and small-scale entrepreneurs”)

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/09/06/al-shabaab-kills-four-more-christian-men-in-lamu-kenya/>

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/09/29/mourning-fear-and-faith-christians-bury-family-members-killed-by-al-shabaab/>



Syria: Aleppo

Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh OFM (aged 44; **UPDATE**: said his city "was a metropolis that [before the war] generated about 60 per cent of Syria's industrial output [but now is] paralyzed and does not produce even a kilo of tomatoes, [it is] only a great consumer...[It is an] unstable society, where seniors are abandoned to their fate and die alone because no one takes care of them. Then there are the widows, young and lonely mothers with children because the men have disappeared, those who have not died in the war but have escaped abroad to avoid compulsory military service...For every young man, there are 12 young women, a huge disproportion...violence is part of the everyday life that went from the street into the home. The main challenge is to rebuild the children's personality. This issue is not just about schooling, but includes psychological support and involves the Church and the parish with targeted activities...The fundamentalist ideology has put down roots in the minds of a part of the population thanks to ignorance, poverty, and a desire to vengeance...[Security issues exist] because of the presence of sleeper cells, ready to strike")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Fr-Ibrahim-talks-about-Aleppo-Christians-and-the-metropolis%E2%80%99s-slow-revival-after-being-paralysed-by-war-41706.html>



South Sudan: Wau

Natalina Andrea Mabu (church coordinator, arrested on or before [August 28, 2017](#) after soldiers attending an UN human rights seminar were sickened by alleged food poisoning from a local hotel, 3 died, 57 were hospitalized; **UPDATE**: reported to have been released on bail)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/62874-AFRICA_SOUTH_SUDAN_Coordinator_of_the_Justice_and_Peace_Commission_accused_of_food_poisoning_released_on_bail#.Wa_x4LKGOM8



Egypt: Sohag province

Pastor Dr Imad Shawky (said there are not enough churches in his province and that most need restoration)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1977&A=32144>



United Kingdom

Jacob Rees-Mogg (aged 48, Member of Parliament, said he supported his church's teachings on marriage and abortion)

Rev Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE:** later wrote to the Times of London "Your cartoon published today displaying Jacob Rees-Mogg as a fetus deserving of abortion for expressing Christian views on contemporary ethical issues, causes the most profound offense. But worse than the offense, is the implication that is presents a new form of Test Act for Catholics and other Christians...Such a cartoon deliberately sends the message that Christian ethical views have no place in the public and political forum and should be both ridiculed and excluded...")

Dan Hitchens (Catholic Herald editor, later wrote "...Considering all the truly evil things which happen in this country – workers paid pitiful wages to make their employers rich, addicts exploited by vampiric drug-dealers, the daily cruelty towards the elderly – it is strange that people get so furious about politicians saying that yes, since you ask, they wouldn't seek to change the law, but as a theoretical matter, they aren't wholly on board with the modern progressive beliefs about sex....Whatever can be said about Catholic teaching, there are at least various well-elaborated philosophical justifications for it; and it does provide a clear rule of life...the liberal sexual ethic amounts to little more than the vague wish: 'As long as no one gets hurt...' This can hardly address the complexity of human experience – both its nobility and its tawdriness...")

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/09/06/video-jacob-rees-mogg-i-oppose-same-sex-marriage-and-abortion-in-all-cases/>

<https://ashenden.org/2017/09/07/a-letter-submitted-to-the-times-for-publication/>

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2017/09/07/the-liberal-rage-at-rees-mogg-hints-at-a-deep-insecurity/>



United States – California: San Francisco

David Daleiden (aged 29; investigative journalist, reported on [July 19, 2017](#) to have been 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; **UPDATE:** reportedly the judge increased the fine to almost \$200,000)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/judge-orders-pro-life-investigator-to-pay-200k-in-fines-over-released-video>

United States - District of Columbia

Amy Coney Barrett (law school professor, mother of 7, federal appellate court nominee, told by Senator Dianne Feinstein "When you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you" [pundits replied that the Senator sounded like Star Wars' Yoda], also questioned by Senator Dick Durban as to whether she was an "Orthodox Catholic")

Chad C Pecknold (theology professor, tweeted that Senator's Feinstein's questioning was "chilling", added "Senators Durbin and Feinstein weren't questioning a judicial nominee, they were holding a Religious Inquisition with extreme prejudice" and "I teach dogma for a living, and can honestly say that even orthodox Catholics aren't nearly so 'dogmatic' as secular progressives")

United States - Michigan

Carrie DeKlyen (aged 37, wife of Nick DeKlyen, mother of six, in a coma from brain cancer, had decided against aggressive treatments due to pregnancy, gave birth to her daughter Life Lynn DeKlyen via surgery)

Life Lynn DeKlyen (newborn daughter of Carrie and Nick DeKlyen)

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/faith-helped-couple-choose-baby-over-chemotherapy-treatment-93100/>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/democrat-senator-rips-catholic-judicial-nominee-the-dogma-lives-loudly-with>

Thursday September 7, 2017



China: Beijing

Gao Zhisheng (aged 53, husband of Geng He, brother of Gao Zhiyi, reported on [November 15, 2016](#) to have disappeared after agents from Beijing arrived at his home in [Shaanxi province](#) and destroyed a copy of his new book, *Year 2017, Stand Up China*, which had been sent him from friends overseas; **UPDATE**: confirmed to be in police custody)

Geng He (wife of Gao Zhisheng, granted asylum in the U.S.; **UPDATE**: said "We finally made contact with the government. They said he has been brought back to Beijing")

<http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/gao-police-09072017170316.html>



Iran

Firouz Khandjani (**UPDATE**: in hiding, described how Christian children are being forced to learn the Quran in school: "Right now [President] Rouhani wants to prove that he is a good Muslim by persecuting Christians. Most of the new Christians are former Muslims")

Iran: Shiraz

Mohammad Vahid Roghangir (detained on [October 12, 2012](#) in a government crackdown that may have detained between 100 and 400 Christians; sentenced to six years in prison on [July 16, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

Bijan Farokhpour Haghighi (**UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

Eskandar Rezaie (**UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

Suroush Saraie (released from prison on [November 10, 2015](#); rearrested, then released in [December 2015](#); detained in [July 2017](#); **UPDATE**: recently transferred to a VEVAK interrogation center)

<http://www.bosnewslife.com/37736-iran-threatens-to-expell-christian-children-from-schools>



Egypt: Barba, Assyut province

Mohrael (newborn daughter of Nour Bakhit Khalil and Azza Gamal, abducted and **murdered**)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/10/latest-attack-copts-egypt/>



Czech Republic: Prague

Cardinal Dominik Duka OP (**UPDATE**: reported to have written in sympathy to the Greek ambassador after the German supermarket chain Lidl removed the cross from the Greek church pictured on some of its packaging "So far, 'only' the falsification of photos has occurred, but there are fears that soon real crosses may be removed even from churches...Their ignorance and suppression of their external expression bears witness of the priorities some businesspeople have")

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/106249.htm>



United Kingdom: London

Archbishop Gregorios Theocharous (aged 88, reported to have complained after the German supermarket chain Lidl removed the cross from the Greek church pictured on some of its packaging “They hurt the Christians — not only the Greeks because it was a Greek church — but [all] the Christians what I read. I hope that many others will protest against this silly decision...It is immoral in my eyes to remove something which has been there for 2,000 year and is the symbol that Christ died on the cross for you, for me, for millions of people”)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/106249.htm>

Friday September 8, 2017



India: Karnal district, Haryana state

UPDATE: Two pastors reportedly may face trial and a 10 year sentence for desecration of Hindu idols, the pastors claim "We are not suicidal" and that the evidence was fabricated

Pastor Bajinder (attacked and beaten by a mob of Hindus during a [November 9, 2014](#) service, arrested, released 5 days later)

Pastor Sanjay (arrested on [July 19, 2017](#) for his involvement in the alleged November 9, 2014 desecration despite the facts that he was not present and did not know Pastor Bajinder)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/indian-pastors-call-for-prayers-to-exonerate-them-from-false-blasphemy-charge>



Nigeria: Ikeja, Lagos state

Fr Daniel Nwankwo (shot outside his church after Mass, hospitalized)

Nigeria: Ancha village, Miango district, Bassa local government area, Plateau state

Twenty Christians were killed and six injured in a revenge attack after the alleged murder of a Muslim child

John Bulus (said “On Saturday, September 2, while we were working on our fields and farms, we saw the Fulanis moving their cattle and families out of their camp, a settlement that is just some few kilometers away from here. So we rushed to them to inquire why the sudden departure from camp. They responded by telling us that one of them was some time ago killed in another village 5 kilometers from our village, hence, their decision to

move away...One of them ran after me into the house, and he stood by the door to my room without entering the room or shooting, and after a few minutes he went out to join his colleagues outside. And just as I was thinking about what to do, I heard sporadic gun shots all over the village. They were shooting everywhere in the village and this lasted for about 25 minutes”)

Sati Ishaya (aged 9, **killed**)

Aveh Ishaya (aged 5, **killed**)

