

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Events – March 2018

Friday March 2, 2018



### **Sudan: Dafur**

**A minister and his family were tied up and killed by six Muslims, and their church burned to the ground, all 130 Christian converts sleeping in the church escaped but some were hospitalized**

Pastor Stephen (husband of Beatrice, father of Rachel and Priscilla, beaten, resisted forced sex with his daughters, **hacked to death**)

Beatrice (wife of Pastor Stephen, mother of Rachel and Priscilla, **hacked to death**)

Rachel (aged 21 or 24, daughter of Pastor Stephen and Beatrice, **hacked to death**)

Priscilla (aged 21 or 24, daughter of Pastor Stephen and Beatrice, **hacked to death**)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/appeals/good-friday-in-darfur-four-weeks-after-a-savage-martyrdom-there-is-spiritual-fruit-and-practical-need>



### **Congo, Democratic Republic: near Biyenge village, Kasai district**

Fr Florent Mbulanthie Tulantshiedi (aged 46, **found dead** in a boat on the Kasai river, appeared to have been strangled)

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63852-AFRICA\\_DR\\_CONGO\\_Mysterious\\_death\\_of\\_a\\_religious](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63852-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Mysterious_death_of_a_religious)



### **United Kingdom: Brixton**

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns, **UPDATE:** wrote regarding the case of Pastor Paul Song "...A common thread in such cases is the way in which the authorities, when exposed for their wrong doing, distort the facts [which often become 'established facts' on which unfair judgments are founded]...the Muslim Chaplain to Brixton Prison, had stated categorically to Pastor Song that he wanted to "wipe out the Christian domination" at Brixton. But for our exposure of what is going on, Christian witness within the prison may well have been wiped out...We have also spoken to numerous other Christian groups who have volunteered in Brixton for over a decade, leading Alpha courses, Christian drama courses, prayer groups and other vital ministries, only to have since been told that they can no longer continue at the prison. Some of them wish to remain anonymous out of fear, though they all tell the same story. Their courses ran smoothly until Imam Mohammed Ahmed took over as Senior Chaplain in 2015. From then on, one by one, their ministries were shut down. Different reasons were given. Some were told that there was no longer a demand for their course, despite them regularly being oversubscribed. For others, procedural minutiae prevented them from continuing. For others, Imam Mohammed Ahmed made it so clear they were no longer welcome that they felt intimidated and left...There is nothing at all to show at any point that the Imam has not simply made this up. In an atmosphere which prisoners have described as having a 'militant Muslim' feel, where we have signed statements showing that forced conversions are also happening by radicalized Muslim gangs, we should not be surprised that a radical Imam would attempt to have Pastor Song removed from Brixton...")

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/andrea-calls-out-hmp-brixton-governor>

**Saturday March 3, 2018**



**Pakistan: Village 77/4R, Sahiwal district, Punjab province**

Pastor Cecil Daniel (church attacked, said "More than two dozen men carrying sticks forced their way into the church and beat up Christian worshippers. Women and children are among those who have been injured in the attack")

George Masih (aged 70, father of Babar, beaten while supervising the construction of a wall around his church)

Babar Masih (aged 22, son of George Masih, beaten with an axe, hospitalized)

William Masih (son of George Masih, beaten, hospitalized)

Nasreen (daughter of George Masih, beaten)

Jamila (daughter-in-law of George Masih, beaten)

Mubarak Masih (human rights activist, said "Although this was a matter of personal enmity, the attackers found it convenient to enter the church and beat up worshippers. The village has

around 200 Christian families who are confined to their homes over fear of further violence")

Sami Minhas (chairman of the Muthida [United] Christian Movement in Sahiwal, said "The incident took place during a worship service but the police are treating it as a land dispute between two parties...[Christians] are also told that if they would seek filing of blasphemy charges against the perpetrators, then blasphemy cases would be filed against them as well, as there had been requests [to do so] from local mosques")

Aftab Gill ( Christian Masiha Millat Party [MMP], **UPDATE:** said "The attacks have become so frequent that it has become difficult to keep count. The Punjab government has failed in its constitutional duty to protect the rights of Christians living in the province")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/mob-attacks-christian-worshippers-in-pakistan/81701>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/pakistan-christian-family-attacked-helping-build-church-wall/>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/muslim-mob-attacks-innocent-christians-while-worshipping-at-church-in-sahiwal>



### **Central African Republic: Bangui**

Fr Barwende Medard Sane SJ (Catholic University Center director, reported that "The clashes in the capital are serious, but represent an exception. Life is relatively normal in Bangui...Since the dissolution of the Seleka movement and the anti-Balaka movement at least 14 factions have emerged that continuously clash with each other for the control of the territory and mineral and natural resources [gold, uranium, timber]. This creates a climate of general insecurity that has serious consequences on the civilian population")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63842->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Instability and general violence the Church's commitment to solidarity and peace](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63842-)

**Sunday March 4, 2018**



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

Zhu Yufu (aged 65, arrested in 1998; released in 2006; arrested in May 2007; released in 2009; arrested on March 5, 2011 for his poem It's Time; **UPDATE:** released from prison, placed under house arrest at a vacation resort, in ill health)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/democracy-advocate-released-immediately.html>



**India: Kotwali Laksar village, Uttarakhand state**

Rev Vipin Kumar (detained by police for 8 hours after Hindu radicals interrupted a prayer meeting, released without charge)

**India: Aligonda, Orissa state**

Fr Ayit Kumar Nayak (reported on the destruction of a religious statue "I pray for the little flock in the parish of Aligonda. The head of the statue of Mother Mary has been destroyed. We are upset and saddened. We are praying for the people who carried out this gesture consciously and unconsciously. We forgive them. God bless them. This is my request: let us respect each other and respect each other's faith")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Uttarakhand-pastor-arrested-and-then-released-without-charges-43261.html>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63851->

[ASIA INDIA A statue dedicated to the Virgin Mary destroyed the faithful forgive the vandals](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63851-ASIA_INDIA_A_statue_dedicated_to_the_Virgin_Mary_destroyed_the_faithful_forgive_the_vandals)



**United Kingdom**

Bishop Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE:** wrote an essay on the demands of Christian baptism "...And here is the dilemma for the Church of England. A state Church wedded to a state that hates Christian virtue and Christian ethics: a state that has begun to criminalize Christian witness as hate speech, where police arrest street preachers and have them thrown in prison at the push of a SJW's phone button: a state that has begun preparations to remove children from their Christian homes if social workers detect what they improperly label 'homophobia' in the parents: a state where Christian teachers are expelled and sacked if they do not endorse the secular brainwashing on the fluidity of gender...Faced with this kind of state, it does not require a subtle reading of Scripture to observe that the gap between the world and Church has grown wide and fierce in our generation. And as always when this happens Christians have to choose between the vigorous and sometimes brutal demands of allegiance the state imposes to cow and tame them, or the faithful witness to Jesus which comes with an increasing and painful cost...")

