

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Events – December 2017

**Friday December 1, 2017**



### India

Archbishop Thomas Ignatius Macwan (issued a letter on [November 24, 2017](#) to various communities regarding the upcoming elections: "The forthcoming legislative elections in the state of Gujarat will affect the future of our country. We are aware that the secular and democratic fabric of our country is at stake, where human rights are violated and constitutional rights trampled. There are episodes in which churches are attacked, ecclesiastical staff, faithful or institutions are affected. There is growing sense of insecurity among minorities. Nationalist forces are about to conquer the country. The election results of the State Assembly of Gujarat can make a difference...The Bishops of the State of Gujarat invite you to organize prayer liturgies in your parishes and convents, hoping that the people who are elected will remain faithful to our Indian constitution and respect every human being without any discrimination"; accused of generating "fear" in his letter, accused on [November 25, 2017](#) of violating the Model Code of Conduct in a complaint filed with the state Election Commission; **UPDATE**: denied internet rumors that he had been arrested for his letter, said "They served me notice on the 25th and I responded on the 27th. There has been no response after that. I hope the issue is over now")

Samson Christian (said "...this is the first time the Hindu nationalists are targeting the church leader to polarize the Hindu voters...Archbishop Macwan has all the right to protect the people and ask them to pray. The complaint against the archbishop is politically motivated")

K P George SJ (said "I fully support the concerns raised by Archbishop Thomas Macwan...If every party and every leader can ask his/her followers to vote for a particular person/party, why should that right be denied to the archbishop and for his members?")

Virginia Saldanha (**UPDATE**: said "What the archbishop did is absolutely right. In no way is it campaigning or alignment with anyone. It only shows the caliber of the [Hindu nationalist] BJP and its nervousness about the elections")

Fr Dominic Emmanuel (**UPDATE**: spoke after the only Catholic cabinet minister denied that Christians had been attacked under Prime Minister Modi "K.J. Alphons has to learn to tell lies like his masters Modi and Amit Shah [the BJP president]...Don't be surprised if

K.J. Alphons, to remain on his ministerial seat, will tomorrow repeat...[the] statement that Mother Teresa's work was all a facade for conversion")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/india-archbishop-served-notice-raising-human-rights-ahead-gujarat-elections/>



### **Sweden: Gothenburg**

Ivan Sahda Moshi (Iraqi refugee since 2007, went into hiding after a decree was issued to return him to Iraq)

<https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2018/01/iraq-refugees-asylum-seekers-europe.html#ixzz55WVINu00>



### **Nigeria: Gwoza, Borno state**

Esther (aged 17 in 2015, alias, reported to have been abducted by Boko Haram militants in [October 2015](#), father killed; rescued by the Nigerian military in [November 2016](#), returned home; **UPDATE:** said "I cannot count how many men raped me. Every time they came back from their attacks, they would rape us...defile us. Each passing day, I hated myself more and more. I felt that God had forsaken me. There were times when I was so angry with God...But still I could not get myself to renounce Him. I found myself remembering His promise to never leave me or forsake me", after her return gave birth to a daughter, added "They mocked me because I was pregnant. Even my grandparents despised me and called me names. I cried many tears. I felt so lonely. What broke my heart even more was that they refused to call my daughter Rebecca. They referred to her as 'Boko'", said she has forgiven her abductors)

Rebecca (infant daughter of Esther)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/25770/>



### **United Kingdom**

**Christians responded to year-old retweeted comments by a Scottish clergyman that called on people to pray that 4 year old Prince George would grow up to be homosexual and become King while in a same sex marriage**

Bishop Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE**: said "If you're going to pray for Prince George, pray for him to be happy...and pray for him to discharge his duty as prince, to be married and have children. It is not a kind prayer. It is not a blessing, it's more like a curse from a fairytale. I would say it is profoundly un-Christian...To use prayer as a mechanism for wishing this on Prince is an unkind and destructive thing to do. It doesn't have the prince's best interest at heart, but uses him as a gender-political football to please 1.7% of the population. What is especially odd and incongruous is the fact that it is suddenly OK to pray for someone to be gay, but totally unacceptable to pray for them to be free from being gay and to resume a sexuality that was in tune with their biology. This seems not only contradictory but hypocritical")

Susie Leafé (director of Reform, said "I was very disappointed that he [the Scottish clergyman] was prepared to bring a child in to this same-sex marriage debate. As a Christian minister he should pray for all people to come to know the love of Christ, rather than a fine young gentleman")

<https://ashenden.org/2017/12/01/the-use-and-abuse-of-prince-george-by-gay-activists/>

**Saturday December 2, 2017**



### **Bangladesh: Syleth**

Fr Walter William Rozario (aged 41, assistant pastor, secondary school headmaster, brother of Premol Rozario, disappeared in [Bonpara](#) on [November 27, 2017](#), ransom demanded; **UPDATE**: recovered by police, has suffered psychological trauma and has difficulty speaking, held in custody, accused by police of being mentally ill and of having staged his disappearance, later released from custody)

Fr Subroto Purification (**UPDATE**: criticized the "absurd conference held by the police" and added "We are literally without words. What the police say does not stand up. Why would William have to do this? We were organizing the pilgrimage of the faithful to Dhaka, and he too could not wait to meet the Pope. The staging is an unfounded hypothesis, as well as the mental illness. We do not know what it is based on and we hope everything can be clarified in court")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63337->

[ASIA BANGLADESH The police no seizure Fr Rozario is mentally unstable](#)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63342->

[ASIA BANGLADESH Fr Rozario released after the seizure he will remain for a period in the Bishop s residence](#)



### **Pakistan: Charman, Baluchistan**

Issac 'Lucky' Saleem (aged 7, son of Asalam and Noreen Masih, **killed** along with 2 others by a car bomb outside the main gate of a Christian colony [ghetto])

Khan Masih (aged 4, cousin of Issac 'Lucky' Saleem, son of Vickram and Nasreen, wounded, hospitalized, underwent surgery on his head, back, and left leg, released 4 days later)

Asalam Masih (aged 54, father of Issac 'Lucky' Saleem)

Noreen Masih (aged 48, mother of Issac 'Lucky' Saleem, said "My heart has been broken in two. My husband and I waited many years for the birth of my son and in a moment these cruel murderers have killed him and taken away my joy. They care nothing for the pain I feel. Their only desire was to murder Christians...Men in uniforms from the army and police and politicians have told me how they feel my pain, but we receive no help, nor no news of the capture of the murders. I want to ask them to their faces why they have taken the life of an innocent boy...I find it hard to sleep now, I feel old and weary, I pray to God that he will take me to heaven soon so that I can be reunited with Isaac. I cry and cry but the tears do not bring Isaac back or ease my pain")

Vickram Masih (aged 44, father of Khan Masih)

Nasreen Masih (aged 38, mother of Khan Masih)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/young-christian-boy-of-only-7-killed-when-terrorist-bomb-struck-christian-village-in-baluchistan>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/mother-breaks-down-in-tears-our-government-cares-little-about-death-of-my-son-by-extremists>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/christian-colony-attack-in-pakistan-kills-young-boy/80980>



### **Kuwait**

Rev Shibu Mathew (aged 42, Indian citizen, husband, father of four, arrested in **Mangaf** for defending Christianity in an ecumenical debate; **UPDATE**: reported to have been released and to have left the country)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/indian-pastor-accused-of-blasphemy-during-interfaith-dialogue-event-set-free-by-kuwaiti-authorities>



### **United States – Ohio: Cleveland**

Jared Plesec (aged 21, Salvation Army employee, **shot dead** by a criminal, had preached the Bible to his killer before he died)

### **United States – Virginia: Roanoke**

Purity Thomas (aged 15, student, punched in the face by an abortion supporter, treated at a hospital for a concussion)

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/salvation-army-worker-shot-dead-with-bible-in-hand-preaching-the-gospel-to-his-killer-in-ohio-208823/>

<http://www.lifenews.com/2017/12/04/abortion-activist-punches-15-year-old-girl-in-the-face-who-was-praying-at-planned-parenthood/>

**Sunday December 3, 2017**



### **Philippines: Mansalay town, Mindoro Oriental, Luzon**

Pastor Lovelito Quinones (**killed** by police allegedly in a gun battle with Communists, critics say a gun was planted on his body, forensic tests showed no powder residue on his body)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/rage-grief-sweep-philippines-after-murder-of-priest/80983>



### **Sudan**

**The eviction of two pastors from their homes was upheld after a judge ruled in favor of the government connected Muslim businessman who has sought to seize church property**

Rev Sidik Abdalla Anglo (husband, father of two aged 8 and 10, evicted from his **Omdurman** home by police on **August 15, 2017**, now living on the street; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Rev Yahya Abdelrahim Nalu (Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church, husband, father of a one year old boy, evicted from his **Omdurman** home by police on **August 15, 2017**, now living on the street; **UPDATE**: appeal denied, said “We need prayers from everyone”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/eviction-pastors-upheld-scores-christians-court-sudan-takes-church-properties/>



### **Nigeria: Kaduna state**

Martha Madami (aged 50, wife of Madami Agiya, mother of Suzie Madami, Eli Madami and Hassan Madami, abducted by Fulani Muslims in [Kwanti village](#) on [November 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: released, ransom of US\$13,770 paid)

Chili (aged 22, niece of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, abducted by Fulani Muslims in [Kwanti village](#) on [November 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: released, ransom paid)

### **Nigeria: Numan local government Area, Adamawa state**

Pwanedo Justin (fled his home during a Fulani Muslim attack that killed 2 village headmen, said: "I watched helplessly as the Fulani herdsmen killed people and burnt houses. They did this with glee on their faces. Numan and its environs belong to us. If the government cannot protect us, then we have no choice but to protect our land, our heritage and the territory of our ancestors. That is all we have to hand on to our children")

<http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/13/abducted-catholic-priest-rev-father-cyril-effiong-released/>  
<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/muslim-fulani-kidnappers-ravage-village-kaduna-state-nigeria/>

**Monday December 4, 2017**



### **Philippines: San Leonardo town, Nueva Ecija province, Luzon**

Fr Marcelito "Tito" Paez (aged 72, officially retired but still active in ministry, **shot** while driving in traffic by four gunmen on motorcycles, **died** in the hospital)

Bishop Roberto Mallari (called the shooting death of Fr Marcelito "Tito" Paez an execution)

Sr Elenita Belardo (said "The execution is a brutal act that aims to sow terror among those who oppose the militaristic and despotic nature of Duterte's government and to silence those who continue to denounce extrajudicial executions and violations of human rights")

Fr Oliver Castor CSSR (said that the government's extrajudicial killing of drug dealers and addicts has begun to expand to political dissidents "It is systematic killing directed towards a specific section of the population. The year past, the targets were drug users, this time, leftists...[It] is chillingly reminiscent of the years of Marcos martial rule")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63354-ASIA PHILIPPINES A priest killed a targeted execution alarm of rural missionaries](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63354-ASIA_PHILIPPINES_A_priest_killed_a_targeted_execution_alarm_of_rural_missionaries)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/rage-grief-sweep-philippines-after-murder-of-priest/80983>



**India: Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh state**

**Seven Christians were arrested on illegal conversion charges, ordered held for 14 days**

Stanley Jacob (arrested)

David Jacob (arrested)

Vijay Kumar (arrested)

Amit Kumar (arrested)

Sumit Varghese (arrested)

Anita (convert, sister of Mamta Singh, arrested)

Dinesh (arrested)

Mamta Singh (convert, wife of Pradeep Singh, sister of Anita, home invaded by Hindu radicals during a worship service)

Pradeep Singh (convert, husband of Mamta Singh, home invaded by Hindu radicals during a worship service)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Seven-Pentecostal-Christians-arrested-for-%E2%80%9Cforced-conversions%E2%80%9D-in-Uttar-Pradesh-42516.html>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/Seven-pastors-arrested-in-india-for-forced-conversion>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/christians-beaten-falsely-charged-jailed-mob-attack-india-sources-say/>



**Kazakhstan: Astana**

Teymur Sultan ogly Akhmedov (aged 61, husband, father of three sons, arrested on **January 18, 2017** for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants, held in pre-trial detention, denied cancer treatment; motion to terminate his case denied on **March 1, 2017**, reportedly has been beaten in prison, can barely walk; sentenced on **May 2, 2017** to 5 years' imprisonment followed by 3 years' prohibition on preaching; appeal denied on **June 20, 2017**; **UPDATE**: Supreme Court appeal denied, still denied medical treatment)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2345](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2345)