Azumi Monday (aged 3 months, **killed**)

Lami Monday (aged 3, **killed**)

Emmanuel Sunday (aged 6, **killed**)

Ishaya Sunday (aged 8, **killed**)

Friday John (aged 17, **killed**)

Ayo John (aged 10, **killed**)

Deba John (aged 7, **killed**)

Bulus Rohun (aged 50, **killed**)

Laraba Bulus (aged 45, **killed**)

Musa Ishaya (aged 21, **killed**)

Gado Odo (aged 75, **killed**)

Sei Musa (aged 19, **killed**)

Kande Ahmadu (aged 48, **killed**)

Ishaya Ahmadu (aged 40, **killed**)

Bala Ishaya (aged 18, **killed**)

Tina Monday (aged 20, **killed**)

Lami Ishaya (aged 40, **killed**)

Ahmadu Rohun (aged 80, **killed**)

Talatu Gado (aged 60, injured)

Mai'angwa Monday (aged 16, injured)

Talatu John (aged 46, injured)

Monday Ahmadu (aged 24, injured)

Vou Monday (aged 4, injured)

Tina Ahmadu (aged 28, injured)

Rev Samson Olasupo Ayokunle (**UPDATE:** later said “Recently I went to a village called Ancha in Bassa local government of Plateau state where 21 Christians were killed overnight by herdsmen. My church in that village lost 20 members out of the 21 and we gave them a mass burial. It was a gory sight to behold. The most painful and baffling thing about it

was that after that attack, [the herdsmen] came to the same area again and killed another 24 people – with none of them arrested by the enforcement agents. What a complicity! Why are the herdsmen devastating communities without being arrested? Why are they not prosecuted? Why was the source of their ammunition not investigated? Why do they roam about with guns without being arrested?”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/09/muslim-fulani-herdsmen-massacre-20-christians-plateau-state-nigeria/>

<http://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/ssouth-west/242739-catholic-priest-shot-lagos.html>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/10/northern-christians-condemn-killings-plateau-urge-nigeria-government-intervene/>



United States – Michigan: Macomb county

Hadeel Khalasawi (husband of Sumar, father of Mariano and Malano, stepfather of Marcella, immigrated from Iraq at age 4, former teen felon, detained, faces deportation to Iraq and possible death once he arrives)

Sumar (wife of Hadeel Khalasawi, said "[The government] should have deported them from day one after they committed their crimes. If they didn't want them in this country, they should have sent them back, not let them go and after 20 or 30 years come and snatch them away from us and break our hearts...My husband did make mistakes. He paid for his crimes. They let him out. He started a family. And now they just came after we built this life together...Eventually he's going to get killed. My husband has tattoos of Christianity. He's a target there after he goes there")

Mariano (son of Sumar and Hadeel Khalasawi)

Malano (son of Sumar and Hadeel Khalasawi)

Marcella (daughter of Sumar and stepdaughter of Hadeel Khalasawi)

<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/iraqi-christians-helped-donald-trump-win-the-white-house-now-theyre-facing-deportation/article/2176817>

Saturday September 9, 2017



China: Xuzhou, Jiangsu province

Pastor Wei Zhelan (required to fill out an 'Underground Christian Church Key Staff [Leaders] Information Registration Form' with her personal information, commented on the

government proposal to merge her church with an official church “It’s too far away. We can’t go there. I’m over 60 now, and I can’t go there. It’s dozens of miles away”)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/09/jiangsu-authorities-invoke-fear-with.html>



United States - Michigan

Carrie DeKlyen (aged 37, wife of Nick DeKlyen, mother of six, in a coma from brain cancer, had decided against aggressive treatments due to pregnancy, gave birth to her daughter Life Lynn DeKlyen via surgery on [September 6, 2017](#); **UPDATE: died**)

Nick DeKlyen (husband of Carrie DeKlyen, father of six, said "We love the Lord with everything in us. We talked about it, prayed about it...Under no circumstance do we believe you should take a child’s life. She sacrificed her life for the child")

<http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/faith-helped-couple-choose-baby-over-chemotherapy-treatment-93100/>

Sunday September 10, 2017



Philippines: Manila

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (wrote in a pastoral letter stating "the country cannot be governed by violence...With pain and horror we continue to receive news of murders every day, largely victims of suspected drug dealers or drug addicts. We cannot allow the destruction of life to become an ordinary fact. We cannot rule the nation with homicides, this is not human", ordered all churches to ring their bells every night at 8 PM to remember those killed)

Fr Benjamin Alforque SCJ (contrasted the extrajudicial killings with the government's acceptance of the wealth of the Marcos family "The Marcoses get the red carpet while the government deprives drug suspects of due process")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/church-leaders-criticize-dutertes-stance-on-marcos-heirs/80215>



China: Zhuhai, Guangdong province

Enoch (aged 22, convert, programmer, reported to have said that his house church has remodeled its apartment "We are trying to look more like a family that are here to chat and drink tea so no one will report us to the police...I'm really afraid it will be shut down one day. At the state church, I felt like I was listening to a lecture. But at the family church, people know about each other and love each other", added that the church has divided its WeChat social media group into several smaller groups to be less noticeable to the police)

<http://www.scmp.com/news/china/policies-politics/article/2110433/chinas-underground-churches-head-cover-crackdown-closes>



India: Pidal village, Haryana state

Two pastors were arrested on forced conversion charges, released, charges dropped

Pastor Santok (said "We were simply sharing the gospel and had the doors open at our church for anyone who wanted to come in. We were not asking people to change their religion that is their choice. We did not give any gifts or any money that is a total lie")

Pastor J P Kalyan (guest homilist)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/two-pastors-narrowly-avoid-anti-conversion-lawsuit>



Pakistan: Lahore, Punjab province

Mary James Gill (Member of the Provincial Assembly; **UPDATE**: criticized a government advertisement calling for people to not throw trash in the streets during a Christian religious festival since Christian sanitation workers would not be available to pick it up)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-upset-over-controversial-pilgrimage-advert/80233>



Egypt: Ezbat Al-Forn village, Minya province

Fr Daniel Babawy (celebrated the Divine Liturgy after security forces allowed the reopening of his church under guard, some local Muslims offered congratulations)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/egypt-coptic-churches-closed-security-reopen/>

Monday September 11, 2017



Philippines: Caloocan

Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (**UPDATE**: threatened with arrest for obstruction of justice for hiding 2 children who witnessed the extrajudicial murder of a criminal by police)

Philippines: Manila

Fr Albert Alejo SJ (**UPDATE**: said "In the so-called crusade against drugs launched by President Duterte, extrajudicial killings continue at a pace of about a thousand per month. The poor are those most affected. To understand the seriousness of the phenomenon, one must bear in mind that under the dictatorship of Marcos, one of the darkest periods of national history, there were 250 a year. We have a serial killer president and the state is becoming a state-killer. As Christians we cannot remain indifferent")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62893->

[ASIA PHILIPPINES Catholic leaders you cannot rule the country with murders#.Wbff8rKGOM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62893-ASIA_PHILIPPINES_Catholic_leaders_you_cannot_rule_the_country_with_murders#.Wbff8rKGOM8)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/scared-drug-war-witnesses-seek-church-protection/80230>



Nepal

The government enacted a law banning religious conversions, which will go into effect in August 2018

Bishop Paul Simick (said "We did not expect that the country would curtail international practices since Nepal is a member of several treaties and conventions on human and religious rights...Now there is fear that charges will be levelled at priests, who do not ask anyone to convert but help people to conduct religious practices. There is the possibility that the right of priests to exercise their faith and duties will be curtailed")

Pastor Chari Bahadur Gahatraj (**UPDATE**: said "This code aims to control religious freedom and freedom of conversion...We strongly condemn such control in every form. Minorities were forced to follow traditional Hindu practices. But because of discrimination and oppression, people are interested in Christianity...We do not force anyone or ask them to change religion. They come to join us and we cannot deny them entry into the Christian community")

Rev Bharat Giri (said "This is a conspiracy against the increasing Christian population. But we will not stop our evangelical work, which is our priestly duty. God will defend us")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Nepal%E2%80%99s-new-criminal-code-punishes-all-religious-conversions-41746.html>



Pakistan: Faisalabad

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer of the employer's brother's sexual harassment and his demands she convert to Islam, her employer told her she should convert and marry him, resigned her position the next day)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sri-lankan-airport-officials-hold-pakistani-christian-rape-victim-fleeing-forced-conversion-in-deten>



Iran: Tehran

A married couple were been arrested for praying at a funeral

Mehrdad Houshmand (convert, husband of Sarah Nemati)

Sarah Nemati (convert, wife of Mehrdad Houshmand, told her husband would be charged with 'corruption on earth' [which carries the death penalty], advised to divorce him)

<https://www.ncr-iran.org/en/news/human-rights/23623-iran-the-situation-of-arrested-christian-couple-is-still-unclear>



Egypt: Barba, Assyut province

Azza Gamal (aged 27, wife of Nour Bakhit Khalil, mother of Mohrael, Mariam and Martha, arrested for the [September 7, 2017](#) murder of Mohrael, beaten by police)