<https://ashenden.org/2018/03/04/meghan-markle-justin-welby-the-use-and-abuse-of-baptism/>

**Monday March 5, 2018**



**United States – Pennsylvania: Bloomsburg**

Lisa Boucher (bridal shop co-owner, reported to have announced the closure of the shop due the imminent passage of an ordinance that would prohibit her religious refusal to cater to same sex weddings, "So what they [the LGBT community] did was got enough people to run for town council and they had a lot of the kids from [Bloomsburg University] vote those members in so a law could be passed. We actually have a document from the Democratic Committee here pretty much saying that there is going to be a fight with W.W. Bridal...We are closing and this is our livelihood. At this point, we don't have any plans of what to do in the future. We are kind of just resting on God's Word and hoping that He is going to pull us through it and open some sort of doors. I am sure He has blessings and will take us to wherever He wants us to serve, whether it be in our church or volunteer locally")

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-bridal-shop-closes-down-over-fear-of-lgbt-law-after-facing-death-threats-220306/>

**Tuesday March 6, 2018**



**Greece: Neapolis district, Thessaloniki**

Metropolitan Barnabas Tyris (aged 60, office attacked with a firebomb)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/terrorist-attack-committed-at-metropolis-headquarters-in-thessaloniki/>



**Canada: Hamilton, Ontario**

**Event:** A Christian couple were fired as foster parents after they refused an order to tell the children in their care that the Easter Bunny was real, filed suit in [April 2017](#) against the agency to remove the negative reference from their file; **UPDATE: the court found that the agency had violated their religious and other freedoms, ordered the agency to disclose the court's ruling to other agencies when the couple sought a reference**

Derek Baars (husband of Frances Baars)

Frances Baars (wife of Derek Baars)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/court-vindicates-christians-who-lost-foster-girls-for-refusing-to-say-easte>

**Wednesday March 7, 2018**



**Canada: Toronto, Ontario**

Mary Wagner (arrested on [December 8, 2017](#) for entering an abortion clinic waiting room and handing out roses and pro-life literature; **UPDATE**: released on bail)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pro-life-activist-mary-wagner-freed-on-bail-after-3-months-in-jail>

**Thursday March 8, 2018**



**Philippines**

**Church leaders reported to have commented on the possibility of terror acts during the upcoming Holy Week**

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Soncuaco Pabillo (**UPDATE**: said "there are always groups out to make trouble")

Fr Jerome Secillano (**UPDATE**: said "the public should be vigilant lest we become victims of possible terror acts. [The police] should improve and make intelligence gathering efficient and truly reliable")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-on-alert-for-holy-week-terror-attacks/81736>



**Indonesia: Palembang**

Archbishop Aloysius Sudarso SCJ (condemned the vandalism of a newly consecrated chapel "Last March 4 I had blessed the new chapel situated in a village in an isolated area, a three-hour journey from the parish. It was a celebration in an atmosphere of supreme cordiality, with the heartfelt participation of village leaders, civil authorities, Muslim religious leaders. The church was built following all the regulations and the necessary legal process. This act of gratuitous violence surprises us, but we believe it is the work of few radical members who want to fuel, here and throughout Indonesia, religious hatred, intolerance and violence...The police are investigating. Acts of desecration like this are perceived as a shame for the whole society...we are saddened by this act but the solidarity received by many Muslims consoles us")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63874-ASIA\\_INDONESIA\\_Acts\\_of\\_vandalism\\_on\\_a\\_newly\\_inaugurated\\_Catholic\\_chapel\\_in\\_Sumatra](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63874-ASIA_INDONESIA_Acts_of_vandalism_on_a_newly_inaugurated_Catholic_chapel_in_Sumatra)



#### **Myanmar: Kachin state**

#### **Two Christians were found dead six weeks after they were reported missing, had be shot dead in an apparent execution**

U Hpaugan Yaw (aged 60, **shot dead**)

Ko Nhkum Naw San (aged 30, **shot dead**)

<http://www.globalchristiannews.org/article/kachin-christian-refugees-murdered-in-execution-style-killing/>

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/kachin-christian-refugees-murdered-in-execution-style-killing>



#### **Iraq: al-Mashtal neighborhood, Bagdad**

#### **A Christian family was stabbed to death in a targeted robbery**

Dr Hisham Shafiq al-Maskuni (aged 61, husband of Shaza Malik, **stabbed to death**)

Shaza Malik (wife of Dr Hisham Shafiq al-Maskuni, daughter of Khairiya Dawood, **stabbed to death**)

Khairiya Dawood (mother of Shaza Malik, **stabbed to death**)

Fr Biyos Qasha (said "We are seen as a lamb to be killed at any time")

Rayan al-Kldani (**UPDATE**: said "This crime has only one message. Frightening our people and forcing them to leave the country")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Chaldean-patriarchate-mourns-latest-victims-of-anti-Christian-violence-in-Baghdad-43330.html>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180310110029.htm>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180311125028.htm>



### **Central African Republic: Bangassou**

Bishop Juan Jose Aguirre Munos MCCJ (Spanish citizen, described on [August 31, 2017](#) how his seminary in has taken in 2,000 Muslims who feared death at the hands of the anti-balaka militia; **UPDATE:** is about to return to his diocese from Spain, said that the Muslim refugees at the seminary have been starved by the anti-balaka blockade and sexually exploited by the UN peacekeepers "They are desperate, they die of hunger...I told him [UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres] that there are women who are raped, some of whom are minors, and that was a crime against humanity. An investigation has been opened, but nothing has changed. This is not the first time UN soldiers behave in this way. In 2015, a group of Congolese peacekeepers were expelled for offering lentil boxes in exchange for sex", added that anti-balaka dismember their victims ["The hearts or internal organs of the victims are torn because they say that in this way they steal their souls"] and spoke of himself "The Catholic Church is the last to turn off the light. We cannot leave. I do not sleep well, I am stressed. Every time I prayed I heard the explosion of bombs and gusts of machine guns. I had moments of psychological fragility and that is why I had to take a break")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63871->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Bishop of Bangassou Sexual abuse and violence committed by the Blue Helmets against refugee women](#)



### **Nigeria: Kaduna state**

Sunny Isa (youth, reported to have said "They called us 'infidels'. "They also said we are 'poor' and that's why they date our girls and convert them to Islam and marry them. These insults and humiliation from the Muslim boys has been going on for long, so we decided to constitute a committee to stop our girls from dating Muslims, since Muslim girls are even prohibited from dating Christians")

Rev Danlami Gajere (reported to have commented on violence between Christians and Muslims over Muslims dating Christian girls "They [Muslim boys] date Christian girls and sleep with them and come to mock the Christians. They will tell us that they sleep with our wives and our daughters and call us 'infidels'. On the other hand it is an abomination for Muslim girls to date Christian girls. 'Who are you to date a Muslim girl!' They don't



even have regard for non-Muslims. That's the reason why Christian youths constituted a committee to stop Christian girls from dating Muslims – to avoid the insults and humiliation")

Rev Makama Mazadu (reported to have said "I was called by the Sarkin Kajuru [traditional ruler] for a meeting. When I went to the meeting, I saw a lady in hijab. The Sarki told me that as CAN chairman, he wants to tell me that the lady named Alheri wants to convert to Islam ... that she is [now] a Muslim and they wanted to let me know. I told him that this is unacceptable because I cannot handle this alone. I requested to take the girl along with me, but he said I can't go with the girl as she was already a Muslim. He said the Muslims had agreed that whoever wants to convert to Islam should, within eight to ten hours be converted")