**Nigeria: Dong village, Numan local government Area, Adamawa state**

Dabang Kayako (village head, **killed** by Fulani Muslim herdsmen)

Dawson K Tufano (retired court judge, spoke on a Muslim attack on his village “As we got early information of the Fulanis’ imminent attack, we alerted the authorities, who responded by sending mobile policemen to secure the area. But before the arrival of the attackers, the security forces withdrew from the area, with no reason, paving the way for to the Fulani herdsmen. While our local vigilantes were in a fierce battle with the herdsmen, aircraft came from nowhere and started throwing bombs on our villages, abetting the herdsmen to kill several people, while many others were injured as houses and properties were completely razed due to the Air Force bombings...The whole thing was a calculated attempt to destroy us. If not, then why is it that the Air Force were only bombarding our people, while leaving alone the large number of well-armed herdsmen, who were twice the number of our population? Where I was hiding during the attack, I saw the herdsmen carrying sophisticated weapons, which I believed these herdsmen could not afford. We are now living in fear. At every loud sound, our people will start running, thinking that the herdsmen have returned to fulfil their promise to kill the survivors”)

**Nigeria: Lawuro village, Numan local government Area, Adamawa state**

Ferdinand Boro (village head, **killed** by Fulani Muslim herdsmen)

**Nigeria: Shaforon village, Numan local government Area, Adamawa state**

Audu (husband of Hanatu Soloman, father of five, injured in a bombing of his village by the Air Force, hospitalized, **died three days later**)

Hanatu Soloman (aged 46, widow of Audu, mother of five, said “A good man was just killed like that, without anything done to his killers...When will the killing stop? It is either Boko Haram insurgents or herdsmen killing our people, [who] are mostly Christians. Many Christian women have lost their husbands. Our children cannot go to school again when our husbands, the bread winners, have been massacred. Most Christian women are raped by herdsmen when they launch an attack on their villages. Some women feel they must hide out of disgrace; other women become pregnant from these murderers”)

<http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/13/abducted-catholic-priest-rev-father-cyril-effiong-released/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/02/nigerian-air-force-complicit-in-massacre-of-christian-villagers-says-amnesty/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/nigerian-christian-who-lost-husband-in-fulani-attack-i-returned-to-encourage-other-women-to-do-the-same/>

**Tuesday December 5, 2017**





## Philippines

### Churches have begun to prepare for government repression

Fr Oliver Castor CSSR (**UPDATE**: said "We laid down security measures, fallback positions. But we never thought it would hit us so close to home, so fast")

Fr Jonash Joyohoy (said of his church involvement in tribal areas "We are not pulling out, we are never pulling out. But we need to tighten safeguards because of the upsurge in security risks")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/clergy-religious-plan-measures-against-duterte-crackdown/81001>



## Vietnam: Hanoi

Fr John Luu Ngoc Quynh CSSR (aged 53, prevented from leaving the country to visit France for an ordination 'for the protection of national security, social order and safety')

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/vietnam-bars-another-priest-from-leaving-country/81003>



## Central African Republic: Bangui

Pastor Jean-Eric Vogbia (convert, church and home in the [PK5 neighborhood of Bangui](#) destroyed by Seleka rebels on [December 5, 2013](#), eldest son [a medical student] killed, later said "We tried to contact him on the phone, but he was not reachable. At about 12 noon, my phone rang again and a voice said: 'The boy was killed. We didn't plan it, but as we missed you, we had to kill him'"; **UPDATE**: wife has suffered from PTSD, said "What happened was a punitive act because of my Muslim background. They wanted to silence the preacher who converts Muslims to Christianity...Each time I pass by the ruins of our family compound, now invaded by wild plants, I feel bad. But I need to overcome my anger and act with love towards my Muslim brothers and friends")

Pastor Gilbert Bogolo (husband, father of ten, petroleum company employee, church and home in [Bangui](#) destroyed by Seleka rebels on [December 5, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: said "Maybe one day we will understand why [God] allowed us to go through this painful experience", said his parishioners now meet in a tent "It's not the big attendance of the old days, but

the remaining members are more committed than ever. The donations we receive on Sundays are greater than ever”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/car-they-wanted-to-silence-the-preacher-who-converts-muslims-to-christians/>

**Wednesday December 6, 2017**



## **India**

Bishop Vincent Barwa (**UPDATE**: criticized a call by Hindu radicals to enact the death penalty for cow slaughter)

**India: Tarra village, Ranjim, Gariaband district, Chhattisgarh state**

**RSS paramilitary members attacked a prayer meeting attended by 600 Christians, men were beaten, women molested, automobiles and bicycles vandalized**

Rev Lakhchan Sahu (aged 34, husband, father of two; said the Hindu extremists set up a sound system outside the prayer hall “They shouted from the mike, name-calling me a butcher, low-caste and much more, using all kinds of vulgar language. They said that they will carry their flag in one hand and a sword in the other and kill all those who dared to enter the prayer hall...While breaking the chairs, they threw the chairs on some worshippers who tried to stop them, causing them minor injuries. But before they could reach the main hall and attack the worshippers sitting inside, the police arrived”)

Arun Pannalal (president of Chhattisgarh Christian Forum; **UPDATE**: said “There are no second- or third-generation Christians found in the area. As soon as a new church is established, they are intensely persecuted, and the church gradually dies down”)

Shibu Thomas (founder of Persecution Relief; **UPDATE**: said “Christians had completed 200 days of prayer under the leadership of Rev Lakhchan Sahu. At around noon, more than a thousand people from the RSS and Bajrang Dal [youth organization] stormed the prayer venue”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-nationalists-attack-a-Christian-prayer-meeting-in-Chhattisgarh-42527.html>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/bishop-criticizes-death-penalty-call-for-cow-slaughter/80995>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/hindu-extremists-block-disrupt-large-scale-prayer-service-india/>



## **Pakistan: Lahore, Punjab province**

Khalid Shehzad (activist, called on the government to release statistics regarding minorities from the 2017 census "For the past 70 years, minorities have been demanding a combined distribution of country resources. Today they are downtrodden due to lack of access to opportunities. Even the five percent job quota for minorities is usually neglected")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistan-minorities-demand-to-know-census-results/80997>



## **Uzbekistan: Nukus**

**Christians were sent letters from the anti-terrorism police which stated they would be prosecuted for illegal possession of religious materials**

Bakhbergen Abdikerimov

Abatbay Doszhanov (husband of Zarina Olimova, fined US\$179 on [October 25, 2017](#) for possession of illegal religious material; **UPDATE**)

Zarina Olimova (wife of Abatbay Doszhanov)

Sarsenbay Khaibrakhmanova

Nazira Dauletmuratova

Yesnazar Zhumanazarov (fined US\$359 on [October 25, 2017](#) for possession of illegal religious material; **UPDATE**)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2341](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2341)



## **Iraq: Bahzani**

**Christians were reported as needing protection to stay in their homes**

Fr Afram al-Khoury Benyamen (said "The reality is we cannot stay without the U.S. or the UN helping to protect Nineveh directly. With international protection maybe we can remain, but if it doesn't come soon...we go...ISIL is not finished in Mosul and still they can come straight here. We expect more attacks. It is like staring into the darkness...Before ISIL, everything was green. Now everything is finished, nobody gave the olive trees water. And when I see the village like this I feel there is no life here. We used to have 150 doves come to our church, too. But after ISIL, even they have not come back")

Mariam Ishaq (aged 58, said "There is no stability. Our homes are destroyed. I don't want to leave," Ishaq said. "But what else can we do?")

Faiza Yaaqoub (aged 68)

Deacon Benian Abdullah (said “We are always worried about who will be our future government? Who will be the next to control us?”)

Rimon (aged 33, son of Silvia, **died of untreated cancer** in **February 2017**)

Silvia (mother of Rimon, said “Because of this crisis we could not find him medicine. We could not get help for him to leave. And so he lost his life”)

<http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/12/05/life-after-isis-christians-say-cant-go-home-without-international-protection.html>

**Thursday December 7, 2017**



**China: Hanzhong, Shaanxi province**

Bishop Emeritus Matthias Yu Chengxin (aged 90, brother of Bishop Bartholomew Yu Chengti, Bishop Louis Yu Runchen, and Sr Yu Rongjie, **died of natural causes**, as a seminarian had been subjected to forced labor and house arrest during the Cultural Revolution)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Msg.-Matthias-Yu-Chengxin,-underground-bishop-of-Hanzhong,-has-died-42568.html>



**Uganda: Jaguzi Island, Mayuge district**

Mulangira Ibrahim (aged 27, convert, former Islamic teacher, converted after being temporarily struck blind on **October 4, 2015** when he attempted to question a Christian pastor regarding a vision of his conversion, beaten that day by local Muslims; ambushed near a church on **November 16, 2017** and beaten, treated at a clinic; **UPDATE**: suffocated by an intruder in his home, hospitalized with chest and abdominal pain)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/01/christian-widow-uganda-poisoned-christmas-day/>



**Congo, Democratic Republic: Semuliki, North Kivu**

Fr Loris Cattani CFX (missionary; **UPDATE**: condemned the massacre of 15 UN peacekeepers, said "It is difficult to attribute the attack to a specific group because there is very little news at the moment")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63377->

[AFRICA DR CONGO Massacre of the Blue Helmits Was the aim to hit the UN mission carried out in order to force it to withdraw](#)



## **United Kingdom**

Jacob Rees-Mogg (aged 48, Member of Parliament; **UPDATE:** wrote "One of the Conservative Party's clearest manifesto commitments was to lift the cap on places for Catholics at new schools. It said 'we will replace the unfair and ineffective inclusivity rules that prevent the establishment of new Roman Catholic schools, instead requiring new faith schools to prove that parents of other faiths and none would be prepared to send their children to that school'. There is no wriggle room in that sentence – yet the Department for Education, instead of implementing the policy decision, has decided to have an enquiry to decide whether to do what was promised or not...The problem with the current rules is that they limit the number of places for Catholics in new schools to 50 per cent if other, non-Catholics, wish to attend. This policy was not introduced with Catholic schools particularly in mind, but has a greater impact on them because, unlike some religious schools which attract virtually no one from outside their own community, Catholic schools are popular with non-Catholics...However, under Canon law Catholic bishops have certain obligations which mean that places cannot be preferentially offered to non-Catholics at the exclusion of Catholics")

## **United Kingdom: Lincoln**

Daniel Courney (aged 33, U.S. citizen, convicted on [September 14, 2017](#) for use of 'threatening and discriminatory language' while street preaching; **UPDATE:** conviction overturned on appeal)

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

[https://www.conservativehome.com/platform/2017/12/jacob-rees-mogg-why-wont-the-education-department-honour-the-conservative-manifesto-pledge-on-catholic-schools.html?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Thursday%207th%20December%202017&utm\\_content=Thursday%207th%20December%202017+CID\\_8c4f02a1eef9624f291be2a8be70bd46&utm\\_source=Daily%20Email&utm\\_term=Why%20wont%20the%20Education%20Department%20honour%20our%20manifesto%20pledge%20on%20Catholic%20schools](https://www.conservativehome.com/platform/2017/12/jacob-rees-mogg-why-wont-the-education-department-honour-the-conservative-manifesto-pledge-on-catholic-schools.html?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Thursday%207th%20December%202017&utm_content=Thursday%207th%20December%202017+CID_8c4f02a1eef9624f291be2a8be70bd46&utm_source=Daily%20Email&utm_term=Why%20wont%20the%20Education%20Department%20honour%20our%20manifesto%20pledge%20on%20Catholic%20schools)

**Friday December 8, 2017**



### **Indonesia: Jakarta**

Rev Abraham Ben Moses (aged 52, arrested on blasphemy charges after attempting to convert a taxi driver)

Theophilus Bela (**UPDATE**: said that while at least 106 people had been prosecuted for blasphemy between 2005 and 2014, this was the first case involving a Christian cleric)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/protestant-pastor-in-indonesia-hit-with-blasphemy-charge/81057>



### **China: Guangzhou, Guangdong province**

**A married couple was detained by police during morning prayer, refused to sign a promise to not attend church for two months, released**