Mariam (aged 2, sister of Mohrael)

Martha (aged 2, sister of Mohrael)

Nour Bakhit Khalil (said "My wife is a very good woman. She is a religious person who has a strong relationship with God and could not do something like killing her daughter. She and I were very happy when God blessed us with this little girl. Mohrael was very beautiful and cute and a great gift from God to us and we loved her so much")

Fr Philemon Abdallah Mashreqi (said "the police's indifference, inaction and complicity gives an opportunity for these criminals to continue with their aggressive acts against us. As

long as no legal action is taken, these attacks will not end but increase over time. We see that we have no rights here and that the law does not apply”)

Rev Ezzat Salib (said "the people of our village will contribute even a small part to pay for these costs" to legally defend Azza Gamal, added “Christians in the west of Barba village have been targeted by thugs and gangs since 2013. Many Christians have been kidnapped and their families had to pay these big amounts of money as ransom for releasing them. If the family is a simple family and doesn't have the ability to pay the ransom, relatives and friends help and raise the money between them. These kidnapping cases happen repeatedly and are increasing because those kidnappers enjoy complete impunity”)

Egypt: Ezbat El-Sheikh Nageim village, Minya province

Bassem Abdel-Malak Fahim (aged 25, home surrounded by a mob that protested a Facebook post he made after the May 26, 2017 terror attack on Christians outside a monastery, had apologized for any misunderstanding three days earlier)

Mina Younan Samuel (aged 25, shared Bassem Abdel-Malak Fahim Facebook post, fled the village with his father days earlier)

Fr Gawargious Abdel-Saied Aziz (called for security forces to protect the Copts)

Adel Girgis (said two Copts were injured by angry Muslims)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/egypt-copts-face-arrest-facebook-post-leads-muslims-riot/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/10/latest-attack-copts-egypt/>



Nigeria

Bulus (aged 32, alias, convert, reported to have been beaten, threatened with death, jailed on false allegations that he stole livestock from his family, said “I remembered that even Jesus, who didn't sin, suffered. He died a painful death on the Cross, alongside criminals. I realized I had to live as He did and take up my cross. From the moment I decided that, my burdens were lifted and I saw how God gave me enough strength for every day to preach the Good News also in prison”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/bulus-fulani-family-jailed-false-charges-hes-christian/>

Tuesday September 12, 2017



Philippines: Manila

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Soncuaco Pabillo (**UPDATE:** said "Any person who is said to be a drug suspect in the eyes of the government must have an opportunity to defend themselves in a right and lawful court with due process, accessing the judicial system. The government cannot apprehend people without proper investigation and facts... The Philippine government has no moral responsibility nor political right to kill people on the basis of mere suspicions. What about people's inalienable human right to defend their position with due process?...The government's relentless war against drug is nothing but extra-judicial killing, which is uncalled for. It is nothing but an 'abuse of power'")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Duterte%E2%80%99s-war-on-drugs-is-unjustified,-says-Mgr-Pabillo-41763.html>



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (**UPDATE:** detained while travelling to a Christian training conference in Hong Kong, released and sent home)

Jiang Rong (wife of a pastor, not detained while travelling to a Christian training conference in Hong Kong)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/09/pastor-detained-for-traveling-to.html>



Bangladesh: Chittagong

Archbishop Moses M Costa (**UPDATE:** said "Last year a thousand Bengalis attacked a parish in Chittagong, because many miles away two business men had been killed and we Christians were accused of having had something to do with it...The government does not acknowledge their [i.e. minorities] rightful existence and ignores them, so that they have scarcely any possibility of development...[take shipbreaking for example:] This work is carried out in very hazardous conditions and claims innumerable human lives. But I am not permitted to visit this place, because the authorities have refused me permission")

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1505178316.html>



Yemen

Fr Tom Uzhunnalil SDB (aged 57, 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: freed from captivity, has left the country)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fr.-Tom-Uzhunnalil-is-freed-41761.html>



Israel: Jerusalem

Bishop Attallah Hanna (aged 52; **UPDATE** spat upon and cursed by more than 20 Jewish extremists)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1983&A=32259>



Belgium

Br. Rene Stockman (**UPDATE:** issued a statement opposing his hospital board's latest vote in favor of euthanasia "where does a board of directors of an organization that specializes in mental health care, but made up of jurists and economists, and without a single expert in the field, get the knowledge to give its opinion on such a matter? Some of them, with all due respect for their person, have never had first-hand experience with a psychiatric patient, let alone cared for one or treated one. And have they listened to the many objections that were raised exactly by these experts in the field, and which they continue to raise, or are they stuck in their ideological discourse, supported by a few enlightened ethicists and caught up in social trends...When those in charge of the Organization now openly claim to follow Jesus while distancing themselves from the vision of the Vatican, the Belgian bishops, and the General Administration of the Congregation of the Brothers of Charity because, supposedly, in their eyes, they 'live far removed from reality', then they are sadly mistaken and this is more about pride, arrogance, and ideologization at the expense of the lives of those most in need of care. Let us call a spade a spade: euthanasia is still killing a fellow human being, even if it happens with the utmost due care. How in the name of God is this supposed to be compatible with our charism of charity, the charism of life?")

<http://brothersofcharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Jesus-did-not-follow-the-rules-yet-to-give-life-not-take-it.pdf>



United Kingdom: Isle of Wright

Sally Rowe (wife of Nigel Rowe, reported that she had been told that her six year old son could be disciplined if he could not accept the transgender change of a classmate, in reply said that the school's promotion of gender theory was psychologically damaging of the other students and therefore constituted abuse under the law)

Nigel Rowe (husband of Sally Rowe, reported to have said "I cannot contemplate my six-year-old son being disciplined and stigmatized as a bully simply because he believes that another six-year old born as a boy, is actually a boy...the school's behavior has created a direct clash between our family's beliefs, and the imposition of this new ideology. We, and our children, are being bullied into accepting a new moral framework which strongly conflicts with what we really believe")

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/parents-to-challenge-church-schools-transgender-policy>



Canada: Toronto

Mary Wagner (aged 43, arrested on [December 12, 2016](#) after entering the waiting room of an abortion clinic in an effort to persuade the clients to leave, refused bail conditions that required her to avoid entering abortion clinics; convicted of mischief and breach of probation on [August 15, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: released with time served, read letters to the court including one thanking her from a woman who she had persuaded to keep her baby on the day of her arrest)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/mom-tells-judge-my-baby-is-alive-because-of-mary-wagner>

Wednesday September 13, 2017



India: Rehaladag village, Pasarar, Latehar district, Jharkhand state

Sajan K George (President of the Global Council of Indian Christians; **UPDATE**: described how 13 indigent Christian tribal families were denied food assistance after they refused to pay a tax to fund a Hindu festival)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Jharkhand,-poor-tribal-denied-food-rations-because-Christians-42040.html>



Pakistan: Attock

Sher Dil (son of Izhaq Masih, abducted and sexually assaulted by 7 Muslim men, forced to recite kalmas [Islamic articles of faith], threatened with death, released)

Izhaq Masih (father of Sher Dil, sanitation worker, took his son to the police to file criminal charges, the police performed their own medical exam and wrote on their report that no sexual assault occurred)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-boy-sexually-assaulted-police-taking-sides-with-guilty-party/>

Thursday September 14, 2017



Australia: Melbourne

Karina Okotel (aged 37, attorney, wife of David, mother of Hannah, David, and Grace, daughter of Sri Lankan immigrants, said of her opposition to same sex marriage “I have even been told to go back to my own country, which is difficult given that I was born in Australia. However, the discrimination and hate I have faced, just by querying whether we should be legalizing same-sex marriage, has been like nothing I have experienced before...I wonder what life will be like for my own kids should they form a view that supports traditional marriage. To protect them, will I have to caution them to keep their views to themselves, not to ask questions and not speak up?”)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Australian-politician-defending-religious-freedom-says-she-faces-bigotry-worse-than-racism>



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Li (reported to have said “Many Sunday schools in Wenzhou were shut down...Many teachers sent messages to their colleagues in group chats in order to prevent children from attending religious gatherings”)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/09/china-persecutes-christians-for.html>



India: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Cardinal Telesphore P Toppo (**UPDATE**: reported to have been burned in effigy at a BJP rally)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: reported to have written a letter to Prime Minister Modi "I am making this appeal to you with much sorrow and anguish but also with hope. You must be aware of the recent happenings in Jharkhand, a State ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party. You might be aware that there is spiraling hatred being created by the Chief Minister [Governor] belonging to your Party, which if not controlled immediately, could take the State and its people down the streets of violence and hate... Here is the burning of effigy of probably the most prominent and respected religious leader in Jharkhand. Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo, as you would be aware, is a non-controversial leader, respected not only in Christian circles but also in civil society and by Tribals and non-Tribals...History shows us that hatred which begins as a tiny spark can engulf into an unstoppable fire. As you know the burning of effigies can very well turn into physical violence...I appeal to you, honorable Prime Minister, with trust and hope to intervene and curb the spread of hate created by the Chief Minister of Jharkhand. Jharkhandis and Jharkhand deserves better. If the Chief Minister is unable to control his ideological hatred, then it is time for him to go")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Jharkhand,-Card.-Toppo-'in-flames'.-Msgr-Mascarenhas:-curb-the-hatred-of-the-chief-minister-41778.html>