Sunday "Sunny" Oibe (Public Relations Officer for the Christian Association of Nigeria, **UPDATE:** reported to have said "Abducted girls are always taken to the palaces of some traditional rulers, where the conversion and marriage takes place and when the matter is reported to the police, nothing is done to bring the culprits to justice. Why do Muslims find it convenient to marry Christian girls but [they] will not allow their own daughters to marry Christians? We must discourage [this]. Nigeria has a constitution and laws, but the only thing is that our security agencies are not living up to expectations. That is why this issue of abduction and forceful conversation has continued. The police should be able to arrest and prosecute all those doing this")

**Nigeria: Nzharuvo village, Miango, near Jos, Plateau state**

Christopher (aged 12, son of Joseph Gah Nze, twin brother of Emmanuel, **killed**)

Emmanuel (aged 12, son of Joseph Gah Nze, twin brother of Christopher, **killed**)

Peace Joseph (aged 6, son of Joseph Gah Nze, **killed**)

Henry Audu (aged 18, nephew of Joseph Gah Nze, **killed**)

Chanka Amos (aged 4, nephew of Joseph Gah Nze, wounded, hospitalized)

Joseph Gah Nze (aged 48, husband, father of Christopher, Emmanuel, and Peace Joseph, uncle of Henry Audu and Chanka Amos, said "My house is located in the outskirts of this area, and so it became the first to be attacked. But because the sound of gunshots in my house alerted the other Christians around here, they quickly mobilized themselves and repelled the attackers, forcing them to retreat")

Samaila Isa (aged 55, convert, husband of Jummai Samaila, father of nine, **shot dead**)

Jummai Samaila (aged 45, widow of Samaila Isa, mother of nine, said "I was woken up by heavy sounds of gunshots. The herdsmen shot at our windows, and as I woke up I saw dust all over the room. The room was covered with dust, and I could not see anything. I had to move my hand around in the dark in search of my child. I eventually found my child and held tight to it. There was shooting going on all around our house, and the whole house was shaking. I quickly ran to the children's room to ensure they were safe, and I found that they were safe. I wanted to go running out of the room, but one of my sons told me not to do so. The window in their room was opened. I lifted the curtain of the window slightly, and outside I saw six armed Fulani herdsmen. I moved away from the window and tried getting out, only to find that my husband was shot and was lying on the floor. I

could not move since the herdsmen were still in our house. I hid myself in a corner and watched as they carried my husband. Two of them carried his legs, while another two carried him from the chest up. One of them had a torchlight which was switched on to show them the way out of our house. As they made their way out of our house carrying my husband with them towards a stream just behind our house, my son urged me to open the door so that we can run out to seek for help. I opened the door, and we ran out")

Yusuf Samaila (aged 20, son of Samaila Isa, cut the hand of a gun toting Fulani Muslim with a machete, the gunman fled)

Mallam Isa (aged 80 plus, convert, father of Samaila Isa)

Rev Sunday Zibeh (said "We ran as they pursued us and were shooting at us at the same time. We ran to the area where the district headquarters of ECWA church is located here in Miango. The herdsmen, after a while, withdrew from pursuing us and retreated to the bush where they had emerged. It was after the herdsmen had retreated that I was alerted that they killed some children in one of my member's house. I rushed to the house to find that four children were killed in the house, and one was taken to the hospital...If all that is happening to Christians at this time is within the plans of God for us his children, then let His will be fulfilled in us, but if this is not the case, I have faith that God will raise he who will rescue us from these attacks of the herdsmen. I plead with other Christians to please stand in the gap for us and other Christians facing persecution in northern Nigeria. I also want to plead that should there be others who are being led by the Holy Spirit to help displaced Christians in northern Nigeria, they should please do so...In spite of the shortcomings I see in our government in Nigeria, I believe God will rescue us from this calamity. God alone can wipe away our tears in this part of Nigeria. As Christians, all we need do is to remain faithful to Jesus Christ, and this we can do by getting on our knees and being prayerful")

Rev Andrew Okebe (spoke after a Muslim attack in which nine were killed "As a pastor, I join other pastors to take our turns every night as part of the community vigilante. We can only take turns to sleep at night, but the issue here is, just as they came, how do we defend our village with sticks and torchlights? We can only raise alarms so people can run. But how far can you run from the bullet of an AK 47 in the dark?")

<http://www.globalchristiannews.org/article/death-toll-from-fulani-herdsmen-continues-to-rise-in-central-nigeria/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/christian-widow-bereaved-father-show-reality-behind-herdsmen-attacks-nigeria/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/bloody-clashes-in-kaduna-as-christian-youths-resist-dating-and-conversion-of-christian-girls/>



**Algeria: Tiaret**

**Event:** Two brothers were arrested in [March 2015](#) for possession of 56 Bibles in their automobile; each was sentenced in [December 2017](#) to 2 years' imprisonment and fined

about US\$450; **UPDATE: sentence reduced on appeal to 3 months' imprisonment, sentences were suspended, fines were increased to US\$873 each**

Nouredine Khalil

Belabbes Khalil

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

**Friday March 9, 2018**



**China: Shangqiu, Henan province**

Fr John (described the removal of three crosses from the cathedral as "brutal", added "Since the newly revised regulations on religious affairs were enforced, such incidents have happened nationwide")

**China: Zhumadian and Zhoukou cities, and Gushi county**

Wang (reported that all churches in two cities and a county had been notified by the government that their activities were cancelled and that violations of the notice would be punished)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholic-church-in-china-has-crosses-removed/81778>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/pressure-increases-for-henan-christians.html>



**Syria**

Cardinal Mario Zenari (apostolic nuncio [Vatican ambassador], **UPDATE:** commented on the continued fighting "It's terrible. I always say, it's a massacre of the innocents...the deep wounds, above all in these children, are worse than what is seen...Jesus in his passion sweat blood, from his whole body...[the] blood of the entire Church, the blood of the martyrs. We are in the eighth year of the Passion")

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/syria-is-a-new-massacre-of-the-innocents-nuncio-says-17726>



## **Nigeria: Bauchi, Yobe state**

Bishop Hilary Nanman Dachelem (reported to have spoken on the [February 19, 2018](#) Boko Haram abduction of 110 schoolgirls in [Dapchi](#): "My call is for the government to leave politics aside and bring back these girls: leave politics and protect lives. You do not politicize life, for Christ's sake")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63876-AFRICA\\_NIGERIA\\_Bishop\\_of\\_Bauchi\\_Leave\\_politics\\_aside\\_Bring\\_the\\_abducted\\_girls\\_back\\_home](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63876-AFRICA_NIGERIA_Bishop_of_Bauchi_Leave_politics_aside_Bring_the_abducted_girls_back_home)

**Saturday March 10, 2018**



## **Iran: Karaj**

Mansour Borji (human rights spokesman, reported on the government seizure of a church retreat center "...[it is] not only a takeover of a property by corrupt judiciary and Intelligence officials, but yet another move in an ongoing and systematic campaign by the Iranian state to uproot Protestant Christianity...Labelling a long-standing and vibrant Church with national security charges for its rightful religious activities and accusing them of collusion with the CIA is indeed worrying. It should be a concern for anyone who is interested in safeguarding freedom of religion and belief in this country", added that churches have been forced to conduct only one service on Sundays "This was an attempt to restrict participation in services, especially for the converts to Christianity, as Sunday is a weekday and Friday is a day off for many people in the country. Training camps and programs held during the week were shut down too")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/iran-christian-retreat-centre-ordered-close-tomorrow/>