Zhou Guanjun (spouse of Li Jionjun)

Li Jionjun (spouse of Zhou Guanjun)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/christian-couple-taken-into-custody-for.html>



### **Iraq**

Wahida Yaqo Hurmiz (Member of Parliament, said "Christians are facing another catastrophe in the Nineveh Plain despite the defeat of [the Islamic State] because of Shia militias who are committing many violations against our people")

<http://www.kurdistan24.net/en/news/5be824a8-c5d9-45a8-98ae-be1a72a1d632>



### **Russia: Sverdlovsk**

Raufi (convert, Iranian citizen, monastery worker, detained on **October 18, 2017** after his asylum application had been rejected, deportation could result in his prosecution in Iran;

**UPDATE**: reported to have been released, deportation halted, asylum application resubmitted)

<http://orthochristian.com/109016.html>



## **Egypt**

**Police were reported to have prevented Christians from visiting a monastery for security reasons**

Abba Pasilious (St Stephen monastery leader)

Bishop Tadrus

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2043&A=33286>



**Nigeria: Awi, Akamkpa local government area, Cross River state**

Fr Cyril Effiong Essien (abducted)

<http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/13/abducted-catholic-priest-rev-father-cyril-effiong-released/>



**Canada: Toronto, Ontario**

Mary Wagner (aged 43; **UPDATE**: arrested for entering an abortion clinic waiting room and handing out roses and pro-life literature)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/canadian-pro-life-heroine-jailed-again-after-rescue-attempt-at-abortion-cen>

**Saturday December 9, 2017**



**India: Periyanaickenpalayam, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu state**

Pastor Vinodh Kumar (aged 38, prayer hall invaded by Hindu extremists after he ignored an order to close, beaten by Hindu extremists along with three other Christians at a

Christmas charity event for destitute widows, arrested, said “The police are attempting to show the incident as a fight between Christians and Hindus in a way so it protects the attackers. They want to say there was exchange of words and that both parties quarrelled, so that they have taken me into custody. But it is not true. I was beaten, but they took me into custody instead of arresting the attackers”, submitted photos and videos of the attack to the police “But the police did not make any arrests so far. They arrested three or four men who are not related to the attack. We are not sure what the police are up to”)

Pastor Karthik Chandran (aged 30, convert, father of two, beaten, suffered a serious head wound and US\$3,116 worth of property damage, said “We made bulk purchase of sarees and shirts to distribute them to the poor, aged and widows. They were gathering in our church premises, but all of a sudden the Hindu Munnani activists barged inside. They came with steel rods and big stones and started beating us”, added that a 55 year old Christian woman tried to help “But the attackers were very aggressive – they beat her also, and she is suffering fractures in her hand...I am very joyful that I have been persecuted for Christ’s sake. The extremists broke the music equipment, chairs and glass windows into pieces. I have forgiven my attackers, and I am to proclaim Christ even more boldly after this incident. This has actually made me and my family stronger in faith... We did not do anything wrong, we just wanted to celebrate Christmas and distribute some goods to the poor”)

Arun Kumar (aged 25, beaten)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63380->

[ASIA INDIA Violence against Christians in Tamil Nadu](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63380-)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/police-licit-hindu-extremist-attack-christians-tamil-nadu-india-sources-say/>



### **Pakistan: Kot Lakhput Jail, Lahore**

Usman Masih (aged 29, husband, father, brother of Kamran Shaukat, jailed for alleged involvement in riot that followed the [March 15, 2015](#) attempted suicide bombing in Youhanabad, reported on [March 30, 2017](#) that have refused the invitation to Islam in exchange for his freedom; **UPDATE: died in prison**, official cause was a heart attack, body was "littered" with bruises and welts)

Kamran Shaukat (brother of Usman Masih, said "Both his daughters, aged 3 and 5, cry for their abbu [father]. We are still in shock, but we don't blame anybody. Our matter rests with God")

Rev Irshad Ashknaz (**UPDATE:** said he feared for the lives of all Christian prisoners after the death of Usman Masih "We have held several meetings with police and government officials, but nobody is listening. We are helpless and do not know what to do")

Aftab Gill (information secretary of the Christian Masiha Millat Party [MMP], arrested in [March 2015](#) for the lynching; released in [November 2015](#); **UPDATE:** said medical treatment



was still being denied to imprisoned Christians on trial for the lynching case, added "It's a conspiracy to kill all Christian prisoners")

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/another-christian-martyr-dies-in-pakistani-jail>  
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/another-christian-prisoner-dies-in-lahore-jail/81050>



**Egypt: Izziyah, Assyut province**

Ishak Nashaat Birwan (aged 14, cousin of Samir Fekry, disappeared, police took no action)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/26796/>



**United Kingdom: Camberley, Surrey**

Events: Two street preachers were questioned by police

David Barker

Stephen Wan

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/two-street-preachers-questioned-over-hate-speech-have-all-charges-dropped>

**Sunday December 10, 2017**



**Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City**

**Three priests and six laypeople were prevented by police from travelling to a Mass**

Fr Anton Le Ngoc Thanh CSSR (**UPDATE**)

Fr Joseph Truong Hoang Vu CSSR (**UPDATE**: beaten)

Fr Paul Le Xuan Loc CSSR (beaten, said on social media "After we just left our monastery, traffic police stopped our bus and took the driver's license. Then plain-clothes security officers, who wore face masks, used helmets to brutally hit me and Fr Vu while we videoed them from outside the bus")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/police-prevent-catholics-in-vietnam-from-attending-mass/81053>



**India: Kalibai village, Dewas district, Madhya Pradesh state**

**Police raided a church during an Advent service attended by 30 people**

Rev Karan (arrested)

Kiram (arrested)

Bhikha (arrested)

Bagwan Singh (arrested)

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: said "Christians are increasingly intimidated and harassed. There is a palpable fear among [them], especially during this period of Advent, where prayer services and functions take place in small churches in preparation for the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ. [Anti-conversion laws are] an instrument of harassment by radical right-wing groups, with which they can accuse Christians of forced conversions and push the police to quickly detain them")

**India: Raikia**

**A prayer meeting was held for the seven Christians falsely imprisoned for the 2009 murder of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati**

Bhaskar Sunamajhi (husband of Debaki, father of one; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Bijay Kumar Sunseth (husband of Pabitra Sanseth, father of six; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Budhadeb Nayak (husband of Nilandri, father of five; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Durjo Sunamajhi (husband of Gumili, father of five; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Gornath Chalanseth (father of four; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Munda Badmajhi (husband of Bandigudali, father of four; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Sanatan Badmajhi (husband of Badusi, father of four; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Sushant Nayak (**UPDATE**: thanked journalist Anto Akkara for his work)

Anto Akkara (journalist, in attendance)

Debaki (wife of Bhaskar Sunamajhi, in attendance)

Bandigudali (wife of Munda Badmajhi, in attendance)

Pabitra Sanseth (wife of Bijay Kumar Sunseth, in attendance)

Gumili (wife of Durjo Sunamajhi, in attendance)

Badusi (wife of Sanatan Badmajhi, in attendance)

Nilandri (wife of Budhadeb Nayak, in attendance)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Four-Pentecostals-arrested-in-Madhya-Pradesh,-they-were-praying-for-Christmas-42571.html>

<http://mattersindia.com/2017/12/prayer-for-kandhamals-7-launched-in-odisha/>



### **Pakistan: Punjab province**

Rev Maurice Shahbaz (Director of Prisons Mission Society of Pakistan; **UPDATE:** in summary wrote "The Christian community inside the prisons of The Punjab in Pakistan are being persecuted and denied the same religious freedom as other religions. The missionaries/Pastors/Teachers have increasingly stopped access to the prisoners, while Muslim religious teachers - including the Muslim religious teachers of jails staff - can preach and teach with no limits and Christian prisoners inside Punjab Prisons are black mailed and tortured to become Muslims by the jails staff and they have not chance to improve the education")

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6707>



### **Iran: Tabriz, East Azerbaijan province**

Ali Amini aka Philip (recent convert, husband, father of two aged 3 and 1, arrested at his workplace, held without charge)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3901>

<http://www.persecution.org/2018/02/15/iranian-imprisoned-shortly-conversion-status-remains-unclear/>

**Monday December 11, 2017**



### **Australia: Strathfield**

Pastor Mark Powell (cited increased anti-Christian statements by homosexual activists after Parliament passed the same-sex marriage bill, wrote "Let it be known that on the December 7, 2017 – the day in Australian Parliamentary history when "love won" – the hate campaign truly began")

## **Australia**

Lyle Shelton (traditional marriage supporter, mercilessly attacked in social media by homosexual activists after Parliament passed the same-sex marriage bill)

### **Australia: Perth**

James Parker (husband, father, former homosexual, conversion and ministry attacked by homosexual activists after Parliament passed the same-sex marriage bill)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/christians-fear-retribution-for-opposing-same-sex-marriage-in-australia>

<https://www.spectator.com.au/2017/12/the-hate-campaign-begins-as-lovewins/>



### **India: Padanpur, near Bhubaneswar**

**A prayer meeting was held for the seven Christians falsely imprisoned for the 2009 murder of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati**

Anto Akkara (journalist, **UPDATE:** said “Seven innocents of Kandhamal are living martyrs of the faith”)

Archbishop John Barwa SVD (uncle of Sr Meena Barwa; **UPDATE:** introduced journalist Anto Akkara)

<http://mattersindia.com/2017/12/prayer-for-kandhamals-7-launched-in-odisha/>



### **Nigeria: Minawao refugee camp, Pulka**

Fr Gideon Obasogie (**UPDATE:** described a Boko Haram attack on a refugee camp which killed four persons "We gathered that the Boko Haram elements made their way into the returnees from the Minawao camp and exploded their suicide belt [the army said it was a mortar attack] killing dozens including two Pastors [Catechists] from that community who had been appointed by the bishop of Maiduguri Most Rev Oliver Dashe Doeme")

### **Nigeria: Numan local government Area, Adamawa state**

John Dodo (local resident, said “These herdsmen are not the normal Bororo [pastoralists] we are used to. Look at the kinds of weapons they use. They are heavily armed with different sophisticated weapon such as machine guns, RPGs [rocket propelled grenades], AK47s [assault rifles], knives, machetes, bows and arrows – one can wonder where they got all these firearms from. It’s like they are hired from other countries”)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63392->

[AFRICA NIGERIA The drama of displaced people caused by Boko Haram](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63392-)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/nigeria-government-failure-and-the-spread-of-fulani-herdsmen-attacks-in-adamawa-state/>



### **Nicaragua: Managua**

Auxiliary Bishop Silvio Jose Baez (said in a homily "There is paralysis due to fear. There are people who are paralyzed by fear, unable to speak or express their outrage because of injustices and abuses of civil and military authorities...Today we are unfortunately living in a society interested in the production of paralytics. There are people and groups of power committed to keeping people with mental paralysis, in which the dominant ideology tries to avoid at all costs that people think freely and make discernment with moral depth...We are getting used to the horrible and shameful physical and moral violence against women and children, inexplicable killings, arbitrary arrests, espionage and threats, irregular judicial proceedings, impunity, authoritarianism, corruption, lack of access to public information, fragility of institutions in the country, all of which produce social paralysis")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63381-AMERICA NICARAGUA Bishop Baez Paralyzed by fear we are getting used to physical and moral violence>

**Tuesday December 12, 2017**



### **Indonesia**

**Church leaders were reported to have issued a statement titled "Let the Peace of Christ Reign in your Hearts" regarding the current religious and political conflicts "At the moment we are worried. Our unity as an Indonesian nation is in danger of breaking. Restlessness and worry have been felt more and more in recent years. There are those who, vaguely or shamelessly, are tempted to follow different paths and ways of the Charter at the base of our nation, the Pancasila. This was seen in many acts and events: in an unhealthy political competition that justifies any means, in the restricted fanaticism that exploits religion and in many other ways"**

Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo (UPDATE)

Bishop Antonius Subianto Bunjamin

Henriette T H Lebang

Pastor Gomar Gultom (**UPDATE**)

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63384-  
ASIA\\_INDONESIA\\_Christian\\_Bishops\\_Indonesia\\_risks\\_division](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63384-ASIA_INDONESIA_Christian_Bishops_Indonesia_risks_division)



## **Pakistan**

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer in [Faisalabad](#) 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; 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; **UPDATE**: received a threatening phone call)