Pakistan: Lahore

James Nadeem (brother of Najma and Samreen, accused on or before [July 10, 2016](#) of sending a blasphemous poem via social media; arrested on [July 14, 2016](#), case likely triggered by his marriage to a Muslim woman who converted to Christianity, the pastor who baptized his wife has fled into hiding; **UPDATE**: sentenced to death)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-man-sentenced-to-death-for-alleged-blasphemous-whats-app-message>



Uzbekistan: Yangiyul district

Pastor Fathulla Ibrahimov (husband of Nargiza Ibrahimova, home in [Tashkent](#) raided by police without warrant on [August 23, 2017](#), property seized, detained, refused to sign the police report; **UPDATE**: fined US\$1,797)

Nargiza Ibrahimova (wife of Pastor Fathulla Ibrahimov; **UPDATE:** fined US\$1,797)

Kholiskhon Nishanova (home in [Gulbahor](#) raided by police on [August 23, 2017](#), property seized; **UPDATE:** fined US\$72)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2341



Egypt

Father ‘S’ (reported to have said “Because I advocate for these [abducted Christian] girls, I received threats. If I wouldn’t stop, they would take my daughter too. But I fear no one, only God. Their threats weren’t going to stop me”, during the 2011 attempted abduction of his daughter he fired his gun in the air: “The kidnappers got scared and ran away”, added that he has recovered only 8 girls of the approximately 150 abducted in his area in the last 10 years “Every girl who doesn’t return feels like a daughter I am losing... We are one Body. If one suffers, we all do...But I believe my God is a God of miracles. We pray for these girls in church, while our tears flow. I pray also for their kidnappers, that God touches their hearts”)

Egypt: Ezbat El-Sheikh Nageim village, Minya province

Adel Girgis (**UPDATE:** said “At 9pm, a great deal of Muslim villagers gathered and began to attack us. The situation was very terrible for all of us. They attacked Coptic-owned homes randomly, they hurled bricks and stones at the homes, destroying the windows and doors of these homes, destroying and looting the properties”, three Copts were injured, many shops and automobiles destroyed)

Bassem Abdel-Malak Fahim aged 25; **UPDATE:** fled the village, later posted on Facebook “I did not mean to offend any religious or public figures, but rather terrorism and terrorists, the enemies of the homeland. I deleted that post from that date, and I did not write anything after it. I affirm my love and respect for all Christians and Muslims, and everyone in my dear country”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/egypt-ex-kidnapper-admits-get-paid-every-copt-christian-girl-bring/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/egypt-copts-face-arrest-facebook-post-leads-muslims-riot/>



Nigeria: Akure, Ondo state

Pastor Benaiah Moses (complained after a convention center refused to allow a Christian prayer meeting "This is quite unfortunate. Imagine, they sent us out after they had assured us of using the venue, giving an excuse that the place is reserved for dinner...Can this ever

happen with other religions? I don't see any reason why they wouldn't allow us to use the hall this morning, or in the least, give us an alternative", the delegates held their prayer meeting outside the center under the scorching sun)

Bishop Eddy Bebor (said there was a deliberate effort to prevent the prayer meeting at the convention center)

Nigeria: Jos, Plateau state

Muslims attacked Christians in reprisal for the targeted killing of Muslims by Biafrian separatists, at least three were killed

Jerry Binkur (final-year college student, **killed**)

Prof Timothy O Oyetunde (postgraduate dean, attacked in his automobile, escaped with minor injuries, another professor was stabbed in the chest, automobile set afire)

Prof Ema Ema (stabbed in the head while in Prof Timothy O Oyetunde's automobile)

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201709150082.html>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/nigeria-calm-returns-to-jos-after-eruption-of-violence-that-threatened-the-nation/>



United Kingdom: Lincoln

Daniel Courney (aged 33, U.S. citizen, convicted for use of 'threatening and discriminatory language' while street preaching)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/christian-street-preacher-cleared-of-hate-speech-conviction>

Friday September 15, 2017



Australia: Perth

Pastor Margaret Court (former professional tennis player, denied re-election to her tennis club due to her support of traditional marriage, said "I think it's sad. You don't have the freedom of speech today to really defend yourself")

<https://thewest.com.au/news/wa/same-sex-marriage-critic-margaret-court-hits-back-over-cottesloe-tennis-club-dumping-ng-b88600348z>



Vietnam: Thua Thien Hue province

Br Stanislas Tran Minh Vong OSB (aged 81; **UPDATE**: said the current drought has led his fellow monks to again ask the government to return a seized reservoir to their monastery "We are very worried about our orange gardens that are in danger because water supplies have become scarce")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/scarce-water-threatens-benedictines-livelihood/80231>



India: Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh state

A Hindu mob attacked a parochial school after an 11 year old student killed himself and reportedly left a note accusing his teacher of bullying

Bishop Gerald Almeida (**UPDATE**: said "This is not a one-off incident. Christian schools often become the target of mob violence in northern Indian states, where Christians are a minority...They are out to tarnish the image of Christian missions and attack our institutions to scare people away from Christians and to intimidate missionaries...We always offer quality and cheap education to children in remote rural areas and in towns where the focus is on the poor and socially weaker sections. But many in the Hindu groups are opposed to educating lower caste people and making them equal to the higher caste in education")

Christy Abraham (general secretary of the state chapter of the Rashtriya Isai Mahasangh [National Christian Federation], said police concoct false allegations of sexual abuse against school managers and principals)

Shibu Thomas (Persecution Relief; **UPDATE**: said "This is a hard time for Christian education institutions. Christian schools are the only place for the poor to get educated. This is inviting the ire of those who always want the hegemony of the Hindu upper caste")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/hindu-hardliners-try-to-damage-mission-schools-image/80407>



Eritrea

Ruth (wife, mother of three, husband in prison for his faith, reported to have said: "I always worry and wonder how he is. I also find it unbearable to see how my three young children miss him. They always cry for baba. They sometimes perform poorly in school because they miss him so much. It is so hard to care for them by myself")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/eritrean-christian-single-mothers-isolation-church-leader-husband-imprisoned/>



United States - Michigan

Steve Tennes (farmer, husband of Bridget Tennes, banned in [March 2017](#) from a farmer's market in East Lansing due to his Facebook posts in support of traditional marriage and refusal to host same sex weddings on his farm; **UPDATE**: a Federal court issued an injunction against the municipal ordinance that banned him)

Bridget Tennes (wife of Steve Tennes)

<https://stream.org/judge-suspends-citys-ban-farmers-marriage-views/>

https://www.scribd.com/document/359013890/Country-Mills-vs-East-Lansing-opinion-and-order-granting-motion-for-preliminary-injunction#from_embed

Saturday September 16, 2017



Philippines: Bato

Fr Teresito 'Chito' Suganob (abducted by Islamic militants along with 13 parishioners in [Marawi, Mindanao](#) on [May 23, 2017](#), cathedral burned, 9 other Christians shot dead; **UPDATE**: rescued from captivity by the Philippine military)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Marawi:-Fr.-Chito,-free-after-4-months-41807.html>



India: Gondi village, Simdega district, Jharkhand state

Six Christians were arrested and jailed for a month after praying for a sick Hindu woman

Sajan Majhi (aged 25, beaten)

Kalender Majhi (aged 20, beaten)

Dasrath Karketta (aged 35, cancer survivor, said “The police hit Sajan Majhi and Kalender Majhi repeatedly. They didn’t give us a chance to speak. If they inquired of us, we could have explained what happened exactly, but they didn’t, instead, they scarred the face of

Kalender Majhi. He bled also...We spent one month in jail joyously – we sang hymns, read the Bible, prayed and worshipped together in jail. We shared the gospel with other inmates in the district jail. There also, people came to Christ. We strongly felt the Lord was using us for His work and were happy about it”)

James Ba (aged 30)

Balmuni Kumari (aged 19, university student, arrested illegally as Indian law required female detainees to be processed by female police after dark, beaten, family threatened with expulsion from their village, later said “No female police constable came for me. I was the only woman, and it was frightening. I trusted the Lord...Even in the prison, I prayed and worshipped with other Christians. Every Sunday believing sisters from outside visited us and led us in prayer and worship”)

Jagdish Majhi (aged 50)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/christians-india-praise-god-spice-police-brutality-month-jail/>

Sunday September 17, 2017



Australia: Canberra

Madeline (aged 18, fired from her job at a children’s party store after she posted on Facebook that she would vote against same sex marriage in the national referendum)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-woman-fired-revealing-shell-vote-no-australias-gay-marriage-referendum-199921/>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/18-year-old-aussie-loses-her-job-for-saying-its-ok-to-vote-no-on-same-sex-m>