## **Eritrea: Asmara**

Patriarch Abune Antonios (aged 85; **UPDATE**: still under house arrest)

<https://occidentalworld.com/persecuted-christians-and-a-dying-church-in-eritrea/>



**Uganda: Kakoli village, Naboa sub-county, Budaka district**

Gobera Bashir (aged 27, convert, doused with hot cooking oil by relatives after leaving church, suffered 40% burns, hospitalized, released but still required intensive medical care)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/muslim-relatives-new-christian-eastern-uganda-attack-hot-oil/>

**Sunday March 11, 2018**



**India: Sikandar Chavadi, Tamil Nadu state**

**Hindu radicals and police attacked a church**

Persia Jacob (aged 38, wife of Pastor Ravi Jacob, mother of two girls aged 10 and 14, stripped of her sari, Bible seized, kicked in the face until unconscious, said “I will die, but I can’t do without the Bible...It was all too much – it caused lot of weakness. I couldn’t even stand or look at anyone even. My voice was gone; I soon fainted...The attackers on that day were forcefully taking away the Bibles to burn them. I was shocked. I didn’t know what to do. I held my Bible tight close to my heart. My Lord speaks to me from His Word...And, there is not a day I can go on without reading and knowing what He wants to tell me. Like a child, I was being stubborn at the same time I was also pleading”, said of her daughters “They are not going to school. They have never seen anything like this attack before”)

Pastor Ravi Jacob (aged 41, husband of Persia Jacob, beaten, chased over a kilometer to another village, threatened with death, said of his wife “She was kicked in the face with shoes. I tried hard but couldn’t protect her. She fell unconscious. She was lying there unconscious without her sari”)

Mariyammal (attempted to file a police report, was refused)

**India: Koodul Pudur, Tamil Nadu state**

**Hindu radicals and police attacked a church**

Pastor Jerome Jagatheesan (said of the Hindu radicals “They yelled at me, calling pottai, pottai [pervert]. The words they used were highly humiliating. I was told that I give my wife to adultery. She was standing there right next to me; I know how much it hurt her. She can’t take a word against me, and I’m sure by now my in-laws who live in Andhra Pradesh state also had watched the video. That was not the end of it. They stripped two female members of the church, ages 51 and 40, and a young 23-year-old woman was punched in her chest. Her mobile was thrown away”, police refused to register a case)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/ferocity-hindu-extremist-attacks-stuns-christians-tamil-nadu-india/>

**Monday March 12, 2018**



**China: Urumqi, Xinjiang province**

Huang (one of four women administratively detained for 10 days after refusing to sign a document admitting they had gathered illegally for worship and incited others to do the same)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/church-members-interrogated-four.html>



**India: Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh state**

**Hindu radicals seized land belonging to a Christian hospital**

Fr Vineesh Mathew (said “Some 60 masked men armed with cycle chains and pickaxes came with bulldozers around 9 am and broke the front gate of the hospital and fenced off some 2,000 square feet of the hospital land”)

Sr Elsy Jacob (roughed up along with other nuns, said that four nurses were beaten and that the electricity to the hospital was severed “We are operating some sections with the help of a generator”, added that police did not protect the hospital)

Fr Anthony Pulickamandapam (hospital director, **UPDATE:** said “Our staff, including Catholic nuns, who attempted to resist the advance were manhandled and forced to flee for safety. They also destroyed the backup power generator and disconnected the water supply, putting the lives of nearly 200 patients – including 12 in the intensive care unit – in serious danger”)

Bishop Sebastian Vadakel (appealed to police to protect the hospital, police did nothing)

Archbishop Leo Cornelio (**UPDATE** said “[the attack was part of] a systematic plan to bring disturbance and violence among a peace-loving community”)

<http://mattersindia.com/2018/03/church-hospital-in-ujjain-attacked-nurses-beaten-up/>  
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholic-mission-hospital-nuns-attacked-in-central-india/81776>



**Uzbekistan: Bektemir district, Tashkent region**

Alina Chernikova (daughter of Gulnara Kokhlova, step-daughter of Aleksandr Khokhlov;  
**UPDATE:** notified that she had been convicted on February 7, 2018 on illegal possession of religious materials charges, fined US\$413, appeal made impossible by the illegal delay in notification of her trial)

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



**Nigeria: Kwall village, Plateau state**

Lumumbah Chayi (aged 17, secondary school student, **killed** by Fulani Muslims)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/two-christians-ambushed-killed-in-central-nigeria/>

**Tuesday March 13, 2018**



**Indonesia: Palembang, Sumatra**

Fr Felix Astono Atmojo (said "We call on each parish and mission station to stay alert ahead of the observance of Holy Week and Easter. This is very important. We don't want the [February 11, 2018] church attack to reoccur")

**Indonesia: Semarang**

Fr Franciscus Xaverius Sukendar Wignyosumarta (said "Security in churches must be tightened and cooperation with police and security personnel must be improved")

**Indonesia: Medan, Sumatra**

Archbishop Anicetus Bongsu Sinaga OFM Cap (said that recent attacks have made Christians more vigilant, and that his cathedral has formed a 12 member security team)

**Indonesia: Matraman, East Jakarta**

Maria Theresia Erlie (parishioner, said "Being vigilant is important despite security personnel usually being deployed [for Holy Week]")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-catholics-on-alert-for-holy-week/81789>



### **Pakistan: Gujranwala**

Anjum Naz Sandhu (school director, arrested in [May 2015](#) after two men he had accused of extortion produced an audio recording in which he allegedly committed blasphemy; convicted in [June 2016](#), sentenced to death; **UPDATE**: charges dismissed on appeal for lack of evidence)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-embroiled-in-a-fabricated-blasphemy-case-acquitted-by-the-court/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/pakistan-christian-escapes-death-for-clearly-fabricated-blasphemy/>



### **Kazakhstan: Shymkent**

Dilobarkhon Sultanova (arrested on [January 11, 2018](#) after helping a police agent download a Bible onto her phone "Literally a minute and a half after we parted they detained me"; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2360](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2360)



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

Stanislav Kim (home raided by police during a [February 11, 2018](#) worship service; **UPDATE**: ordered to the police station, told after arrival he and two women would be taken to court for their attendance at the February 11 worship service, released after the women did not appear)

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



### **Turkey: Izmir**

Pastor Andrew Brunson (U.S. citizen, husband of Norine Brunson, detained as a 'national security risk' on [October 7, 2016](#), denied access to U.S. diplomats, attorneys, and fellow parishioners; ordered held on [December 9, 2016](#) on 'terrorism' allegations from a 'secret informant', attorney denied access to the allegations; as of [August 25, 2017](#) four new charges have been added by prosecutors including 'gathering state secrets for espionage, attempting to overthrow the Turkish parliament and government, and to change the constitutional order'; confirmed to be a hostage at a [September 28, 2017](#) press conference)



by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President explicitly called for the U.S. government to exchange him for Sufi cleric and U.S. resident Fethullah Gulen;  
**UPDATE:** prosecutors said they would seek life imprisonment)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/turkey-calls-life-imprisonment-us-pastor-andrew-brunson/>

**Wednesday March 14, 2018**



## **India**

### **Christian leaders criticized a secret government commission that had been created to re-write Indian history to make Hinduism the religion of the original inhabitants**