## **Pakistan: Karachi**

Susan Thomas (activist, city council member, asked about equality when all of the Muslims arrested for the recent riots have been released but the Christians arrested for the March 15, 2015 riot that followed the twin church bombings in Youhananbad are still jailed)

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

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/255357-if-faizabad-rioters-can-be-freed-why-are-christian-protesters-still-in-jail>



## **Iran: Karaj**

### **Four Christians were detained after raids on their homes**

Alireza Nour-Mohammadi

Pastor Amin Khaki (**UPDATE**)

Milad Goudarzi

Shehabuddin Shahi

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3813>



### **Mexico: Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua state**

Bishop Jose Guadalupe Torres Campos (condemned the murder of two people who were rehearsing for a dance in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe: "There is no respect for anyone, it is the extreme of evil, how dare they? These murders are not like the others, although it must be said that no homicide is good, but these people were not at a party or getting drunk, they were matachines who were dancing for the Virgin of Guadalupe, in an act of faith and love, this suggests that there is no longer any respect for anything or anyone")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63394->

[AMERICA MEXICO Two dancers of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe killed meaningless violence](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63394-)

**Wednesday December 13, 2017**



### **Kazakhstan: Akmola**

Yuri Bekker (arrested in [Arkalyk, Kostanai region](#) on [September 10, 2015](#) for distributing religious literature, released after 5 hours of questioning, literature seized; charged by police on [September 11, 2015](#) after distributing more religious material; fined US\$252 on [March 24, 2016](#); convicted in [Zhaksy, Akmola region](#) on [October 31, 2017](#) on a criminal charge for refusing to pay his fine, sentenced to one year imprisonment, sentence suspended, may be imprisoned or have his home seized if he continues to refuse to pay the fine; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2345](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2345)



### **Greece: Fthiotida**

Metropolitan Nicholas (**UPDATE**: said "When the [financial] crisis began, the authorities established that in place of ten retiring state employees [including priests], only one new one could be taken on for work. But today positions are being given to thousands of officials, while the same limitations have remained in relation to the Church. As a result, countless village parishes remain without a priest...Do not deceive yourselves — the reduction of clergy is not due to financial considerations. There are other motives")

### **Greece: Kalavryta**

Metropolitan Ambrose Lenis (aged 79; **UPDATE**: wrote a letter to Minister of Health Pavlos Polakis: "You are destroying Greece. It is no accident that we have added a new petition to the Church services in our diocese: 'For our impious, godless, and faithless rulers, the persecutors of our holy Faith and Fatherland, the members of our parliament who hate and wrong us, and for their repentance, let us pray to the Lord'...Look at the state hospitals, which fall within the scope of your responsibilities. They don't even have bandaging materials for the Greek patients. The priority for any medical assistance is given exclusively to immigrants! Greek citizens are starving and suffering!")

<http://orthochristian.com/109143.html>

<http://orthochristian.com/109149.html>



### **Nigeria: Cross River state**

Fr Cyril Effiong Essien (abducted in [Awi, Akamkpa local government area, Cross River state](#) on [December 8, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been released after a ransom was paid)

<http://dailypost.ng/2017/12/13/abducted-catholic-priest-rev-father-cyril-effiong-released/>



### **Algeria: Oran**

Pastor Louis Martinez (aged 60 plus, French citizen, refused re-entry to the country, wife later left as well)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/algeria-two-churches-closed-others-threatened/>

**Thursday December 14, 2017**



### **India: Satna, Madhya Pradesh state**

Fr George Mangalappally (said Hindu radicals interrupted their caroling with allegations the singing was an illegal conversion activity "One of them called police and demanded action against us", detained by police, released on bail)



Fr Robin (said “The Fathers and Brothers had gone for the program, when a group of Bajrang Dal [the RSS paramilitary youth wing] people had turned up and accused us of carrying out conversions and then the police came...After being taken to the police station, they were beaten up by another group of Bajrang Dal members”)

Fr Anish Emmanuel (went to the police station to help the detained carolers, said "We were beaten up in front of the police, but they did nothing. They set our vehicle on fire, forcing us to take shelter inside the police station")

Fr Joseph Ottapurackal, (St Ephrem Theological College rector, wrote concerning the attacks on Christmas carolers in which 10 priests and 30 seminarians were beaten and arrested: "We strongly condemn the atrocities against the Christian missionaries and intimidation of religious minorities. We demand immediate action from the civil authorities against those involved in the incident”)

Fr Stephen Maria (church spokesman, denounced the attack on the 10 priests and 30 seminarians: "The freedom to practice and profess one's faith is suspended by extremists. The celebrations of Christmas have already been disturbed. This is an attack on the secular nature of the country")

Bishop Joseph Kodakkailil (said he had been accused of offering US\$65 to a villager in exchange for the villager's conversion)

Shibu Thomas (founder of Persecution Relief, **UPDATE:** said that this incident was the 48th attack on carolers this Advent season)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE:** condemned the attack on the 10 priests and 30 seminarians: “[They were] conducting a routine Christmas carol singing program which has been the practice during the Christmas season for the last 30 years...The charge of conversion on which the priests and seminarians were detained is frivolous and laughable. The violence perpetrated by groups who claim to be ‘nationalists’ and have taken upon themselves the mantle of protecting ‘nationalism’ and ‘religion’ is disgraceful...The complicity of the police who arrested the seminarians and stood by helplessly as the priests and seminarians were assaulted is disgusting and appalling. Such misuse of the police force and the breakdown of law and order is not tolerable in a democracy and in a civilized society...What is even more shocking is that eight priests who later went to inquire about the detained priests and seminarians were also taken into custody. Shamefully, the situation outside the police station was allowed to be so hostile that even those who wanted to approach the detained persons could get no access to them...The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India condemns the behavior of the goons who even went on to torch the vehicle of the priests. All right-thinking Indians will hang their heads in shame at these terrorists who have taken on the garb of ‘religious police’. We are absolutely sure that they do not speak in the name of our very broad-minded and peace-loving Hindu brethren”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Indian-Church-slams-attack-on-seminarians-and-priests-in-Madhya-Pradesh-42600.html>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/False-charges-of-forced-conversions-over-Christmas-carols-in-Madhya-Pradesh-42615.html>

<http://mattersindia.com/2017/12/satna-attack-converted-man-changes-statement/>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/hindu-activists-in-india-beat-eight-priests-torch-car/81086>



### **Pakistan**

Fr Inayat Bernard (**UPDATE:** reacted to an announcement that there would be no Christmas exemption to electrical power cuts "There will be no electricity, especially in Christian-majority settlements on Christmas, I can bet on it. They don't care about us. We are not considered equal citizens or even humans")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/power-cuts-dampen-christmas-season-in-pakistan/81076>



### **Mali**

Fr Edmond Dembele (spokesman for the Episcopal Conference of Mali, **UPDATE:** said "The security situation in different areas of Mali has been a concern for several months...There have been several terrorist attacks in the center of the Country in recent months that are becoming increasingly regular...These groups are linked to illegal trafficking - weapons, drugs, cigarettes, human beings - that are concentrated in the center of Mali. These are very lucrative trades and smugglers like jihadists have an interest in sowing chaos to prevent the State from controlling the area to enforce the law")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63399-AFRICA\\_MALI\\_Mali\\_is\\_the\\_epicenter\\_of\\_jihadist\\_groups\\_that\\_rage\\_in\\_Sahel](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63399-AFRICA_MALI_Mali_is_the_epicenter_of_jihadist_groups_that_rage_in_Sahel)

**Friday December 15, 2017**



### **United Kingdom**

Rev Franklin Graham (son of the Rev Billy Graham, U.S. citizen, reportedly may be banned from entering the country for alleged hate speech aka orthodox Christianity)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/franklin-graham-spoke-bible-truth-about-lgbt.-now-the-uk-wants-to-ban-him-f>



## United States

**Christian and Muslim leaders issued the joint statement "Created Male and Female: An Open Letter from Religious Leaders" which condemned gender ideology: "...We acknowledge and affirm that all human beings are created by God and thereby have an inherent dignity. We also believe that God created each person male or female; therefore, sexual difference is not an accident or a flaw...Children especially are harmed when they are told that they can "change" their sex or, further, given hormones that will affect their development and possibly render them infertile as adults. Parents deserve better guidance on these important decisions, and we urge our medical institutions to honor the basic medical principle of "first, do no harm." Gender ideology harms individuals and societies by sowing confusion and self-doubt. The state itself has a compelling interest, therefore, in maintaining policies that uphold the scientific fact of human biology and supporting the social institutions and norms that surround it...The movement today to enforce the false idea — that a man can be or become a woman or vice versa — is deeply troubling. It compels people to either go against reason — that is, to agree with something that is not true — or face ridicule, marginalization, and other forms of retaliation..."**

Bishop Joseph C Bambera

Archbishop Foley Beach

Bishop John F Bradosky

Archbishop Charles J Chaput OFM Cap (**UPDATE**)

Bishop James D Conley

Bishop John A M Guernsey

Rev Dr Matthew Harrison

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

Archbishop Melchisedek

Bishop Eric V Menees

Rev Eugene F. Rivers III

Rev Dr Gregory P Seltz

Bishop Emeritus Paull Spring

Rev Tony Suarez

Very Rev Nathanael Symeonides

Rev Dr L Roy Taylor

Andrew Walker (Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission Director of Policy Studies)

Rev Dr David Wendel

Elder Paul Winter

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/created-male-and-female.cfm>

**Saturday December 16, 2017**



**China: Shanghai**

Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin (ordained as bishop on [July 7, 2012](#), then disappeared after stating in his first homily that he would resign from the state-sponsored church; **UPDATE**: still under house arrest)

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Shanghai's-St.-Ignatius-Cathedral-reopens.-Msgr.-Ma-Daqin-Absent-\(Video\)-42606.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Shanghai's-St.-Ignatius-Cathedral-reopens.-Msgr.-Ma-Daqin-Absent-(Video)-42606.html)



**United Kingdom: Ilford**

Wilson Chowdhry (**UPDATE**: called police after a Christmas display hosted by nine local churches in a shopping district was interrupted by an unauthorized Islamic display that used loudspeakers with Islamic chants to drown out the Christmas music, the chants caused panic among some shoppers, police ordered the chanting to cease, the Muslims were from a mosque with known extremist ties)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/police-called-to-ilford-town-centre-after-allah-akhbar-chant-played-during-christian-event-set-of-te>

**Sunday December 17, 2017**



**Pakistan: Quetta, Balochistan**

**Four suicide bombers attacked a church during a children's Christmas Nativity pageant, police and parishioners shot two before they could gain entry to the church but one was able to detonate his vest, the other two fled, at least 14 were killed and 57 wounded, 9 critically**

George Masih (aged 58, father of five, church groundskeeper and security guard, locked the church gate to deny entry to the killers, **killed**)

Sultan Masih (aged 40, husband, father of five, son of Siraj Masih, railroad ticket collector, had helped George Masih close the gate to the church courtyard, **killed**)

Mrs Masih (widow of Sultan Masih, said "I lost my champion, Sultan was my protector and now I feel so vulnerable. I have five children all in education and now we cannot even afford to pay our daily living expenses")

Gulzar Masih (aged 49, father of seven including Ramesh, laboratory technician, **killed**, had bolted the church door during the attack)

Ramish (aged 18, son of Gulzar Masih, injured in the head and right hand, said "I heard gunfire just as I and my younger brother Ishaq were bringing out the youngest children in the church for their nativity drama. My brother and I quickly pulled the children back into the room where they had been changing into costumes. Then a loud explosion occurred I later woke up in hospital...While there I discovered my brother, mother and father were also in hospital. My brother and mother survived but my father lost his life which is a brutal blow to our family. Our future is uncertain and we have lost a wonderful loving father who we all miss terribly...I will never be able to repay my father for everything he has done for me - it's heartbreaking")

Mehak (aged 13, daughter of Sohail Yousaf, sister of Wasiqa, **killed**)

Wasiqa (aged 16, daughter of Sohail Yousaf, sister of Mehak, hospitalized in critical condition)