Pakistan: Faisalabad

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer on [September 11, 2017](#) of the employer's brother's sexual harassment and his demands she convert to Islam, her employer told her she should convert and marry him, resigned her position the next day; **UPDATE:** visited at her home on [September 17, 2017](#) by her employer, her brother, and three imams who demanded she convert, family threatened with false blasphemy charges and death by arson)

Shamim Masih (aged 69, mother of Sidra Masih, threatened with death)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sri-lankan-airport-officials-hold-pakistani-christian-rape-victim-fleeing-forced-conversion-in-detention>



Nigeria: Oguurute, Enugu Ezike, Enugu state

Bishop Godfrey Igwebuike Onah (issued a pastoral letter in [Nsukka, Enugu state](#) on [April 29, 2016](#) entitled *Stop This Madness!* concerning the [April 25, 2016](#) attack by Fulani gunmen in [Nimbo](#); **UPDATE**: denounced the destruction a mosque by possible Biafrian separatists, visited the local imam to express his condolences)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/62950-AFRICA_NIGERIA_The_Bishop_of_Nsukka_condemns_the_attack_on_a_Mosque_Fears_of_independent_reawakening#.WcUVNlKGOM8

Monday September 18, 2017



Vietnam: Hoang Mai, Nghe An province

John Nguyen Van Oai (aged 36, husband, arrested in [Nghe An](#) on [January 19, 2017](#) on fabricated charges of violating probation; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment and 4 years' house arrest)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Ho%C3%A0ng-Mai,-Catholic-activist-Nguy%E1%BB%85n-V%C4%83n-Oai-convicted-again-41844.html>



Cambodia: Phnom Penh

Twenty-nine Montagnard tribal people from Vietnam have been denied asylum for religious persecution

Rlan Lap (aged 40, Vietnamese citizen, had spent years in a Vietnamese prison, said “I am very scared, I am very nervous. I know when they take me back to Vietnam, they are not going to treat me well”)

Y Rin Kpa (aged 47, had spent 9 years in prison in Vietnam)

By Un (aged 40, church leader, father of six, said “I urged the people to protest for freedom of religion, ownership over the land, and to demand authorities to allow us to build a church”, was attested, beaten, and tortured)

Siu Loih (aged 60, spent 4 years in prison in Vietnam)

<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/national/well-founded-fears-montagnards-returning-vietnam-speak-dread-what-awaits-them>



India

Pastor Gunsingh (reported to have been beaten by Hindu radicals, motorbike damaged, said “More than 70 Christians from Kadhalkogaom stopped meeting for any kind of Christian gathering, and I was strongly advised not to enter into the village”)

Mansingh (reported to have been beaten by Hindu radicals, deafened in one ear, suffered a partial hearing loss in the other ear)

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/09/18/despite-persecution-in-india-i-will-live-for-him-alone/>



United Nations: Geneva, Switzerland

Farrukh Saif Harrison (attorney, said that Christians are loyal Pakistani citizens, “Since 1987 to 2017, so far 222 cases of Blasphemy laws have been registered against Christians. This law has been used to settle down the personal vendetta against the oppressed and persecuted Christian community...By using Blasphemy law, many Christian Colonies [ghettos] and villages were set on fire by the fanatic Muslims. Shanti Nagar, Baminwala, Koriyan, Christian Colony Gojra and Badmi Bahag are few of such places which were destroyed and ransacked by the Muslim fundamentalists”

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christians-are-loyal-citizens-of-pakistan-pakistani-lawyer-reiterates-at-un/>

Tuesday September 19, 2017



Australia: Brisbane

Pastor John Gill (church threatened with arson after it posted a billboard supporting traditional marriage)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/evangelical-church-threatened-set-on-fire-amid-lgbt-outrage-at-marriage-billboard-199760/>



Thailand: Bangkok

Maherwar Ishaq (Pakistani asylum applicant, subjected to an attempted rape by a Pakistani embassy official when she applied for a passport renewal on [December 26, 2016](#);

UPDATE: threatened by Pakistani embassy officials with deportation and death unless she drops her complaint against the embassy, Canadian Christians have been working to secure her asylum there)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/depraved-officials-of-embassy-in-pakistan-threaten-christian-girl-to-stay-silent-on-sexual-harassmen>



Pakistan: Malkhanwala, Faisalabad

Afzad Masih (father of three, son of Safia Bibi, abducted by a neighbor who has threatened to kill him if the family does not vacate their home)

Safia Bibi (mother of Afzad Masih, husband disabled, said "the only purpose of [the abductor] Ullah is to occupy our home, as he has already occupied two other Christian homes. We are very poor and we have no strength to oppose the judges, especially because he is very influential and has power. We work all day in a brickwork and we only have a small property. We do not want our home to be occupied")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Faisalabad,-Christian-kidnapped-by-a-Muslim-landowner:-They-want-his-home-41925.html>



Kazakhstan: Oskemen

Dmitry Vedyakin (**UPDATE:** excused from military service after the government reversed itself and accepted his status as a church minister)

Date: September 19, 2017

Location:

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2333



Egypt

Girgis Nazir (reported to have been **shot dead** by a Muslim neighbor during a disagreement)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1985&A=32294>



Mali

Sr Gloria Cecilia Narvaez Argoti (Colombian citizen, abducted in **Koutiala** on **February 7, 2017**;
UPDATE: reported to have developed health issues with a leg and kidney)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62930->

[AMERICA COLOMBIA Health problems for the missionary nun kidnapped in Mali in February#.WcEgbLKGOM8](#)

Wednesday September 20, 2017



China: Hong Kong

Anthony Lam Sui-ki (**UPDATE**: said that the new 10,000 page religious regulations order published by the government showed that public consultations with Christians had been ignored with the aim to achieve total control of religion)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/total-control-is-behind-chinas-revised-religious-regulations/80265>



India: Mohanpur village, Guna district, Madhya Pradesh state

The state government closed a 20 year old Catholic college allegedly for lacking permits and title to its land

Fr Siljo Kidanganv (college administrator, reported to have said the government "received pressure from extremist Hindu groups and closed the school, arguing that our certificate lacked the signature of the district authority. But the Church bought land from the local population following all legal formalities. Now because of a small matter the government has taken possession of the property")

Fr Maria Stephen (said "What worries us most and concerns us is the way the closure took place. Police arrived at night with five jeeps full of members of the Rashdriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] Hindu paramilitary group, and VHP [Vishva Hindu Parishad, Hindu nationalists, leader of Hindutva ideology]. This scared the children...The behavior of officials dictates that they are not on the side of the poor but the rich. It is horrible to see welfare and good education to poor children shut down")

Bishop Anthony Chirayath (**UPDATE:** reported to have said police "found that the alleged accusation of converting 200 people is false. Police officers have also verified that property really belongs to the Church, so there is nothing illegal about the land on which the structure is built. They only want to attack us...[the goal] is to drive out Christians from this area. There are just two Christian families here and yesterday one of them told me they received threats, now lives in fear")

Archbishop Leo Cornelio (**UPDATE:** reported to have said there had been "harassment against Christians and an anti-Christian atmosphere surrounding our mission. This is a land dispute. And it is also a question of Ghar Wapsi, that is to return to the religion of origin. But tribals have never been Hindus. So the [nationalist]'s claim to return the land to the people is unfounded and only responds to the goal of tormenting Christians")

India: Madhya Pradesh state

The state government has ordered all public schools to require students to say Jai Hind [hail India] when attendance is taken, Hind is a sectarian pro-Hindu word for India - the official non-sectarian word is Bharat

Bishop Anthony Chirayath (**UPDATE:** reported to have said he had not received the order and would think about implementing it, added "It is not good for a healthy democracy to force such orders on students")

Fr Maria Stephen (**UPDATE:** reported to have said "This is more or less a cultural invasion")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Catholic-college-closed-down-in-Madhya-Pradesh.-Bishop-of-Sagar:-They-want-to-drive-out-Christians-41829.html>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Madhya-Pradesh,-Catholics-and-Protestants-denounce-Hindutva-targeting-of-the-poor.-41840.html>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/forcing-patriotic-slogan-on-indian-schools-criticized/80290>



Pakistan: Faisalabad

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer on [September 11, 2017](#) of the employer's brother's sexual harassment and his demands she convert to Islam, her employer told her she should convert and marry him, resigned her position the next day; visited at her home on [September 17, 2017](#) by her employer, her brother, and three imams who demanded she convert, family threatened with false blasphemy charges and death by arson; **UPDATE:** abducted by three men on [September 20, 2017](#) while on the way to a job interview, raped, forced under threat of death to convert, released, police refused to take any action, placed in a safe house by her pastor)

Shamim Masih (aged 69, mother of Sidra Masih, threatened with death on [September 17, 2017](#); **UPDATE:** brought her daughter to the police)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sri-lankan-airport-officials-hold-pakistani-christian-rape-victim-fleeing-forced-conversion-in-detention>