A C Michael (Delhi Minorities Commission member, United Christian Forum, **UPDATE:** said "They have already issued an education policy which is silent on Christian contributions to education. Although Christian missionaries brought modern education to India, the document is silent on it")

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE:** said "There is large-scale poverty in the country, coupled with marginalization and alienation of the farmers and village poor. Instead of trying to rewrite history, the government should first deal with the issues troubling the common masses")

### **India: Ramachandrapuram village, Karimngar district, Telangana state**

#### **A Christian family was reported to have been beaten by ABVP members, police later filed a complaint against the family for filing a false police report**

Pastor Kolhapuri Lachaiah Moses (aged 52, husband, father of three including Kolhapuri Prabhakar and Kolhapuri Immanuel, reported to have been beaten by several Hindus, said "We thought the youths had come to quench their thirst at the hand-pump [outside the church gate]. The youths started shouting, 'Where is the pastor idiot? Who gave you Christians the permission to set up a church here? You Shudras [low caste]! Idiots! How dare you do Christian activities here?' ...I came out running and asked, 'What happened, babu? Why are you shouting? I could smell the stink of alcohol. They were drunk'")

Kolhapuri Prabhakar (son of Pastor Kolhapuri Lachaiah Moses, said "But they became aggressive, and started hitting my elderly father. When I tried to stop them, they punched me too. My mother and sister also rushed to help us, only to be pushed away by the drunk men. They yelled, 'We have been looking for you for the past six months, we got you today. We will not stop now.'")

Kolhapuri Immanuel (aged 20, son of Pastor Kolhapuri Lachaiah Moses, beaten, foot fractured)

### **India: Telangana state**

Pastor Ravi Babu (said “A mob of 15 Hindu radicals followed me, when I was returning from [a nearby] village, after visiting [a] few Christian families [in] that village. Sensing possible trouble by the mob, I took a different route to escape the mob’s attempt to attack me. Later, the same group went and assaulted [another Christian family]”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/pastors-family-assaulted-southern-india/>  
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/efforts-to-rewrite-indian-history-worry-christians-muslims/81794>

<http://www.persecution.org/2018/03/22/exponential-increase-attacks-christians-telangana-india/>



### **Pakistan: Lahore**

Aneeqa Maria Akhtar (attorney, **UPDATE**: took part in a hunger strike over the arrest of Patras Masih and the police brutality directed at his cousin Sajid Masih which ended when he jumped from a fourth floor window to escape, said of Sajid "Almost every bone in his body is broken...Some hospital workers are even praying for the death of chuhra [low caste]...The shameless and merciless FIA officials took a forced statement after he survived although he kept insisting to see his lawyer. He was not even shown the copy of that statement...Interior Minister Ahsan Iqbal, who ordered the inquiry against the FIA officials, has no time to meet us. This is a matter of grave concern. The poor families cannot fight powerful federal agencies...Ever since the tragedy occurred, we are all raising voice but the high authorities are not listening. Our demands are countered with fake assurance of ongoing investigation. In this country, a dead dog and a dead Christian are seen as equals”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Lawyer-for-'blasphemous'-Christians-warns-of-investigation-irregularities-in-Lahore-43355.html>



### **Egypt: Beni Suef province**

Magdy Farag Samir (aged 49, teacher, arrested for administering a multiple choice exam concerning Muhammad)

### **Egypt: Giza**

Matthew Habib (aged 22, son of Samir, soldier, **died from two gunshots** while with his military unit, death ruled a suicide, family said he had reported that his commanding officer had persecuted him)

Samir (father of Matthew Habib, refused to sign the cause of death or to receive his son's body, said he did not believe the suicide ruling was true)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/coptic-soldiers-family-say-he-didnt-commit-suicide-but-was-killed/>

<http://www.persecution.org/2018/03/23/christian-teacher-arrested-multiple-choice-question-muhammad/>



## **Sweden**

Aideen Strandsson (convert, refugee from Iran; **UPDATE**: still facing deportation to Iran, denied employment by the government, martial arts certificate seized by the government, has been offered asylum in Hungary)

<https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2018/march/update-sweden-tries-to-starve-out-christian-asylum-seeker>



## **United States - Vermont**

Brian Senecal (daughter reported to have been denied access to a state funded program that granted college vouchers to high school students because her school was Catholic, said “I can’t believe that Vermont would do that. That’s discriminatory”)

Robin McCormick (mother of Catholic school students, reported to have said “Ironically, a public school student can get this voucher and go to a Catholic college with it, but a Catholic high school student can’t take the voucher and go to the University of Vermont with it. It’s a little crazy”)

Bishop Christopher Coyne (reported to have said “There’s no good argument against it in terms of the separation of church and state”)

[https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2018/03/14/vermont-latest-clash-between-public-money-and-catholic-church?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletters&utm\\_content=3+-+In+Vermont+the+latest+clash+between+publ&utm\\_campaign=Newsletter&source=Newsletter](https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2018/03/14/vermont-latest-clash-between-public-money-and-catholic-church?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletters&utm_content=3+-+In+Vermont+the+latest+clash+between+publ&utm_campaign=Newsletter&source=Newsletter)

**Thursday March 15, 2018**



### **China: Beijing**

Zhou Jinxia (detained for holding a sign calling on President Xi Jinping to convert to Christianity, escorted to her home in Dalian)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/christian-woman-detained-after-trying.html>



### **India: Mukherjee Nagar district, Delhi**

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: denounced the unannounced demolition of a church facade that had been built years earlier for handicapped access)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Delhi-Methodist-church-fa%C3%A7ade-and-entrance-destroyed-43400.html>



### **Nigeria: Rotsu village, Plateau state**

Joseph Alli (aged 23, **beheaded** by Fulani Muslims)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/two-christians-ambushed-killed-in-central-nigeria/>

**Friday March 16, 2018**



### **China: Dalian**

Zhou Jinxia (detained in [Beijing](#) on [March 15, 2018](#) for holding a sign calling on President Xi Jinping to convert to Christianity, escorted to her home; **UPDATE**: arrested)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/christian-woman-detained-after-trying.html>



### **Bolivia**

Archbishop Jesus Juarez Parraga (**UPDATE**: signed a letter addressed to parents of students in Catholic schools which claimed that government interference in the schools "cannot guarantee teaching, Christian education and integral quality education")

Prof Carmen Suarez (said she is convinced the government "intends to eliminate the private education system in Bolivia, and aims especially at the Catholic one")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63908->

[AMERICA BOLIVIA State Church convention violated Catholic education in a state of emergency](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63908-)



## Nicaragua

### **Church leaders reacted after Vice President Rosario Murillo [and the wife of President Daniel Ortega] proposed social media censorship on national television**

Auxiliary Bishop Silvio Jose Baez (**UPDATE**: said "The state should not control or censor social media because it would limit freedom of expression, nor should it stand as a moral arbiter of people")

Bishop Rolando Jose Alvarez Lagos (**UPDATE**: said "One must not limit anyone's freedom: in social networks, as in any street, people can write and express their opinion, of course one must stigmatize the lack of respect or offenses to the dignity of the person, but not for this we can limit the freedom of people...We deplore the attempts of public authorities to block access to information, on the Internet or other social media, preventing legitimate freedom of expression and opinion")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63907->

[AMERICA NICARAGUA The Church No to the censorship of social media](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63907-)