Sohail Yousaf (aged 44, father of four including Mehak and Wasiqa, insurance manager, said "It was a pleasant morning. We had sung songs and children had presented a Christmas program. Pastor Simon Bashir had finished his sermon and we were moving towards the altar when we started hearing gunfire outside the church...We bolted all the doors and were praying that God would protect each of us. Then a suicide bomber blew himself up at the main door. The explosion shattered the door and injured many inside. When some rushed outside, they were injured by gunfire as the terrorists were on the church lawn. But soon the situation was brought under control by the volunteer church security guards and police present there...Losing my daughter at such a young age is morale-sapping I have not yet come to terms with her death. She was a beautiful, friendly and intelligent child that did nothing to hurt anyone. Every memory I have of her will be cherished she will never be forgotten")

Akash Masih (aged 19, college student, son of Naseem Masih and Parveen Bibi, **killed**)

Aster (aged 22, sister of Akash Masih, hospitalized due to shrapnel lodged in her intestines)

Naveed Masih (aged 15, brother of Akash Masih, shot in the elbow, hospitalized)

Parveen Bibi (wife of Naseem Masih, mother of six including Akash, Naveed, and Aster, hospitalized with head wounds, released)

Naseem Masih (husband of Parveen Bibi, father of six including Akash, Naveed, and Aster, said "My heart is broken, I have lost my handsome, intelligent wonderful son who was in command of his life and was heading towards a good future. His death has shattered our family, we all feel broken, we still cannot believe he is gone. It breaks my heart that I will never see him grow up...Our family is still going through great pain as we wait to see if Aster will survive, I pray on my knees night and day pleading with God to return her to me, it would be a cruel blow if we lose both children, we have done nothing to hurt these evil, twisted murderers, their attack makes no sense...God is our only hope in this country, I will never forsake Him, my family and I will all be back at church on Sunday. We are Christians it is what we do - despite the constant targeting")

Fazal Masih (aged 53, husband of Shenaz, father of five including Faraz, son of Malik Masih, welding shop owner, **killed**)

Shenaz (aged 42, widow of Fazal Masih)

Faraz (aged 22, son of Fazal Masih, said "It was the desire of my father that his all children obtain higher education but now we will all struggle without him. I was going to follow up my bachelors degree with a Master's Degree but now will have to find work to support my family...Our lives have been destroyed and filled with sorrow by some wicked men who are heartless. I hope the two men that are on the run are found and that their capture leads to the exposure of others who are planning similar attacks")

Sona Nazaf (daughter of Noaf Hameed, **killed**)

Madeeha Barkat (aged 29, daughter of Barkat Ali, sister of Danish Gill, partially disabled from polio, **killed**)

Danish Gill (aged 27, brother of Madeeha Barkat, said "Despite disabilities my sister was the most loving and caring sister I knew. She would make tea and would lay the table for me and my brothers when we came home from work and school. She was always the one who would open the door to me and I could talk to her about anything...She never complained about her disabilities and lived her life to the full. She survived such a debilitating illness and proved her worth ten times over, which is why her cruel death hurts so much. Our sister was a warrior - she conquered polio and life's difficulties but this heinous attack was too much for her. I will miss her every day of my life")

Salamti Bibi (aged 42, wife of Younas Masih, mother of three including Anum, **killed**)

Anun (aged 19, daughter of Salamti Bibi and Younas Masih, teacher, injured in the foot, said "We were in church, we were celebrating the birth of Jesus. We meant no harm to anyone, we were completely innocent. The two men involved in this attack killed my mother as they killed us all. All they had was hate, a deep rooted twisted hate, that meant they were devoid of compassion...Evil men like this have destroyed our country, they have shattered so many lives and now my family have experienced the same deep sorrow that others who have lost loved ones to a brutal unexpected death. It has shocked me to the core and I am finding it so hard to cope, my emotions are a mixture of anger, frustration and sorrow...I know I will see my mother in heaven one day, but the wait is so long and for now it is small solace. She has been the most beautiful thing in my life and now she is no longer there. I cry myself to sleep and I pray for her, I ask God to let her know that I love her so much")

Sunila Nidat (aged 35, wife of Nidat Masih, mother of Elijah and Zarek, daughter of Arif Bhatti, **killed**)

Nidat Masih (aged 44, agricultural engineer, widower of Sunila Nidat, father of Elijah and Zarek, injured, hospitalized, released, temporarily disabled, said "I lost the love of my life, my wife of 11 years. We had a very happy home and were enjoying bringing up our wonderful children. The blast took Sunila away from me and has left my children terrified, they think that church is a place to be feared, but it is not. It is these killers in our midst that should be feared as they are everywhere and they will no doubt attack us again and again because Christians are anathema...These people have no emotions they are brainwashed and taught that we are demons, but it is obvious who are innocent and evil in this attack...I have to care for my two boys without my wife and I know it will be hard but I will raise them into fine men whatever happens, I owe this to my wife's memory. She is a martyr who is with God now and though I want to pray that I am united with her soon I know I must first see my two boys to adulthood. I just hope she forgives me for failing to protect her from the Islamists that took her life")

Elijah (aged 9, son of Sunila Nidat and Nidat Masih, escaped uninjured due to his parents' actions, psychologically traumatized)

Zarek (aged 5, son of Sunila Nidat and Nidat Masih, escaped uninjured due to his parents' actions, psychologically traumatized)

Arif Bhatti (father of Sunila Nidat)

Ashraf (son of Manzoor, injured)

Sultan (son of Mizaj, injured)

Saiqa (wife of Sohail, injured)

Aaliya Naeem (injured)

Nadia (injured)

Mekal (injured)

Saima (injured)

Sunil (injured)

Shamim (injured)

Yasir Naveed (injured)

Shezadi Shamshad (injured)

Adil (injured)

Khushi (injured)

Salma (injured)

Hanan (injured)

Sadaf (injured)

Jospheen (injured)

Ayeasha (injured)

Eman Wali (injured)

Zeeshan (injured)

Aksa (injured)

Haroon James (wounded, younger brother hospitalized in critical condition with shrapnel in his lungs, sister-in-law killed, said "Everybody panicked as Muslim policemen and church volunteers exchanged fire with the terrorists trying to get inside... We moved towards the altar to protect ourselves, but they continued to bomb the church and hit the doors to enter. When I realized it was an attack, I immediately went to the school of catechism where the children were: I closed the door and pushed a wardrobe in front of the doors, to protect them")

Aqil Anjum (shot in his right arm, said "The situation was so chaotic that my mind had numbed. My condition was such that I initially didn't even feel the bullet piercing my arm")

Arooba Maryam (aged 15, shot in the abdomen, unable to attend school due to a stoma, said "I thank God that he allowed me to survive my injuries, I feel upset that I have survived when so many have lost their lives. I pray that God takes care of those who have fallen, they did not deserve to lose their lives")

Aleeza (aged 18 months, daughter of Ashraf Masih, injured with shrapnel in her abdomen)

Ashraf Masih (father of Aleeza, railroad station janitor, said "Aleeza survived very serious wounds at such a tender age and I can only believe that God has a great purpose for her life...My wife and I could not stop weeping when we thought she was dead, but God brought her back from the brink of death...We rejoice in our Lord who chose to preserve our child's life and we will dedicate her very existence to the furtherance of His Kingdom. Our God truly is great")

Yousaf Khokhar (aged 58, widower, father of five, police constable, injured with glass shards, said "I have been praying for courage because the attack has left me feeling anxious and traumatized. I will never forget the loud sound of the explosion - it still fills me with dread")

Nadia Younas (aged 19, sister of Saima and Aqsa, injured, Nativity pageant performer, said "I was in a queue for Holy Communion nearly all the church was in a line as we prepared to receive the bread, whilst awaiting my turn I could hear gun shots, I was in a fit of panic and did not know what to do. Thankfully Pastor Simon quickly instructed the church to sit or lay down on the floor, he told us to get as low as we could in whatever place we could find...We could hear bullets being fired and I felt a pain sear through my abdominal region I just screamed and screamed, then a loud blast was heard and I fell unconscious, I woke up later in hospital")

Aqsa (aged 10, sister of Nadia Younas and Saima)

Saima (aged 18, sister of Nadia Younas and Aqsa)

Maheen Shezad (aged 14, daughter of Shezad Masih, injured in the abdomen and ankle with shrapnel, hospitalized)



Shezad Masih (father of Maheen Shezad, received a minor head injury, hospitalized, released, said "I was so frightened I thought I was going to die. I still can't believe it happened so many people have been killed - every time I remember what happened I just feel like crying. I will never forget this day it is a painful reminder that Christians are always in danger here in Pakistan")

Shamim Bibi (aged 39, wife, mother of two, injured with shrapnel in the knee, hospitalized)

Tina Qasim (aged 29, wife, mother of five, injured in the right shoulder with shrapnel, hospitalized, released)

Adil Daniel (aged 28, husband of Salva Adil, father of Nida and Mariam, unemployed, injured with shrapnel in the left foot)

Salva Adil (aged 26, wife of Adil Daniel, mother of Nida and Mariam, injured with shrapnel in the abdomen, discharged without completion of treatment)

Ashraf Masih (aged 35, husband of Shazia, driver, shot in the back, hospitalized, both arms paralyzed, said "I was happy and content with life, my wife and were praying for a child but other than that everything was perfect. The men who shot me have left me with two paralyzed arms and I am terrified that I will never have movement back in them...I want Christians everywhere to pray for me, this is so unfair I have done nothing wrong and now only God can help me. He has saved my life now with their help and prayers I want to be able to hold my wife in my arms again and to be able to drive again that I might be able to support the two of us. Please pray for me")

Rev Saimon Bashir Masih (said "Suddenly I heard the firing in church compound...Our church gatekeeper, George Masih, was the first person who fell to the terrorists' bullets...The worshippers panicked and cried loud for God's mercy. Seconds later, the windows shattered with explosion at the door. Some people were injured with ball bearings from the bomb. Those who were hit in the head collapsed on church benches...Thanks to our young volunteers and police guards, the terrorists could not enter inside the church hall packed with more than 400 people, including 80 children from Sunday school...We are lucky to be alive, but my congregation is like my family. I was single when I arrived in the city a decade ago and now all of my relatives are here. We spent more than a million [rupees] in decorating the building and polishing the furniture. I saw them die and I could not do anything", has been ordered to temporarily vacate his home, added that the church may not be able to reopen until after New Year's)

Kal Alaxander (aged 52, present with his wife and two children. said "We were in services when we heard a big bang. Then there was shooting. The prayer hall's wooden door broke and fell on us...We hid the women and children under desks [pews?]")

Sunil Pervaiz (present in the church with his sister, said: "We hid the women and children under the benches, but just then a deafening explosion occurred, breaking the wooden door and the glass windows. I saw several people covered in blood ... some were lying on the floor, some limping away to safety. It was sheer chaos")

Mehreen Joseph (aged 43, 17-year-old son suffered multiple wounds, said "I am thankful to God Almighty that my son is alive, but my heart grieves for the families of our congregation who have lost their loved ones today. The church was brimming with activity for the pre-

Christmas service, and we all were very excited to be there, but our happiness has been turned into sadness”)

Jacob Masih (said “People started running to the corners of the church when the firing started. All of this happened very quickly, leaving most of us in a state of shock and disbelief. Many, including myself, thought that it was the last day of our lives”)

Sidra Shams (said many of the children participating in the Nativity pageant were unharmed)

Alizah (younger sister of Maryam George, hospitalized with two broken legs and other injuries)

Maryam George (aged 20, sister of Alizeh)

Sheezan William (Caritas Executive Director, said “I came to know what was happening while the exchange of fire was taking place. I phoned two youths in the choir. I could hear gunfire on the phone and then rushed to the church...The injured were taken to the Civil Hospital, CMH, Akram Hospital and other private hospitals. Relatives picked up two bodies from the church and took them away, which is why they are not counted in official numbering...A team of about 70 youths is working day and night to provide blood supplies, food or any other assistance to the injured, and coffins for the burial”)

Bishop Sadiq Daniel (said at the funerals following the church attack: "We are all in the same boat, terrorists are targeting everyone, they are attacking mosques, schools, universities, hospitals, armed forces, they want to destabilize Pakistan, they have their own political agenda. We, as followers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, are opting for peace and we will work to maintain serenity and coexistence...Once again we are being put to the test...Our God, Emmanuel, the God-with-us who we celebrate at Christmas, is beside us and will console us, he takes care of us, he is fair and will do justice for his people")