Iraq: Basra

Archbishop Habib Hormouz al-Naufali (**UPDATE:** said that there are only 300 families left in his eparchy [diocese], of its 15 churches only 4 are open, requested that a statue of Mary the mother of Jesus be moved from a public park to church property)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-statue-of-Our-Lady-removed-in-Basra-to-avoid-tensions-between-religious-communities-41836.html>



Israel: Beit Jimal

Archbishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo (**UPDATE:** condemned the vandalism of St. Stephen's church [a traditional site of the tomb of the saint]: "Vandals broke into the church and destroyed the crosses, the statue of Our Lady and the stained glass, as well as the faces of the saints...Perhaps, Jewish extremists did it, but we do not know this for sure. At present, there is no evidence, but it is the same kind of background that led to the attacks in Tabgha and other Christian sites in the Holy Land")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Mgr-Marcuzzo,-the-attack-against-St-Stephen%E2%80%99s-Church-in-Beit-Jimal-is-a-sign-of-fanaticism-41846.html>



Uganda: Nanoko village

Magale Hamidu (aged 20, convert, beaten by his family for his conversion, threatened with death, hospitalized)

Pastor Joseph Kisense (sheltered Magale Hamidu after his hospitalization, has received threats)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/10/muslim-father-uganda-drives-son-home-becoming-christian/>



United States – Michigan: Jenison

Carrie DeKlyen (aged 37, wife of Nick DeKlyen, mother of six, **died of brain cancer** on **September 9, 2017**, had decided against aggressive treatments due to pregnancy)

Life Lynn DeKlyen (aged 14 days, daughter of Carrie and Nick DeKlyen, born **September 6, 2017; UPDATE: died**)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/heartbreaking-baby-whose-mother-declined-cancer-treatment-dies>

Thursday September 21, 2017



China: Gaizhou, Liaoning province

Fr Fei Jisheng (aged 41, abducted by authorities in **November 2015**, released; detained on **June 6, 2016** for cross-border evangelization; released in **July 2016**; arrested in **Fushun, Liaoning province** on **October 18, 2016** on charges that he stole a money box from a home for the elderly, Christians believe he was arrested for his evangelization work; **UPDATE:** sentenced to 18 months' imprisonment in a closed trial, had been denied visitations while detained)

He Xianmin (sentenced to 1 year probation)

China: Nanyang, Henan province

Bai Fengju (farmer, land seized on **June 5, 2016** in an attempt to build 'temples'; **UPDATE:** threatened with death along with his family for harvesting peanuts on his land)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-priest-gets-jail-time-for-theft-supporters-say-he-was-framed/80303>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/09/christian-family-threatened-with-death.html>



India: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Fr Michael Kerketta SJ (said in response to the [September 5, 2017](#) signing of the state's anti-conversion law "The measure affects non-Hindu religious communities like Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, and other local communities. It is our duty to denounce an injustice that violates the freedom of conscience and religion and is against the Constitution...Hindu extremist groups in the state of Jharkhand are strong and have ample space in society. In past days anti-Christian demonstrations in Ranchi and violent militants shook the city. Some Christians are in prison for false accusations of having promoted conversions")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62944->

[ASIA INDIA Anti conversion law in Jharkhand will give rise to violence and religious polarization#.WcPBW7KGOM8](#)



Ireland: Dublin

Patrick McCrystal (director of Human Life International, spoke after threats forced a hotel to cancel hosting a pro-life conference "Who decides who may speak in Ireland? This is an attack on the very foundation of democracy in our country. These women are highly respected in their fields. Yet an angry mob have decided that only certain voices are allowed to be heard in Ireland")

<http://www.independent.ie/irish-news/news/antiabortion-group-left-fuming-after-hotel-cancels-their-booking-over-intimidation-36155799.html>

Friday September 22, 2017



China: Xinning, Hubei province

Pastor Xu Shizhen (mother of Xu Yuqing, grandmother of Xu Shouwang, received notice on [August 23, 2017](#) from officers to stop public preaching, said she will not comply; **UPDATE:** detained)

Xu Yuqing (mother of Xu Shouwang, daughter of Pastor Xu Shizhen, detained)

Xu Shouwang (aged 3, son of Xu Yuqing, grandson of Pastor Xu Shizhen, detained)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/10/christian-women-three-year-old-taken.html>



Pakistan: Rawalpindi

Muslim neighbors filed a police report demanding the closure of a church after threatening parishioners with guns and disrupting services

Pastor Patris Salamat

James Allah Dita

Javed Youhana (parishioner, described by Pastor Patris Salamat: “he used to attend the Sunday services since 1999 but he feels himself insecure while going to church since the Muslim in the neighborhood have threatened the Christians”)

Basharat Khokher (parishioner, activist, said “I live nearby but attend the service on regular bases with my family, since the attack on church has created sense of insecurity in me and many others. We live under constant traumatized since the attacks begun on Pakistan on worship places by the extremists. For the most time, when I go to church I fear anything can happen anytime and I feel whether I will go back home or not”)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christians-fear-of-attending-sunday-service-due-to-the-threats-of-muslims-living-in-the-neighborhood/>



Kazakhstan

Pretrial investigations reportedly underway of four Christian conscientious objectors

Adilzhan Iskakov

Dmitry Vedyakin

Kaken Dostayev

Tlek Zhumagazinov

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2317



Sudan: Omdurman

Mahjoub Abotrin (church elder, arrested for his refusal to cooperate with 'church leaders' who were appointed by the government, interrogated, released, another leader was also arrested and released)

Rev Kowa Shamal (**UPDATE**: said “We cannot allow them [government-appointed committee members] to take over the church”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/09/sudan-detains-interrogates-elder-campaign-take-church/>



United Kingdom: London

Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev (said at The Christian Future of Europe Conference "The modern-day decline of Christianity in the western world may be compared to the situation in the Russian Empire before 1917. The revolution and the dramatic events which followed it have deep spiritual, as well as social and political, reasons. Over many years the aristocracy and intelligentsia had abandoned the faith, and were then followed by common people...I firmly believe that a Europe which has renounced Christ will not be able to preserve its cultural and spiritual identity...The legalization of abortion, the encouragement of sexual promiscuity, and the systematic attempts to undermine family values have led to a profound demographic crisis in many European countries...Often the language of hatred in relation to Christians is used when Christians insist on their right to participate in public affairs. They enjoy the same right as much as it is enjoyed by adherents of any other religion or by atheists. However, in practice it is not like this...In modern-day Europe militant secularism has been transformed into an autonomous power that does not tolerate dissent. It allows well-organized minority groups to successfully impose their will on the majority under the pretext of observing human rights...I believe it important that Christians of Europe should stand shoulder to shoulder to defend those values upon which the life of the continent has been built for centuries, and that they should view the afflictions and dismay of Christians throughout the world as their own")

<https://mospat.ru/en/2017/09/23/news150374/>

Saturday September 23, 2017



India: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Fr Michael Kerketta SJ (**UPDATE**: described a rally of 5,000 protestors to oppose the new state anti-conversion law)

Fr Amrit Tirkey (event organizer)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Ranchi:-5,000-protest-against-the-anti-conversion-law-and-the-lands-41868.html>



United Nations: Geneva, Switzerland

Fr Manoj Kumar Nayak (reported to have spoken on the situation in India at the UN Human Rights Council "The Government of India fails to prevent the adoption anti-conversion acts in states such as Odisha, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand and Gujarat that restricts the rights of minorities to practice, propagate and profess their religion. In addition there are documented data about the increasing of criminalization of minorities, dalits [untouchables] and adivasis [aboriginals]. There is also the increase of hate speech delivered by State officials which lead to the incitement of violence and discrimination against religious minorities, in contrary to their responsibility to protect them")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/62954-ASIA_INDIA_Indian_Priest_to_UN_Need_to_ensure_freedom_of_religion_and_the_protection_of_religious_minorities#.WckIvrKGOM8

Sunday September 24, 2017



India: Biswan town, Sitapur district, Uttar Pradesh state

Pastor Abhay Sagar (aged 37, husband of Francisca Gill, father of two aged 7 and 3, abducted from a worship service by 25 Hindu radicals, taken to a RSS paramilitary organization school, beaten, stripped, tortured, the radicals forced police to file criminal charges against him, taken to the hospital in extreme pain but not admitted under police pressure, lost hearing in his left ear, fled from his residence)

Francisca Gill (wife of Pastor Abhay Sagar, mother of two aged 7 and 3, private secondary school administrator, criminal charges filed against her, school supervisors told her to leave their home for at least a year, said "Biswan is not safe for my husband and my kids at the moment. Whatever savings I have made, I spent on his treatment. He lost hearing in his left ear. We need to start life from scratch. Our kids are 7 and 3, they need admission in a new school now, and honestly, I have nothing to provide them – all our hope is in the Lord. Only He can pave a way and lead us by His hand")

Deenanath Jaiswar (said “The cases of assault of pastors have been on the rise. That night Bajrang Dal [the RSS youth wing] and Vishwa Hindu Parishad activists were thronging to the police station to check if the pastor was in custody”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/10/torture-pastor-india-ruins-livelihood-hearing-not-faith/>