**Sunday March 18, 2018**



## Pakistan: Burewala

### **A church was attacked by at least 15 local Muslims, at least seven Christians were injured**

Pastor Haleem Feroze Masih (said "Some of our church elders were trying to install a flex signboard in connection with the upcoming Easter festival on the wall in front of the church but they were stopped by Sharif's sons. Sharif is a local tough who has previously grabbed a piece of the Christian cemetery in our colony and built a cattle shed on the

graves. He is also running a gambling den and is known to patronize criminals. The elders tried to reason with the youths, but it seems that the Muslims intentionally wanted to pick a fight with us. One of our church elders told the Muslims that they had desecrated biblical verses inscribed on the flex sign, to which they responded that, 'We are bigger than your Jesus'. Some of them whipped out their weapons and opened fire on the church members, who ran to save themselves. I immediately telephoned the police and headed out to try and defuse the situation. However, I was also beaten up, my service robe torn and my mobile phone smashed to the ground. I think we were fortunate that none of us suffered a fatal bullet injury during the clash. They also pelted stones at the police, but the policemen managed to arrest Sharif, his sons and another unidentified man from the spot while the others fled along with the weapons")

Iftikhar Bhatti (said "Hanging on the front of the church was a Christmas banner. Some of our church members went to replace it with an Easter banner, but they were stopped by Muhammad Sharif, a Muslim living in the area. Then the pastor went along to help attach the banner to the wall, but Sharif and his sons tore it down and trampled on it. The church service had ended by then and as church members started leaving they also got caught up in the clash...Why would Muhammad Sharif stop us from putting a banner on a Christian building? We resisted and then a fight broke out")

Bishop Abraham Daniel (said "The police have assured us of providing security to the area's Christians and of proceeding against the accused Muslims in accordance with the law")

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

Sarfraz Victor (catechist, told parishioners at the cathedral "be on alert. Consider yourselves like security staff, protect yourselves and others, be friendly and work together with [police] agents" in the days leading to Easter)

William Arif Khan (cathedral security leader, said "No visitor will be allowed in without a national identity card. Action will be taken against any parishioner who brings a non-Christian to church Mass. Use of smartphone /social media will be prohibited inside Church premises...Volunteers with licensed weapons are already armed during Masses. But those without a license cannot do much in capturing an infiltrating terrorist. We have asked police to issue license for arms to protect churches")

Samuel Piyara (**UPDATE:** said "Punjab government has yet to implement SOPs, standard operation procedures, including installation of walk-through gates and posting of snipers in Churches. We shall file a contempt case if they continue ignoring the apex court verdict...A major concern of Islamabad churches is the irregularity of police [agents]. Most were busy on their mobile phones while on duty to protect worshipers. Also Church buildings were exempted from safe city project under which security cameras were installed in Islamabad")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Catholics-to-work-with-police-as-Easter-security-threat-level-raised-43393.html>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/christians-wounded-muslim-attack-church-service-pakistan/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/pakistan-easter-banner-torn-down-christian-infighting-blamed/>

**Monday March 19, 2018**



**Philippines: Ozamiz City**

Bishop Carlo Morales (husband of Maria Teofifina Morales, arrested with others at a police checkpoint in [Gango](#) on [May 11, 2017](#) while travelling with an alleged member of a rebel group; **UPDATE**: reported to have been released on bail after a judge ruled that the evidence presented by the prosecution would not prove a conviction)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-protestant-bishop-freed-after-10-months-in-jail/81826>



**China: Beishaliang, Baotoukun district, Inner Mongolia**

Fr Ding Zhanmin (underground priest, arrested in [January 2012](#) with four other priests; **UPDATE**: forcibly removed from his parish and sent to work on a farm in Xilin Gol after he refused financial enticements to join the official church)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Inner-Mongolia,-an-underground-priest-expelled-from-his-parish:-forced-to-be-a-farmer-43454.html>



**India: Bangalore**

Archbishop Bernard Moras (**UPDATE**: retired)

Bishop Peter Machado (appointed bishop)

<http://mattersindia.com/2018/03/bangalore-gets-new-catholic-archbishop/>



**Iraq**

Fr Salar Kajo (**UPDATE:** reported to have said "We have to rebuild now - if we take more time families will leave and Christianity will disappear from Iraq...It is urgently necessary for everyone to return to their towns and villages...After a year of rebuilding, the only channel of aid has been through the Church")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180319102948.htm>



## **Ethiopia**

Temesgen Mitiku Mezemir (aged 24, charged with 'causing outrage to religious peace and feeling' in [Arba Minch](#) on [January 23, 2018](#) after a debate with other Christians over a replica of the Ark of the Covenant, attacked and beaten along with fellow parishioners outside the courthouse; convicted on [February 2, 2018](#), sentenced to 7 months' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/ethiopian-christian-loses-appeal-prison-sentence/>



## **United States - Rhode Island: Providence College**

Michael Smalanskas (aged 22, college dormitory resident advisor, former seminarian, reported to have been threatened and harassed after having posted a defense of traditional Christian marriage on a bulletin board, said "I couldn't even go brush my teeth for several nights without facing a mob in my hallway...There had been a pro-lesbian bulletin board up for the entire month of February in one of the female residence halls. But nobody was rioting outside the girl's door. There's a tremendous double standard when it comes to Catholic teaching or conservative views. They are just not protected in the same way", moved by campus security to a secure undisclosed location, fiancée threatened, after threatened with homosexual rape said it "very disturbing threat [and] a Title IX issue now...[a] lawsuit's not off the table by any stretch")

Dr James Keating (faculty advisor to Michael Smalanskas, reported to have criticized the college's lack of response to the attacks against Michael: "The example that I gave to [Vice President of Student Affairs] Kristine Goodwin is, let's say a young Mexican-American student had put up a poster that said, 'God loves the dreamers,' that poster had been torn down, and [the student who created it] felt unsafe in her own dormitory because kids who tore it down were milling outside her door. Then, a poster is put up of her being raped. How would the college react?")

Dr Matthew Cuddeback (reported to have said "President Shanley's [March 19] message to the Providence College community leaves Michael Smalanskas exposed. The President does not defend the bulletin board. He seems to imply that expressions of Catholic teaching on



marriage should be confined largely to the classroom and the pulpit. And he leaves Michael exposed to the charge that the bulletin board is, in fact, 'uncharitable.'")