Archbishop Sebastian Francis Shah OFM (**UPDATE:** said "It was a day of sorrow for all Pakistanis and especially for Christians. It proves they don't believe in any religion, they neither respect worshippers or God...Military and religious leaders assured us that we are united as a nation. We are receiving messages of condolence from all religious communities...The enemy is not at the borders, but in our streets and surroundings")

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/innocent-christians-massacred-by-muslims-during-nativity-service-in-quetta>

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/pakistan-quetta-church-under-suicidal-attack/>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6716>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6717>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6718>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6719>

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Quetta,-pastor-of-the-Methodist-Church:-The-faithful-implored-God's-mercy-\(Video\)-42612.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Quetta,-pastor-of-the-Methodist-Church:-The-faithful-implored-God's-mercy-(Video)-42612.html)

<https://www.charismanews.com/world/68757-suicide-bombers-murder-9-injure-dozens-in-sunday-morning-church-attack>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63418->

[ASIA\\_PAKISTAN\\_In\\_Quetta\\_the\\_funerals\\_of\\_Christians\\_victims\\_of\\_the\\_attack\\_that\\_wants\\_to\\_destabilize\\_Pakistan](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63418-ASIA_PAKISTAN_In_Quetta_the_funerals_of_Christians_victims_of_the_attack_that_wants_to_destabilize_Pakistan)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63427->

[ASIA\\_PAKISTAN\\_Methodist\\_Bishop\\_Christians\\_are\\_being\\_put\\_to\\_the\\_test\\_the\\_God](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63427-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Methodist_Bishop_Christians_are_being_put_to_the_test_the_God)

[with us will console ushttps://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/suicide-attack-church-pakistan-darkens-christmas-celebrations/](https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/suicide-attack-church-pakistan-darkens-christmas-celebrations/)  
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/quetta-church-bomb-survivors-recount-horror/81110>  
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/pakistan-bomb-attack/>  
<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/Bethel-memorial-methodist-church-plan-christmas-service-despite-traumatic-bomb-attac>

**Monday December 18, 2017**



**Indonesia: Jakarta, West Java**

**Christian leaders refused to participate in a Christmas event at the National Monument [aka Monas], the government's invitation and prior approval of Islamic use was a reversal of the policy of now imprisoned Christian former governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok**

Manuel Raintung (Council of Churches of Indonesia, said "We must make sure that Monas remains a national monument where the spirit of unity among the different Indonesian peoples can show itself")

Fr Suyadi (said "In our meeting with the city administration, I told them that we Catholics of the Archdiocese of Jakarta are called to celebrate Christmas in our respective parish churches. Celebrating Christmas in churches rather than in open public spaces has been our tradition for decades")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christians-say-no-the-Christmas-event-organised-by-Jakarta%E2%80%99s-Islamist-governor-42614.html>



**Vietnam: Dien My commune, Nghe An province**

Fr Dominic Pham Xuan Ke (reported to have led parish opposition to a government attempt to remove the parish's Nativity display)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/government-demand-for-removal-of-nativity-sparks-tension/81090>



## **Iraq: Mosul and the Nineveh Plain**

Amir Yaqu (reported to have said that circumstances are "even worse" for Christians now that the Islamic State [ISIL] has been replaced by the Shia militia Hashd al-Shaabi which is "systematically trying to change the Christian demography of these places")

<http://www.thealabamabaptist.org/iraqi-christians-now-fearing-shiafication/>



## **Nigeria: Kankomi village, Kaduna state**

John Garba (reported: "In Rimi village, the son of the Baptist pastor there, the Rev Nathan Maidoya, was shot dead when the Fulani kidnappers could not find the pastor at home. This pastor left the village immediately after his son was killed. [A Christian identified as Mr Habila was shot and killed...In Taso village a pastor was abducted and tortured: he] was disfigured by machete cuts wounds, when the kidnappers released him, he packed out of the village")

## **Nigeria: Kwanti village, Kaduna state**

Pastor Emmanuel Abu (aged 30, fled his village with all of his parishioners, said "We had to leave too because we were not safe. There are pastors that were kidnapped in other places too around here, and so if we had not left the village we would have become victims too. Out of the 85 members of my church, one was killed, and five were kidnapped by the Muslim Fulani kidnappers this year alone")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/muslim-fulani-kidnappers-ravage-village-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



## **United Kingdom**

Dennis Sewell (wrote "The First Amendment of the US Constitution protects both free speech and the free exercise of religion. Perhaps, post-Brexit, Britain will be allowed to treat itself to something similar. We are going to need it. Hardly a week passes without some public body overstepping the mark in seeking to curb free expression, religious practice, or both. This week, Ofsted's [the education agency's] annual report appears to be demanding powers to combat thoughtcrime in faith schools...It does not take a great leap of the imagination to see, for instance, a big crash coming between the mainstream faiths and transgender ideologues. Police forces up and down the country have shown in their often crass social media policies that they could very easily regard parts of the Catechism of the Catholic Church as hate speech. We need a constitutional protection and we need it soon")

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2017/12/18/will-ofsted-start-policing-thoughtcrime-in-schools/>

**Tuesday December 19, 2017**



### **Philippines**

Sr Mary John Mananzan OSB (said she was "appalled" by a government announcement that there would be no Christmas truce with Communist rebels: "Many more civilians will be endangered. We will see many new evacuations and victims in crossfire. How much more suffering can tribal and poor people face?")

Sr Susan Bolanio (Hesed Foundation executive director; **UPDATE**: identified the dead in a government attack on a village as local leaders)

Maridel Fano (Rural Missionaries of the Philippines project coordinator, said "Tribal communities are the most vulnerable right now. They have long been accused of being members of armed groups. Their mere existence in their remote communities have made them a target")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-tribal-communities-brace-for-deadly-christmas/81102>



### **China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province**

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (detained on [May 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: recovering from surgery, still in detention in [Xining, Qinghai province](#), diocese has organized a monthly prayer campaign for his release)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Wenzhou,-a-prayer-campaign-for-Mgr-Shao-Zhumin,-who-is-still-in-detention-42623.html>



### **India: Madhya Pradesh state**

Osmand Charles (activist; **UPDATE**: reported to have criticized Hindu nationalists in the Hindu Jagran Manch [HJM] who demanded that Christmas not be celebrated in Christian

schools: “[It] has come as a shock for Christians in Aligarh. There is fear in the community, [they are] spreading insecurity among minorities”)

Fr Johnson Dugal O.Carm (teacher, reported to have said "It is abominable that the hard-line Hindu outfit groups continue to issue repeated dictate, intimidations and threats to Christians and attacking them in different parts of India. Most of all the students are Hindus and Muslims here, but they are cooperative with us so far. Last year one Pastor was forced to tonsure his head and was paraded on a public road, thinking he was converting people without any solid evidence")

### **India: Jharkhand state**

Fr Savarimuthu M SJ (teacher, reported to have said "False propaganda of religious conversions, intimidating minority institutions in the name of religion under the patronage of ruling parties has become a great threat to the very constitutional right of citizens in India. Slowly but steadily India is moving towards pseudo-theocracy. It is a time that all the Indians woke up to realize this and defend India against these fascist forces")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Uttar-Pradesh:-Hindus-want-Christmas-banned-in-Catholic-schools,-claim-it-lures-Hindu-students-to-Christianity-42627.html>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63429->

[ASIA INDIA Threats of Hindu extremists to Christian schools in view of Christmas](#)



### **Pakistan**

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer in [Faisalabad](#) 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; 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; received a threatening phone call on [December 12, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: fled the country for Sri Lanka)

### **Pakistan: Punjab province**

Khalil Tahir Sindhu (provincial Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Minister, **UPDATE**: said 1,100 police officers will be deployed to churches for Christmas: "Even the smallest church will have five police guards. We are vigilant, the rest depends on God. We are ready to die and will not compromise on religious obligations. However, this Christmas will be celebrated with simplicity", a police officer added that police have trained more than 100 church volunteers in armed self defense skills)

### **Pakistan: Quetta, Balochistan**

Rev Saimon Bashir Masih (**UPDATE:** said "I used to travel around the province with visitors without fear. Christians, living in scattered communities across the province, lived silently in peaceful co-existence. But Daesh [ISIL - Islamic State] terrorists are now targeting us one by one")

**Pakistan: Sambrial. Sialkot district, Punjab province**

Fr Victor Sawera (church attacked and vandalized by 50 armed men from a 'moderate' political party in retaliation for his refusal to allow a Protestant group to use the premises, said "This is our internal matter and Muslims should not get involved")

Fr Bhuro Mangho (church attacked)

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

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/church-security-to-have-weapons-at-christmas-services/81111>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/second-pakistan-church-attacked-by-armed-mob/81132>



**Sri Lanka**

Sidra Masih (aged 26, Pakistani citizen, refugee, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, detained at the airport for deportation to Pakistan)

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



**Egypt: Beni Suef**

Abdul Masieh Ezzat (aged 9, reported to have had his sentence of one year's imprisonment for stealing 5 loaves of bread cancelled and conviction revoked after the complainant withdrew his complaint)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2050&A=33383>

**Wednesday December 20, 2017**



**Philippines: Catubig, Northern Samar province**

Fr Edwin A Gariguez (**UPDATE**: reported to have condemned a Communist rebel attack on soldiers who were providing emergency relief following a typhoon, two were wounded)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/caritas-condemns-attack-on-soldiers-helping-victims/81119>



**China: Huludao, Suizhong county, Liaoning province**

Pastor Wang Zhongliang (husband of Li; **UPDATE**: banned from holding services by the RAB - Religious Affairs Bureau - and told to 'go to a legitimate religious venue to participate in religious activities')

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/officials-close-church-for-holding.html>



**Sri Lanka**

Sidra Masih (aged 26, Pakistani citizen, refugee, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, detained at the airport on [December 19, 2017](#) for deportation to Pakistan; **UPDATE**: released after officials evaluated her mental state, hospitalized for three days, applied for asylum)

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



**India: Ganapathipalayam Panchayat**

Pastor Enosh Rajendran (month-old church reported to have been demolished despite having had permission for construction, said "We were allegedly facing threats from supporters of a Hindu-outfit to remove the church from the locality for the past two weeks. We have sent petitions to various government authorities seeking protection. The district administration authorities were forcing us to remove the church...When all of us came to meet the [tax] collector during the grievance day meeting, the church was demolished totally in presence of the police force")

**India: Karoli village, Pathankot Tehsil, Gurdaspur, Punjab state**

Pastor K K Oommen (aged 75, reported to have been beaten after handing out a Gospel tract)

Evangelist Mukesh Kumar (beaten)

**India: Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh state**



**Event UPDATE: Seven Christians who had been arrested on illegal conversion charges on December 4, 2017 were reported to have been released on a bail of US\$780 each**

Stanley Jacob

David Jacob

Vijay Kumar

Amit Kumar

Sumit Varghese

Anita (sister of Mamta Singh)

Dinesh

Pramod Singh (attorney, president of the Christian Legal Association; **UPDATE:** said “I am happy that the rule of law has been upheld by the Honorable Judge [who rejected] the frivolous and false accusations by some political ideologues seeking to restrict the fundamental rights of individuals to express their beliefs”)

Dr Michael Williams (United Christian Forum president, **UPDATE:** said “We have requested the SSP of Mathura to provide protection to all those granted bail today. My prayer is that in this month of Christmas may there be peace and harmony among all communities. I thank all for their prayers and encouragement who stood by together at this time”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Hindu-fundamentalists-against-Christmas-in-India-42636.html>

<http://www.persecution.in/node/4501>

<http://www.persecution.in/node/4503>



### **Egypt: Izziyah, Assyut province**

Ishak Nashaat Birwan (aged 14, cousin of Samir Fekry, disappeared on [December 9, 2017](#), police took no action; **UPDATE:** **found dead** in a canal, had been tortured)

Samir Fekry (cousin of Ishak Nashaat Birwan, said “Ishak’s body had facial deformities, it had no eyes and there were signs of torture on different parts of his body...After kidnapping him, none of the kidnappers contacted us demanding any ransom for his return. So why he was killed? Was it because he is a Christian? We demand the government find the killer and the cause of the killing and how he disappeared for 10 days until he was found dead”)