Pakistan: Sikenderabad

Salman Rashid (son of Rashid Akhtar, threatened with death)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6629>



Central African Republic: Bocaranga

Christians fled after Muslim rebels attacked their town

Madeleine (aged 9, sister of Cesare, carried her sister on her back, separated from her family)

Cesare (aged 15 months, sister of Madeleine)

Brigitte (aged 40, wife, mother of ten, said "Why is this happening to us? We used to have a decent life. I used to run a small business, while my husband was a nurse. We earned enough to look after our children...We have no bed or mattress...We sleep on a piece of tent. At night, it's difficult to sleep. It's cold and mosquitos are flying all around and biting us")

Christiane (aged 29, mother of three, abandoned by her husband before the fighting, concerned that her twin babies will get sick)

Deacon Valentin (husband, father of eight aged 2 to 16, said “By the grace of God, we got the strength and energy to walk all the way” to a refugee camp, said that not all who fled the town have been accounted for)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/10/central-african-republic-idps-angry-at-un-failure-to-protect-them/>



United States – Tennessee: Antioch

A former church member entered a church and shot eight people, one died, two hospitalized in critical condition

Melanie Smith (aged 39, wife, mother of two, **shot dead** in the parking lot)

Pastor Joey Spann (aged 60, husband of Peggy, shot in the chest, hospitalized)

Peggy Spann (wife of Pastor Joey Spann, shot, hospitalized)

Robert 'Caleb' Engle (aged 22, church usher, grappled with and disarmed the gunman, suffered a broken nose, dislocated shoulder, and a gash on his forehead, held the gunman at gunpoint for police)

Minerva Rosa (parishioner, applied first aid to Pastor Joey Spann)

Mary Pitts (applied first aid to an elderly parishioner, said "I'm going to go home and cry")

Roger Bracey (witnessed the shootings)

Michelle Day (mother of Jeremiah Reese, witnessed the shootings)

Jeremiah Reese (aged 10, son of Michelle Day, helped barricade the door to a children's classroom with chairs, twisted his ankle)

<http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/09/24/nashville-church-shooting-heroes-survivors-recount-tragedy/698642001/>

<http://www.tennessean.com/story/news/2017/09/24/antioch-church-shooting-10-year-old-boy-helped-barricade-door-inside-building/698393001/>

Monday September 25, 2017



China: Ningbo, Zhejiang province

Bishop Mathew Hu Xiande (aged 88, sentenced in 1958 to 7 years' forced labor; released in 1965; **UPDATE: died of natural causes**)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Msg.-Mathew-Hu-Xiande,-bishop-of-Ningbo,-has-died-41869.html>



India: Haryana state

A Hindu man beat his entire family and then disowned them for converting to Christianity

Sunita (convert, wife of Ramesh Kumar, mother of Neeraj, Sapna, Pardeep, and Gaytari)

Neeraj (aged 23, convert, son of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, lost his employment due to his father's allegations)

Sapna (aged 19, convert, daughter of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Pardeep (aged 17, convert, son of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Gaytari (aged 15, convert, daughter of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Pastor Ramesh (under threat of arrest for converting the family)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/hindu-patriarch-beats-family-and-throws-them-out-of-his-home-for-converting-to-christianity>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6687>

Tuesday September 26, 2017



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong, **UPDATE**: detained, charged with “picking quarrels and provoking troubles”, released)

Jiang Rong (wife of Pastor Wang Yi, **UPDATE**: missing, apparently detained)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/10/pastor-detained-wife-missing.html>



India: Delhi

Christians from Myanmar have become refugees in India, may be deported

Cing Dwat (aged 31, refugee since 2008 after Buddhist monks burned his home, said "We are not Muslim, we are Christians and we left our country because the Buddhist state forced us to leave. We left our education, our homes, our lives and we didn't come here out of choice. We feel insecure all the time. Our history, our culture, our identity don't matter to anybody over here")

Pu Bual (aged 60s, former government lawyer, said "I am surviving with the help of my friends. After working for 36 years, I cannot earn here because I can't be employed in the formal sector")

Ca Vang (aged early 40s, widow, husband killed in Delhi by a racially motivated mob, said "I am struggling to raise my children and I live with the burden of injustice and have no answers for my children about why their father was killed")

Thin Hnem (aged 65, refugee since 2009)

Dim Hai (aged 43, widow, refugee since 2007)

Sang Lian (aged 47, father of an 8 year old daughter, refugee since 2000, said "If the Indian government asks me to go back to Myanmar, I don't even have the money to reach the border. I have no land in Myanmar and it is not safe for us to live there anymore. I want to live in India")

<http://www.firstpost.com/india/watch-refugees-in-delhi-living-in-india-a-struggle-but-myanmar-is-a-threat-to-our-existence-say-chin-migrants-4082851.html>



Nepal

Event: Four Christians who were arrested on July 21, 2016 on charges of witchcraft, false imprisonment, and violence for praying over a mentally ill woman, and then convicted on December 22, 2016 and sentenced to 5 to 8 years' imprisonment, **UPDATE: convictions reported to have been overturned, released**

Bimkali Budha

Ganga Pariyar (wife of Ruplal Pariyar)

Lali Pun

Ruplal Pariyar (husband of Ganga Pariyar)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/nepali-christians-freed-9-months-after-conviction-for-witchcraft-of-praying-for-mentally-ill-woman/>



Pakistan

Aasiya Noreen aka Asia Bibi (aged 52, wife of Ashiq Masih, mother of five including Isham, daughter of Soran Masih, convicted of blasphemy in 2009; **UPDATE:** has passed 3,000 days in prison, has been nominated for the European Union Sakharov Prize)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/62964-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Asia_Bibi_nominated_for_Sakharov_Prize_2017_the_blasphemy_law_in_the_spotlight#.Wco1o7KGOM8



Iran

Twenty Iranians were reported to have converted to Christianity and were baptized while visiting a neighboring country, then returned home

Hediyeh (alias, convert, said "I've been waiting for this moment for nearly nine years")

Fariborz (aged 53, alias, convert, said "This was my wish before I die...I accepted Christ when I was 43 years old. There was no way for me to get baptized in Iran because of the dangers we face. Today, my faith is complete")

Bitra (aged 16, alias, convert, said "I became a Christian after seeing Jesus in a dream [at age 12]...As I was getting baptized this morning, I felt the Holy Spirit come upon me in a new way")

Majid (alias, convert, mother, father, and sister also converted, said "It feels very good. I'm very happy. My whole family is happy")

Elahe (alias, convert, said "This was the appointed time for me to get baptized...I know God used the past 11 years to grow my faith so I could endure difficult times...Since we didn't know other believers or were part of a house church, there was nobody to help us grow in our faith. We could only grow through watching Mohabat TV and with the Holy Spirit's help to get stronger in our faith")

Afarin (assisted the recent converts, said "The moment the Iranian government discovers someone has changed their religion, they will try everything to stop the person from sharing their new faith with others")

<http://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2017/september/exclusive-20-iranian-christians-embark-on-secret-journey-to-celebrate-baptism>



Uganda

Pastor Peter Sewakiryanga (described how children have been abducted every week and killed or maimed as human sacrifices, said "It's a brutal ritual that destroys the lives of our children and affects their parents mentally. We are working with the police to arrest witch doctors involved in the ritual. We are also assisting the survivors financially and with moral support")

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2017/09/26/witch-doctors-sacrificing-children-drought-stricken-african-country-uganda/703756001/>



Zimbabwe: Harare

Rev Evan Mawarire (arrested after posting a call for non-violent protest against the government)

<http://www.christiantimes.com/article/zimbabwe-pastor-faces-20-year-jail-term-for-subverting-mugabe-regime/72920.htm>

Wednesday September 27, 2017



Australia: Brisbane

Fr Morgan Batt (spat upon by a supporter of same sex marriage)

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4925688/Priest-spat-sworn-street-gay-marriage.html>



Malaysia: Johor, Sarawak

Rev Dr Justin Wan (**UPDATE**: spoke against creeping Islamic radicalism and thanked a local Muslim leader for opposing a Muslim-only launderette)

<http://www.themalaysianinsight.com/s/16275/>



India: Arasur, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Suresh Kumar (church ordered closed on [September 3, 2017](#) by the local revenue office, said an officer from the revenue department came and told us that the revenue office received a complaint from Mr Murgeshan [a leader of the Hindu Munnani] regarding our church. He said I had to stop worship and close down the church. Despite this, we continued our worship as we did not get anything in writing from the officer concerned"; **UPDATE**: church closed by the tax collector)

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/11/16/a-new-and-dangerous-threat-for-house-churches-in-southern-india/>



Pakistan: Behawalnagar, Punjab province

Washaal Masih (arrested along with a Hindu coworker on blasphemy charges, had been burning trash and someone alleged that the trash contained Quranic verses)

Adil Saleem Masih (arrested along with a Hindu coworker on blasphemy charges)

Pakistan: Punjab province

Emmanuel Ghulam Masih (husband, father of 3 including one yet to be born, in hiding with his family due to his wife's conversion from Islam to Christianity)