Bishop Thomas J Tobin (reported to have re-tweeted an article about college faculty who were supporting Michael Smalanskas and in effect asked why were anti-Christian students attending a nominally Christian college: "But, it seems to me that those who teach or study at a Catholic school should accept the stated identity and mission of the school? Otherwise, why are they there? There are lots of other good options")

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/catholic-college-silent-on-student-threatened-with-gay-rape-for-posting-bul>

**Tuesday March 20, 2018**



### **India: New Delhi**

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (**UPDATE:** met with Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi, spoke of "sporadic attacks on institutions and personnel of religious minorities in different parts of the country. These acts of violence are against the law and damage the Country")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63925-ASIA\\_INDIA\\_Cardinal\\_Gracias\\_to\\_Prime\\_Minister\\_Modi\\_Attacks\\_on\\_minorities\\_damage\\_India](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63925-ASIA_INDIA_Cardinal_Gracias_to_Prime_Minister_Modi_Attacks_on_minorities_damage_India)



### **Iraq: Nineveh plain**

#### **Christians recounted the 2015-2017 ISIL occupation**

Rita Ayyoub (aged 30, said of her first captor [who had also bought a 14 year old Yezidi girl "He raped the both of us over and over again", later sold twice more: "I was beaten and tortured by [the jihadi's wife] every day. She would not give up until I was bleeding, from my head, for example. They made me read the Quran and threatened to kill me if I did not convert to Islam", rescued by Syrian military in November 2018)

Fr Emanuel Adel Kelo (**UPDATE:** described how Christians during the July 2015 ISIL takeover refused to meet with ISIL militants "There was specific concern that the intention was to keep women there so that they could be taken freely by the ISIL fighters", the Christians were later expelled)

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem Joseph III (**UPDATE**: estimated that ISIL killed more than 500 Christians during their occupation)

Archbishop Amel Shamoun Nona (**UPDATE**: wrote a letter describing ISIL atrocities including the murder of four siblings aged 4, 6, 8, and 15)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180320170452.htm>



## Sweden

### **Church school leaders objected to a proposal by a political party to shut down all religious schools**

Paddy Maguire (principal, said that the government wants to target Muslim schools “but they are too cowardly to say so”)

Daniel Sziranyi (board member)

Kristina Hellner (diocesan communications officer, said “The absolute majority of the religious schools in Sweden show excellent results but a small number of them - and these are Islamic schools - have had different kinds of problems. Instead of doing something about these specific schools, certain politicians would like to solve it by closing all religious schools”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholics-decry-swedish-political-partys-plan-to-close-all-religious-schools-58561>



## Central African Republic: Seko

### **Approximately a dozen Christians were killed by anti-balanga militants**

Fr Joseph Desire Angbabata (**killed** had refused to move to a UN protected camp because he would have abandoned people who had taken shelter at his parish)

Passi Kouzouneye (school director, **killed along with his wife**)

Archbishop Richard Appora (said “We lost a young priest. Fr Joseph Desire Angbabata died as a martyr in his field of mission, the Church”)

Cardinal Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: said "We strongly condemn these acts. The men of God have the task of announcing the path of peace and reconciliation")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63955->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Unanimous condemnation for the killing of the parish priest of Seko](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63955-)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/dozens-killed-in-car-including-priest-who-planned-to-move/>



**United Kingdom: Barking**

Pastor David Lynn (Canadian citizen, arrested for street preaching after a homosexual made accusations that he had called her 'perverse' and 'sinful')

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/christian-preacher-arrested-in-barking-for-hate-speech-has-charges-dropped>



**United States - Rhode Island: Providence College**

**Four college chaplains were reported to have sent an email affirming traditional Christian marriage**

Fr Peter Martyr Yungwirth OP (Chaplain)

Fr Michael Weibley OP (Assistant Chaplain)

Fr Dominic Verner OP (Assistant Chaplain)

Fr Bonaventure Chapman OP (Assistant Chaplain)

Michael Smalanskas (aged 22, college dormitory resident advisor, former seminarian; **UPDATE:** said "I think it was a great effort on their part...a significant moment...possibly a turning point here at PC...Four young Dominicans came out with something that went much [further] than what the president or Vice President of mission and ministry did")

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/providence-college-chaplains-respond-to-attacks-on-pro-marriage-Catholic-st>

**Wednesday March 21, 2018**



**India: Bollapalli village, Prakasham district, Andhra Pradesh state**

Chadarajupalli Subbaravamma (aged mid-60's, convert, wife of Jayaramaiah, mother of Subba Rao, **beaten to death** by a sculptor from a Hindu temple, police acted to protect the killer by stating he was mentally ill)

Jayaramaiah (aged 70, widower of Chadarajupalli Subbaravamma)

Subba Rao (son of Chadarajupalli Subbaravamma, said "By the time we all went to the terrace, she was lying with her blouse by her side and the Bible thrown away, and her head bled profusely. She died on the spot. The neighbours saw him [the young man] beat her to death. She was knelt in prayer and fell with her face down. The blows were so heavy that her head is broken apart. Nobody should wish such painful death to their bitter enemies even...There was no chance for the killer to escape. He went and locked himself inside the bathroom. We don't know to whom he made calls, but soon police arrived and pulled him out of the bathroom. We were howling in pain that 'mother is dead; he killed her, he killed her'. But the police told us, 'That fellow is mad'. I am not educated; my family survives only on [the produce from] our one-acre agriculture field. They asked me to 'shut up', and 'don't make a scene'. The police took the killer with them. The police had themselves written a complaint and took the signatures of my wife and assured us that the body will be taken for post-mortem, and we can perform the last rites after it. They told me if we inform any Christian leaders, they will take up protests and will not let us perform the last rites for at least ten days. They told me, 'That fellow is mental, and there can't be any complaint against him'"

Pastor Mohan Rao (said "Subbaravamma came to Christ ten years ago, took baptism and continued in faith until her death. On any Sunday, she would be the first one to make it to the church. She was a strong believer...The church is shocked to hear the news and none of us is in accord with the police statements. They are cooking up a different version that she was mistaken for a young woman wearing the same colored sari. It is not true")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/elderly-christian-woman-murdered-in-india-family-say-she-was-targeted-police-say-killer-mad/>



**Syria: Afrin**

### **The Turkish military continued operations against the Kurds**

Valentine Hanan (said "Afrin was untouched by the war going on all around us. We were a safe place in the middle of our war-torn nation...I am very grieved about what is going on today. Six years ago when I started the church ministry in Afrin, I didn't know of any other Christian. Many of those who come to church are from Muslim background and they became Christians. Many people were coming to the church because they were really interested in knowing more about Christ. Those who attended said they felt peaceful and hopeful when they heard the gospel message.. Many of the other Christian families are still in Afrin and surrounding villages and are now trying to get out...Now they [Christians] are afraid that they could be persecuted for their faith. Many are

terrified for their lives because of ISIL and other Islamic groups are moving around the town")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180321121017.htm>



### **Egypt: El Toud, Qena province**

Sami Farid (said of an attempt to license an unlicensed church "...news spread among the people of the village very quickly. Many Muslim villagers gathered in front of the 'house church' and threw stones at it. They also pelted the Copt homes next to the church. They shouted 'Allahu akbar' [Allah is greatest], and chanted slogans against the church. Then they blocked access to the street leading to the church...The committee members arrived at the village at midday to inspect the church, but they ran into a volatile crowd. The committee members called for the police to protect them. The police arrived at 3pm but didn't do anything, not arresting a single one of the extremists who attacked us...It is clear that [the law] does not apply to extremists who attack Christians")

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/egyptian-mob-celebrates-blocking-application-for-new-church/>



### **United Kingdom: Barking**

Pastor David Lynn (Canadian citizen, arrested on [March 20, 2018](#) for street preaching after a homosexual made accusations that he had called her 'perverse' and 'sinful'; **UPDATE:** released without charge, video recordings showed the accusations were false)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/christian-preacher-arrested-in-barking-for-hate-speech-has-charges-dropped>



### **United States – Georgia: McDonough**

Pastor Daunte Long (church vandalized with satanic graffiti, said to the vandals “I want to invite you to become a part of this community, because I believe that you need help, and that we can help and build a stronger community together”)

### **United States - North Carolina: Belville**

William Yeoman (church trustee, church vandalized, said “Why? Did God do anything to you? Did we do anything to you?”)