Rev Adel Rafaat (said “Ishak was a very good young man, he was one of our church members. He was loved by all of us and he loved everybody. He always had a smile...Ishak was targeted and killed because of his faith, because he is Christian. They wanted to spoil the joy of our coming Christmas. Extremists chose a young man from our village specifically because our village is a big Christian village and their aim was to turn Christmas joy of the villagers to sadness”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/26796/>



**United Kingdom: London**

Pastor Oluwole Ilesanmi (aged 62, arrested in [Wood Green, London](#) on [June 24, 2017](#) for saying there were connections between terrorism and the Quran while street preaching;  
**UPDATE:** charges reported to have been dropped)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/pastor-oluwole-ilesanmi-acquitted>



**United States – Michigan: Detroit**

Usama "Sam" Hamama (father of Lindsey Hamama, supermarket manager, facing deportation to Iraq for a prior conviction, came to the U.S. in the 1970's as a child)

Lindsey Hamama (aged 12, daughter of Usama "Sam" Hamama)

**United States – Michigan: Ferndale**

Christine Niles (reported that Christmas carolers at a city-approved nativity were disrupted by two-dozen atheists and Satanists with a bullhorn singing obscene parodies of carols and offering free donuts in exchange for worshipping Satan, said “What surprised me were the number of Satanists who showed up, wearing pentagrams and signs with the demon Baphomet, handing out satanic Christmas cards. There is a Satanic Temple in Detroit, and we've had run-ins with them before...All throughout our traditional Christmas carols, the protesters tried to drown out our caroling shouting blasphemies and anti-Catholic slurs, ‘Nazi punks,’ ‘Hail Contraception,’ ‘Hail Satan,’ and obscenities...Atheists also mocked us for our belief in Christ and mocked Christ Himself. They didn't seem to care that there were little children present as they cursed. A ‘transgender’ couple stood in full view of our group, including of the children, and started kissing”)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171220175900.htm>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/satanists-disrupt-christmas-carolers-singing-in-front-of-city-hall>

**Thursday December 21, 2017**



## **China**

Fr Joseph (teacher, said that the current anti-Christmas campaign at universities has been circulated privately among administrators to avoid legal challenges)

### **China: Shunyi district, Beijing**

Pastor Li (reported that the government has closed three churches)

### **China: Xiamen University, Fujian province**

Shou Chenxiao (PhD candidate, received a 'serious warning' for evangelizing on campus)

### **China: Xinjiang province**

Ma Huichao (sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment for 'gathering a crowd to disturb public order')

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/investigation-opens-in-schools-churches.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/uca-news-chinese-university-told-to-ban.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/christian-held-for-10-hours-for.html>



## **India: Aligarh**

### **A Hindu extremist invaded a home while people inside were singing Christmas carols**

Rahul Chauhan (drummer, attacked, unharmed)

Jitesh Chauhan (brother of Rahul Chauhan, said of the attacker “He kicked the musical instruments before trying to attack my brother with a knife”)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/24/christmas-violence-and-arrests-shake-indian-christians>



## **Uzbekistan: Urgench, Khorezm region**

Stanislav Kim (home raided by anti-terrorism police during a [November 14, 2017](#) worship service, worshippers were arrested and questioned for two hours at the police station, Christian books seized; **UPDATE:** fined US\$1,797)

Oybek Rahimov (husband of Gulnara Rahimov, detained on [November 14, 2017](#) at the home of Stanislav Kim, admitted under questioning that he read Christian books, home then raided by police, Bibles, songbooks, CDs, and laptop seized; **UPDATE:** fined US\$1,618)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2361](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2361)



## Syria

Rev Nadim Nassar (**UPDATE**: reported to have said that Christians would be celebrating a "wounded Christmas...This is like the thorn in every side: that the younger generation is not around any more. That does not mean that the Christians are not celebrating: they are celebrating to show that Christianity in Syria is not dead, and will never die...We are here to stay, and not only to stay, but to continue our role as a light in the community")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171221123607.htm>

**Friday December 22, 2017**



## Syria

Metropolitan Boutros Marayati (**UPDATE**: commented on the removal of explosives from churches "There's absolutely nothing planned in Raqa. The church is in ruins. Christians are going to visit, but there is no one living there")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171222122000.htm>



## Uganda: Bumogolo village

Regina Navatovu (aged 35, wife, mother of 4 day old twins, attacked by her Muslim husband with a machete for refusing to convert to Islam, lost her right hand and some fingers on her other hand, children killed)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/uganda-refusal-to-convert-to-islam-ends-in-family-tragedy/>



## Egypt: Waslin village, Atfieh, Giza

Eid Attiya (owner of a building used as a church that was attacked and contents destroyed by a mob)

Rev Yehnes Youssef (diocesan spokesman, said three Copts were injured in an attack on a church by a mob)

Bishop Zusima (said that the attacked church has been in use by up to 500 people each week since 2001, and addressed Muslim complaints that the location of the church was unacceptable “The nearest church is a kilometer away and the people of the village of Waslin would have to walk this distance to be able to pray. There is no transportation available for them except the toktok, which means people would have to pay LE10 to get there, plus another LE10 to come back. This is quite a sum for them to pay, and it would amount to about LE100 [US\$6] for a family to go and pray”)

Eid Abdel Shahid (said “Members of State Security, the police and the mayor’s guards were posted in front of the church. However, five minutes before the end of the Friday prayer, they all withdrew, leaving the church to the crowd, and the church cameras have recorded all this”)

Ramy Kamel (Maspero Youth Association for Development, **UPDATE:** said “MP Abdel Wahab Khalil proposed holding an informal reconciliation session where Christians give up their legal claims, but the church refused. So the MP turned up the pressure, and even said that the Muslims will have a more violent reaction if one of their own is detained”)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171223181138.htm>



### **United States - Louisiana**

Dr Jennifer Roback Morse (Ruth Institute president, organization has repeatedly been dropped from online fundraising companies on discrimination grounds, said “[Our] primary focus is family breakdown and its impact on children: understanding it, healing it, ending it. If this makes us a ‘hate group,’ so be it”)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/financial-company-wont-do-business-with-pro-family-group-accuses-them-of-di>

**Saturday December 23, 2017**



### **China**

Li Aijie (wife of imprisoned activist Zhang Haitao, mother of Li Mutian, beaten by her family in [Urumqi, Xinjiang on October 9, 2017](#) after she refused their demands that she divorce her husband, suffered a black eye and possible brain damage with headaches and nausea, family had been under pressure from the government; **UPDATE**: reported to have fled the country with her son, arrived in the United States)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/wife-of-imprisoned-writer-and-rights.html>



### **Pakistan: Gujrat**

Sahba (aged 16, daughter of Rukhsana Kausar, hearing and speech disabled, tortured and raped by 4 Muslim men who broke into her home)

Rukhsana Kausar (aged 42, widow, mother of Saba and 3 other daughters and 3 sons, hospital sanitation worker, interrupted the rape of her daughter along with her sons and a Muslim friend, later approached at her hospital by 3 of her daughter's rapists after they were released on bail who asked that she refused to drop charges, said "I and my children are all illiterate. None of us went to school because we could not afford it. I believe police have taken advantage of our inability to read and have written what they wanted [in the police report] in an attempt to discredit our family and allow the perpetrators of the crime to escape justice...My daughter has suffered a violent and brutal attack and has lost her innocence to disgusting lecherous men who knew she was vulnerable. My daughter has lost all her confidence and is deeply traumatized and now I have to help Sahba rebuild her life")

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/pakistani-christian-disable-girl-became-victim-of-gang-rape/>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/four-rapists-sexually-assaulted-christian-girl-of-16-yrs-however-local-police-only-register-one-in-a>



### **Iraq: Karamlesh**

Fr Martin Barni (aged 26; **UPDATE**: said "Celebrating Christmas here is a message, that despite all the threats, persecution, killing and what we faced in Iraq, we have hope that this country will change. The last Christmas liturgy here was in 2013. Now, the cross is lifted again over the Church of St. Paul")

Ghenwa Ghassan (aged 17, said "It might seem strange to hear that a female Santa Claus has appeared in this city. But I wanted to give the people here a simple gift - to bring Christmas to a place where it had been banished")

### **Iraq**

Wahida Yaqo Hurmiz (Member of Parliament; **UPDATE**: said only 100,000 Christians remained in the country, added "Baghdad was an important and historical city for the Christians. But ISIL and Hashd al-Shaabi emerged, the situation of the Christians deteriorated...There is only one church in Baghdad the Christians are using to pray")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171223181804.htm>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171225114041.htm>

**Sunday December 24, 2017**



**Egypt: Waslin village, Atfieh, Giza**

Eid Attiya (owner of building used as a church that was attacked and contents destroyed by a mob on [December 22, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: detained for four days)

<https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/12/27/behind-the-attack-on-prince-tadros-church-the-sound-of-a-bell-or-the-absence-of-law/>

**Monday December 25, 2017**

**Christmas – Western Calendar**



**China: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province**

Senior Pastor Joseph Gu Yuese (husband of Zhou Lian Mei, removed on [January 22, 2016](#) from his position as leader of the government sanctioned Three Self Patriotic Movement church; reported on [February 3, 2016](#) to have been arrested on embezzlement and corruption charges, sent to a black jail, had written that his church had been experiencing “unprecedented, chilling trials. Everyone must equally rely on the Lord’s grace to confront [this trial] and triumph over it”; released on [March 31, 2016](#), placed under travel and meeting restrictions; re-apprehended in [January 7, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been released from jail, charges dropped)

**China: Puyang, Henan province**

Rui Yue (church building owner, church raided by police, heat turned off, road blocked by police cars)

Guo Zhongqiang (homily on Jesus and the Bible interrupted by police who accused him of preaching without a permit, replied “I’m not preaching! I am a host. I am hosting a program!”), police took control of the podium and made speeches, the congregation sang Psalms)

### **China: Yining, Xinjiang province**

Pastor Lou Yuanqi (**UPDATE**: detained for 10 hours after neighbors complained of his church's festivities the night before)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/pastor-of-largest-official-church.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/christian-held-for-10-hours-for.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/christians-sing-hymns-over-police.html>



### **Myanmar: Yangon**

#### **Christians were allowed to publicly celebrate Christmas for the first time in 50 years**

Naw Nilar San (said “in 50 years I have never experienced this kind of Christmas feast, many Christian singers sang Christmas hymns, and Christians offered food and drink to the people of Yangon, without any discrimination, bringing everyone a greeting and a wish for peace”)

Fr Thet Tin (said "This year is very significant in the history of Burma because Christians were allowed to celebrate Christmas publicly with the people of the city. This Christmas Festival in the city was intended to promote social cohesion, interreligious understanding and friendship among citizens”)

Toe Toe (said “Christmas means showing and giving the love of Christ for humanity”)

<http://mattersindia.com/2018/01/after-50-years-the-first-public-christmas-festival-in-yangon/>



### **India**

#### **Christians were reported as expressing unease leading up to Christmas**

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: said “There are open letters being written to schools in Uttar Pradesh asking them not to celebrate Christmas. What is going on in this country? This is not about Hindus, Christians, Muslims or Sikhs. It is about our beloved India...They are injecting poison in society; they are spreading rumors like those of ‘forced conversion’...In Satna, instead of arresting those who attacked and manhandled the priests, they have filed cases against the priests. This is unheard of. But people in the villages have fear, not only because these mobs and gangs are going around threatening people, but because the police simply seem to be standing by. This is what is worrying,



not for Christians alone. This is a worrying sign for the country...We will continue living our faith. Christians have grown most when they have been persecuted”)

Dr John Dayal (**UPDATE:** said “In many such cases and attacks against Christians, the police has been either an idle bystander or has been complicit in the violence. How can one citizen of India threaten another citizen of India and get away with it? It is for the police and the government to act – when will they act?...This accusation of forced conversions is a criminal conspiracy to paint a picture of Christians as the way they have already painted a terrible picture of the Muslims. This is a conspiracy to try and frame Christians”)

### **India: Thrissur, Kerala state**

Sapna Tracy (aged 43, wife of Chittilappilly Joju, mother of James, Teresa, Jose, Sebastian, Francis, Mary, Antony, and Philomena, specialist nurse, **died of breast cancer**, had deferred treatment to save Philomena before her birth)

Chittilappilly Joju (widower of Sapna Tracy)