Fr Mario Rodrigues (**UPDATE:** said "There are stories of young Muslims who intend to convert to Christianity in Pakistan; but if they did it openly, every Muslim could feel the right to kill them. For this reason, cases of conversion from Islam to Christianity are very rare and some convert in secret. When the grace of God illuminates a heart and the choice is made, a real Calvary may begin. Only Christ can give strength to face the trials and sufferings that come to light")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/62973->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN A woman converts from Islam to Christianity now she and her family risk their lives#.WczuTltSyM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62973-ASIA_PAKISTAN_A_woman_converts_from_Islam_to_Christianity_now_she_and_her_family_risk_their_lives#.WczuTltSyM8)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6632>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63000->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN Religious minorities under attack it is urgent to repeal the blasphemy law#.WdOI21tSyM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63000-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Religious_minorities_under_attack_it_is_urgent_to_repeal_the_blasphemy_law#.WdOI21tSyM8)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6636>

<http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/dunga-bunga-blasphemy-charges-dropped-against-three-including-two-christians/>



Uzbekistan: Tashkent

Liliya Sitdikova (mother of Vildan Sitdikov, fined US\$779 on [June 2, 2017](#) for possession of religious literature; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Vildan Sitdikov (son of Liliya Sitdikova, fined US\$779 on [June 2, 2017](#) for possession of religious literature; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2329



Zimbabwe: Harare

Rev Evan Mawarire (arrested on [September 24, 2017](#) after posting a call for non-violent protest against the government; **UPDATE**: charged in court with subversion and inciting violence, which carry a possible sentence of 20 years' imprisonment)

<http://www.christiantimes.com/article/zimbabwe-pastor-faces-20-year-jail-term-for-subverting-mugabe-regime/72920.htm>



Nigeria: near Okpella, Edo state

Fr Lawrence Adorolo (abducted, ransom demanded)

Bishop Gabriel Dunia (said "We are holding a Mass for the unconditional release of the priest")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/62984-AFRICA_NIGERIA_Another_priest_abducted_in_the_south_of_Nigeria#.Wc5Vs1tSyM8



United States - New Hampshire: Somersworth

Freddy Sombah (aged 60-plus, husband of Poppy Sombah, father of Timothy Sombah, Indonesian citizen, denied refugee status, deportation halted by a Federal court)

Poppy Sombah (aged 60-plus, wife of Freddy Sombah, mother of Timothy Sombah, factory worker, Indonesian citizen, denied refugee status, deportation halted by a Federal court)

Timothy Sombah (aged 29, son of Freddy and Poppy Sombah, Indonesian citizen, denied refugee status, as a DACA applicant will be safe from deportation until 2019)

<http://www.fosters.com/news/20170927/judges-order-a-huge-relief-for-indonesian-family>

Thursday September 28, 2017



China: Hong Kong

Josiah Chok Kin-ming (former equal opportunities officer, removed from his position in [August 2014](#) after telling fellow church members how to legally resist the homosexual rights movement, denied financial compensation when he refused to apologize for his talk at his church; court ruled in his favor in [2015](#), ordered that the compensation be paid; the High Court in [March 2017](#) accepted the appeal of his former employer and ordered a retrial; **UPDATE**: 2015 ruling overturned at retrial, denied compensation, ordered to pay US\$1,260 in court costs)

<http://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/law-crime/article/2113277/former-hong-kong-eoc-official-loses-gratuity-fee-retrial>



India

Pastor Aryan (reported to have said “I have been facing so much trouble from the Hindu Munnani activists, and I have been targeted and continually threatened and attacked, at times I was discouraged”, has been forced to move)

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/09/28/icc-builds-pastor-a-new-house-after-hindu-radicals-drove-him-away/>



Iraq

Patriarch Louis Raphael I Sako (**UPDATE**: said at a conference in [Rome, Italy](#) "The referendum of Kurdistan, toward independence from Baghdad, is creating an escalation of tension between the two governments and we can almost hear the beats of war drums...Today, our people are living with fear of being engaged in another war, which means more chaos, more bloodshed, destruction and refugees. They are concerned about stability, security and worried about going back to live with daily crimes of robberies, gang rapes, torture and murder of Christians that has become so common...Everyone is waiting. What will happen tomorrow? Will there be a new war or not? Will there be peace? They don't know. Everyone is waiting, waiting with fear, without certainty")

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/iraqi-church-leaders-pray-for-peace-after-kurdish-referendum-83075>



Turkey

Andrew Brunson (U.S. citizen, husband of Norine Brunson, detained as a 'national security risk' on [October 7, 2016](#), denied access to U.S. diplomats, attorneys, and fellow parishioners; **UPDATE**: confirmed to be a hostage at a press conference by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President explicitly called for the U.S. government to exchange him for Sufi cleric and U.S. resident Fethullah Gulen)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/09/turkish-president-admits-us-pastor-political-hostage/>



Zimbabwe: Harare

Rev Evan Mawarire (arrested on [September 24, 2017](#) after posting a call for non-violent protest against the government; charged in court on [September 25, 2017](#) with subversion and inciting violence, which carry a possible sentence of 20 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE**: released on bail)

<http://www.christiantimes.com/article/zimbabwe-pastor-faces-20-year-jail-term-for-subverting-mugabe-regime/72920.htm>



Nigeria: Abuja

Fr Evaristus Bassey (**UPDATE**: spoke in response to the introduction of legislation by Deputy House leader Umar Jibrin that would more tightly regulate and license non-government organizations [NGOs]: “Caritas Nigeria and JDPC observe that most Catholic Dioceses and Archdioceses and Christian Churches that are registered in Nigeria under the CAC are registered as Incorporated Trustees and therefore fall under the NGO categorization...Knowing fully well that his religion demands him to use his position to promote and protect religion, is this Honorable Umar’s subtle way of promoting and protecting his religion by setting up a framework in which others might be persecuted?...Jubril’s disruptive effort is highly suspicious, especially against the backdrop of such security threats as the [Fulani] herdsmen attacks which are being seen as part of a sinister agenda of domination”)

Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan (**UPDATE**: criticized the government for labeling Biafrain separatists [which he does not support] as terrorists but not Fulani herdsmen “My understanding of a terrorist is a deadly armed activist. I don’t think, merely speaking or talking or threatening [Biafrain independence] will add up to being a terrorist...The Fulani herdsmen who are armed, lethal, murderous, vicious and have been killing people in our communities, they are the ones that we are waiting for, to see what the government will do. If you recall, the bishops’ conference called on the government to treat them as terrorists”)

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/09/28/nigeria-catholic-group-cast-ngo-bill-attempt-promote-islam/>



United Kingdom

Rev Gavin Ashenden (aged 63, British citizen; **UPDATE**: reported to have been consecrated in [Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada](#) as Missionary Bishop to Anglicans in the United Kingdom and Europe)

<https://ashenden.org/2017/09/27/a-press-release-from-the-archbishop-of-the-christian-episcopal-church/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uGQxP7z7ys>



Venezuela

Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino (**UPDATE**: said in [Rome, Italy](#) "In general, the situation continues to be really bad, because the government stubbornly continues to insist, in an absurd way, to enforce a failed political and economic project that is the socialist, communist, Marxist, totalitarian and militaristic system. It's led to nothing but ruin, pain, and death in the countries where it has been imposed")

<https://cruxnow.com/interviews/2017/10/03/cardinal-venezuela-stubbornly-clings-marxist-totalitarian-system/>

Saturday September 30, 2017



Egypt: outside Cairo

Marilyn Medhat (aged 16, daughter of Medhat Saad Edward and Hanaa Aziz Shukralla Farag, abducted in [Balansora village, Minya province](#) on [June 28, 2017](#), forced into an Islamic marriage; **UPDATE**: recovered by police, returned home)

Fr Boutros Khalaf (**UPDATE**: said "Recently we found out that Marilyn was held in a place in 10th of Ramadan city...We went to the local police station and they really did their best to reach her and managed to arrest her kidnapper...[she had] not been treated well [but was]

very happy to be back with her family...We thank God for answering our prayers and the prayers of many other people. And we thank all the policemen in the police station that helped us so much in releasing our daughter”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/10/coptic-teenage-girl-rescued-92-days-islamists-kidnapped/>



Turkey: Istanbul

Sait Susin (reported to have been denied government permission to open a primary school for Assyrians)

<https://philosproject.org/assyrians-primary-school-istanbul/>



United States - Georgia

Chike Uzuegbunam (college student, denied permission to hand out Gospel literature in campus free speech zones in [Lawrenceville](#) in 2016; **UPDATE:** the U.S. Justice Department has reportedly joined his civil rights suit against the college, filed: “GGC [the college] applied a ‘heckler’s veto’ that allowed every listener to become a regulator unto himself and to shut down expression simply because the listener found it ‘uncomfortable’. For this reason alone, GGC’s content-based restriction fails strict scrutiny”)

<http://christiannews.net/2017/09/30/u-s-department-of-justice-backs-christian-college-student-told-preaching-disturbing-the-peace/>

September 2017, date unknown

Today’s Martyrs

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