Archbishop Kuriakose Bharanikulangara (said "Sapna was a powerful witness for the pro-life movement. This Catholic couple was inspired by the testimony of the message of the Gospel...She told the doctors that if her life was worthy of value, then the same was true for that of her unborn daughter")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Sapna-Tracy,-pro-life-mother-who-refused-abortion-to-save-herself,-dies-42685.html>

<http://mattersindia.com/2017/12/christmas-in-india-tarnished-by-climate-of-hate/>



### **Syria: Maaloula**

Fr Elias (said "The monastery is being restored, as well as all of Maaloula and the life that was going on there for centuries. We have restored the church, where our main relic is located. We have managed to return the stolen bells. Russia has helped us a lot. And even now, the Russians are restoring a number of icons important to us")

Butrus (aged 15, said "We are all waiting for the evening - we will meet again here, we will sing Christmas carols, light candles, and then go for a walk with friends. It is my favorite holiday")

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201712251060315644-syria-christians-christmas-celebration/>



### **Uganda: Gayaza village, Kabuna sub-county, Budaka district**

Nafamba Bongo Madina (convert, widow, mother of five aged 5 to 14, poisoned by her Muslim neighbors in retribution for holding worship services in her home, hospitalized, released)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/01/christian-widow-uganda-poisoned-christmas-day/>



## Egypt

Moheb Qadri (refugee from the Sinai, said: “We don’t feel any joy this Christmas because of what happened to us. We left everything. I lost my work there: I was working as scrap dealer and the ISIL group took my truck. We can’t return, my brother in-law Nabil Saber Ayoub Mansour went back in May and was shot dead by masked men four days later. All the displaced Christians lost hope of returning after that – what will our future be? I haven’t found work here and we can’t afford presents or new clothes for our children”)

Emad Adel (attorney, said “[President] Sisi has failed to honor the promises of equality he made four years ago to the Copts...He could not take away their constant fear, because of the failure of his administration in the war on terror. Copts fear for their future in Egypt”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/christmas-in-saudi-arabia-and-egypt/>



**Nigeria: Ankpon Village in Nandu and Kabamu Village in Fadan Karshi, Numana district, Sanga local government area, Kaduna state**

Emmanuel Adamu (**UPDATE**: described two attacks by Fulani Muslims: “21 people were killed in Fadan Kashi while 17 killed in Nandu”)

**Nigeria: Gerei local government area, Adamawa state**

Danbaki Talami (**killed** by Fulani Muslims, four others injured)

<https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/163588-gunmen-attack-kaduna-villages-kill-38.html>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/>  
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/>

**Tuesday December 26, 2017**



### **China: Heshan, Guangdong province**

Zheng (commented on the reaction to the government installation of security cameras to monitor Christmas celebrations at government sponsored churches “For many years, Three-Self Churches were never monitored for celebrating Christmas, but this time the cameras were installed, and many believers were shocked”)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/12/authorities-across-china-ban-christmas.html>

**Wednesday December 27, 2017**



### **China: Zhifang village, Lauyu district, Xian city, Shaanxi province**

Bishop Wu Qinjing (**UPDATE**: issued a letter calling for local officials to apologize after they demolished a church)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-catholics-protest-demolition-of-church/81181>



### **Bangladesh: Dhaka**

Peter Hasan (alias, convert, husband, disowned and disinherited by his family, believes he would be killed if he visits them, said "I think the birth of Jesus Christ is important because he came to earth as a man to save mankind. I welcomed Jesus Christ in my heart. During this period of Christmas, I receive peace and blessings")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-a-Christian-convert,-Christmas-is-a-time-of-blessings-42682.html>



### **Greece: Orestiada**

Metropolitan Nikiforos Archangelidis (issued a statement unanimously signed by the clergy of his diocese “Our villages are dying out and schools are closing from lack of students. Unfortunately, the authorities are showing their indifference to people who want to give birth and raise their children. We demand that the government render support to underprivileged and large families instead of wasting huge budget funds on financing

300,000 annual abortions...stop the catastrophic decline of Greece, which is hanging on the edge of the abyss”)

<http://orthochristian.com/109577.html>



### **Congo, Democratic Republic: Kinshasa**

Fr Vincent Tshomba (forced to appear in court after he called for church bells to be rung in protest of the president's refusal to allow elections or to leave after the expiration of his term a year ago)

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63468-AFRICA DR CONGO Protest of bells justice calls its initiator Fr Tshomba](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63468-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Protest_of_bells_justice_calls_its_initiator_Fr_Tshomba)

**Thursday December 28, 2017**



### **Egypt**

Fr Rafik Greich (Church spokesman; **UPDATE**: spoke against a new bill in parliament that would criminalize atheism)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Islamic-parliamentarian-wants-to-criminalize-atheism.-Fr.-Rafic:-Political-liberticide-42687.html>



### **Nigeria: Tamboh Jimoh village, Gerei local government area, Adamawa state**

James Hamman (**killed** by Fulani Muslims, four others injured)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/>  
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/>



## United States – Oregon

**Event:** Christian couple found guilty on [February 4, 2015](#) of discrimination for refusing to bake a cake for a same sex wedding despite serving same sex couples in other ways, had already closed their business due to harassment; ordered on [July 2, 2015](#) to pay \$135,000 in punitive damages, ordered to cease discussing their religious motivations for their actions; **UPDATE: appeal denied**

Aaron Klein

Melissa Klein

<https://www.nbcnews.com/feature/nbc-out/court-rules-against-oregon-bakers-who-refused-make-gay-wedding-n833321>

**Friday December 29, 2017**



## Egypt: Helwan City

**A suicide bomber and gunmen attacked a church but failed to gain entry, 10 were killed including 2 Muslim police and 8 Christians [2 of which were killed at their appliance store just before the church attack] and 7 wounded**

Nermin Sadik (aged 32, mother of Nesma and Karin, nurse, pushed her daughters to the ground and covered them with her body, **shot dead**)

Nesma (aged 11, daughter of Nermin Sadik, shot at by one of the attackers, survived, said: "After [our] falling, the terrorist looked angrily at a necklace on my mother's neck and then took out a weapon and fired several bullets at us. One of them hit my mother")

Karin (aged 7, daughter of Nermin Sadik, shot at by one of the attackers, survived)

Fr Andraos Azmi (said the gunmen killed the 2 Muslim police officer outside the church "but we quickly shut the doors. However, they were able to kill some worshippers at the entrance")

Magdy Adel (aged 65, hid five worshippers in his store during the attack, said "The terrorist was very agitated when they closed the church's iron gate and he could not go inside. He had a lot of ammunition and kept shooting at the gate, killing some people inside")

Fr Antonio Daniel (said that the imam at the mosque across the street announced on the mosque loudspeakers that the church was under attack and called upon Muslims to rescue their 'Coptic brothers')

Ihab (Sunday school teacher, said "Following the end of the [Liturgy], as the congregation of the church began to leave and I began to collect the children to start Sunday School, we heard shooting outside the church. There was a situation of terror among all the people

inside the yard: they all were screaming and running. The situation was terrible, the sound of the shooting was very dense and lasted more than 20 minutes. Many of the congregation who were in the church yard preparing to leave hurried inside when they heard the shooting. They hid inside the church and closed its inside door...The situation was very terrible, it was like war against the church, the sound of the shooting was very terrifying. Those terrorists used automatic weapons")

Abanoub (said "These terrorists arranged the attack of the church with precision. They knew everything about the church and the time of the ending the mass...One of them was wearing suicide vest under his clothes and tried to enter the church while the worshippers were leaving the church to explode himself and kill many of them...First, the terrorists attacked the security men who were assigned to guard the church and they exchanged fire with them. The terrorist wearing the suicide vest tried to storm the church during the exchange of fire to explode himself inside, but the police managed to shoot him and prevent him from storming the church")

John Abdel-Messih (said "Muslims are not all terrorists. Security agents lost their lives defending the church. The sheikh of the mosque called on the residents of the neighborhood to rescue their Coptic brothers. Muslims actually detained one of the perpetrators, and many of them donated blood to hospitals that treated the wounded. There is still hope in this country")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Copts-mourn,-bury-their-dead-after-the-attack-in-Mar-Mina-42710.html>

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/12/29/extremists-attack-egyptian-church-as-worshippers-leave-mass/>

<http://www.persecution.org/2018/01/01/mother-dies-sheltering-children-from-terrorists-who-attacked-a-church/>

<https://www.premier.org.uk/News/World/IS-church-attack-death-toll-may-have-been-higher-if-not-for-residents-and-worshippers>



### **Turkey: Istanbul**

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I aka Dimitrios Arhondonis (falsely accused by Turkish media on [September 7, 2016](#) of having supported the July 15, 2016 attempted coup;

**UPDATE:** media accusations of coup complicity and of collaboration with U.S.-based Islamic cleric Fethullah Gulen and the CIA have been 'expanding dangerously' against him, reportedly government surveillance against him has increased but his security detail has been reduced)

<http://orthochristian.com/109686.html>

<https://ria.ru/religion/20171229/1511987034.html> - with translation

**Monday December 30, 2017**



**India: Amroha, Uttar Pradesh state**

**Five Christians were charged with forced conversion, three are still at large**

Pastor Maan Singh (aged 40, arrested)

Brahmanand (aged 30, arrested)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/indian-pastors-arrested-for-forced-conversion-despite-converts-declaring-they-would-rather-die-than->



**United Kingdom: Camberley, Surrey**

**Events:** Two street preachers were questioned by police on [December 9, 2017](#); **UPDATE:** questioned by the police again with legal counsel present

David Barker

Stephen Wan

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/two-street-preachers-questioned-over-hate-speech-have-all-charges-dropped>

**Sunday December 31, 2017**



**China: Yining, Xinjiang province**

Pastor Lou Yuanqi (detained for 10 hours on [December 25, 2015](#) after neighbors complained of his church's festivities the night before; **UPDATE:** church ordered closed)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/authorities-ban-church-forcing.html>



## **Congo, Democratic Republic: Kinshasa**

Fr Hugues Ndongisila (reported that anti-government protestors were shot, beaten, and robbed by police after they sought refuge in his church and that police shot out the stained glass windows)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/01/03/police-fire-tear-gas-and-arrest-altar-boys-during-mass-in-congo/>



## **Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Cardinal Vinko Puljic (**UPDATE**: reported to have said "During the [1992-95] war and in the immediate aftermath of the war most of the Catholics were expelled from their homes and there was a great deal of destruction and looting. After the war there was neither political nor financial support provided for an ongoing return of the refugees and expelled. The Dayton Accords were not implemented in practice, and those who suffered most were the Catholic Croat minority. It is harder for them to defend their basic rights...The resulting insecurity is evident today among the people, and some people are leaving the country for this reason. They are concerned for the future of their children. The situation has been exacerbated by various negative reports in the media, which have been exploited in order to poison the atmosphere...There are no equal rights for them in those areas where the Catholic minority finds itself in the midst of a majority of the other ethnic groups. This discrimination is expressed in political and administrative terms and above all where employment is concerned...")

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1514682604.html>

**December 2017, date unknown**



## **Thailand: Bangkok**

Asloob George (aged 46, husband of Ulfat Rani, father of Shahid, Shawn, and Edward, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan on [April 17, 2014](#) following blasphemy allegations against one son; detained on immigration violations in [2015](#); **UPDATE**: sent to the hospital, illness not diagnosed, was not expected to survive but was returned to detention)

Ulfat Rani (aged 48, wife of Asloob George)

Shahid (aged 27, son of Asloob George)

Shawn (aged 12, son of Asloob George)



Edward (aged 14, son of Asloob George)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/a-beleagured-christian-family-fleeing-persecution-are-calling-for-release-of-their-father-on-promise>



### **Iraq: Basra**

Archbishop Habib Hormouz al-Naufali (**UPDATE**: said at an [early December](#) meeting at the European parliament "The daily practice of robberies, gang rapes, torture and murder of Christians is ongoing. Therefore, they are pondering what will be next. We are afraid of another wave of persecution that will be the end of Christians")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20171221180543.htm>



### **Algeria: Tiaret**

**Event:** Two brothers were arrested in [March 2015](#) for possession of 56 Bibles in their automobile; **UPDATE: each was sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment and fined about US\$450**

Nouredine Khalil

Belabbes Khalil

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/algeria-government-criticised-over-heavy-fines-for-transporting-bibles/>

## **Today's Martyrs**

**2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455**

**Fairfield CT 06825-2400**

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

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