### **United States - North Carolina: Flat Rock**

Pastor Wilburn Lefler (church vandalized with graffiti stating “[expletive] Jesus” and “[expletive] Billy Graham + diabolic delusive ‘divinity’”, said “We’ll be praying about it, praying for them. Pray that the community would ... show people that there’s still a lot of godly people in this town that love the Lord and serve the Lord”)

### **United States – Texas: Jasper**

Pastor Mark Follett (church vandalized with graffiti stating "[expletive] Christians" and “phoney”, said “When I was a kid, I would’ve never thought that things like this would happen, but they are”)

<http://christiannews.net/2018/03/21/string-of-vandalism-cases-reported-at-churches-nationwide/>

**Thursday March 22, 2018**



### **Pakistan: Mardan**

**Christians protested a 25 year old land dispute in which a Muslim accepted payment for a parcel but then refused to transfer title when he discovered a church would be built**

Amanat Masih (district council member)

Niamat Masih (district council member)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/chief-justice-of-peshawar-high-court-urged-to-take-notice-of-grabbing-of-churchs-land/>

**Friday March 23, 2018**



### **China: Pu'er, Yunnan province**

Rev John Cao San Qiang (husband of Jamie Powell, father of two sons, minister to Myanmar Christians, arrested [at the Myanmar border with China](#) on [March 5, 2017](#) and charged with illegal border crossing; **UPDATE:** sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment, fined US\$3,168)

Jing Ruxia (arrested [at the Myanmar border with China](#) on March 5, 2017 and charged with illegal border crossing; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 1 year's imprisonment, fined US\$792)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/north-carolina-pastor-sentenced-to-7.html>



## **Syria: Afrin**

### **The Turkish military continued operations against the Kurds**

Charmaine Hedding (described the plight of Christian converts from Islam "[Christians] should pray for their safety. They should pray for these families to stay together because in these chronically desperate situations where masses of people are fleeing families can get lost and little ones can get hurt so we need to pray for these families that they can stay together and find a safe place outside of the bombing and outside of the war that's happening in the takeover of Afrin...We know from statements from what they have made that they want to get rid of the people in this area and bring in other people from Syria that have got nothing to do with this area and don't have any connection to this part of the country so it's a population displacement and moving in other groups")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20180323155017.htm>



## **Egypt**

Mariam Makram (aged 19, reported to have disappeared after calling her husband to say she would be home in a few minutes)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2112&A=34326>



## **Nigeria**

Rev Jeremiah Gado (**UPDATE**: said "We call on the federal government and all its agencies to ensure the immediate release of Leah Sherubu, who is a member of ECWA [Evangelical Church Winning All], without any conditions. We condemn in strong terms any attempt to forcefully convert anyone from one religion to another. As a church we continue to pray for her release and the release of all abducted Nigerians")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/03/kidnapped-girls-church-calls-buhari-win-release-boko-haram-nigeria/>



### **France: Trebes**

Lt Col Arnaud Beltrame (aged 44, police officer, shot by an ISIL sympathizer after he had offered to be exchanged for another hostage, hospitalized, married his fiancée on his deathbed, **died**)

<http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/03/26/pope-praises-french-policeman-who-gave-his-life-to-save-hostage/>

**Saturday March 24, 2018**



### **China**

Zhang Kai (civil rights attorney; **UPDATE:** posted on social media "I would like to post a request, as I was summoned [three days ago] by the procuratorate in Ou Hai, Wenzhou: Friends, please take care of my parents if I am detained again. The only reason why I would be arrested is that I helped churches secure their rights during the cross crackdown in Wenzhou. It is because of my ideals of law and my faith's compassion that I served the church as a defense lawyer for ten years and assisted several hundred churches. Remember me in your prayers, brothers and sisters! I have no clue whether I can endure violence and intimidation, but I will make an effort. Meanwhile, I have a word for the perpetrator: History has witnessed that none of those standing against God and the Church ended up well. I meant to focus on reading and writing at home and stay away from the mundane world. Nevertheless, you [government officials] have relentlessly harassed and hurt me so that I am sick of life, but I will never commit suicide. I am counting all evils you have done so far")

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/03/christian-human-rights-lawyer-fears-re.html>



### **Burundi: Bujumbura**

Archbishop Evariste Ngoyagoye (**UPDATE:** resigned)

Bishop Gervais Banshimiyubusa (appointed to succeed Archbishop Evariste Ngoyagoye)



<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63952->

[AFRICA BURUNDI Resignation of the Archbishop of Bujumbura and appointment of the new Archbishop](#)

**Sunday March 25, 2018**



**Pakistan: Dhair village, Shahdara town, Lahore, Punjab province**

**Christians celebrated Palm Sunday after returning to their homes following accusations of blasphemy against Patras Masih**

Pastor Safnia Bashir (said "We were not sure about holding a public rally. Just a month ago, most of the villagers had fled the village for fear of mob attack. Finally we decided to steer the worshippers only in the Christian neighborhood...Observe a fast and pray for an end to this lawlessness and terrorism. Pray for the rulers, even if you do not like them. We are only safe when our country is safe")

Hameed Masih (had fled his home, said "When we came back here two weeks later, we found our apartment had been trashed. All of our utensils and clothes were strewn over the floor. They had smashed our TV set and cupboards. The washing machine was wrecked. They even damaged my neighbor's motorbike...We definitely got a boost from being able to profess our faith openly in the streets after being haunted and living in terror. It was a big deal")

Khalid Shehzad (activist, said "The pastor should have contacted the police and asked for reinforcements. Christian villagers could easily be targeted again. The authorities will blame the organizer of the rally if it provokes more attacks")

Bishop Emmanuel (**UPDATE:** has not been able to return to the village)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/defiant-palm-sunday-procession-held-in-pakistani-village/81890>

**Monday March 26, 2018**



**Indonesia: Jakarta**

Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok (former Governor, sentenced in [Jakarta](#) on [May 9, 2017](#) to 2 years' imprisonment on blasphemy charges despite the court ruling there was no evidence of guilt and the prosecutorial recommendation of a suspended sentence; appealed his conviction on [February 2, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied by the Supreme Court)

Yudo Prihanto (attorney, said "According to what I have surmised, the verdict is not merely a legal decision, but has also been strongly influenced by politics")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/The-Supreme-Court-rejects-Ahok's-appeal-against-his-blasphemy-conviction-43460.html>



### **China: Mindong, Fujian province**

Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin (aged 59, underground bishop, detained in [Fuan](#) on [April 6, 2017](#) for 20 days to 'to study and learn'; released on [May 6, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: abducted by police after refusing to concelebrate Easter Mass with an excommunicated bishop)

Fr Xu Wenmin (underground diocesan chancellor; **UPDATE**: abducted by police)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mindong,-Mgr.-Guo-Xijin-kidnapped-by-the-police-before-Easter-43462.html>



### **India: Ishanagar, Uttar Pradesh state**

Sajan K George (president of the Global Council of Indian Christians; **UPDATE**: reported on the police questioning of eight Christians accused of illegal conversions: "[It was] at the behest of local citizens, who had reported them for activities related to the Christian faith. The policemen, however, neither detained nor held the accused in custody. They were held and interrogated in the police station and then released after an hour...we thank the police of the town who released the faithful who were accused without proof")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Uttar-Pradesh,-police-release-8-Pentecostal-Christians-accused-of-'forced-conversions'-43473.html>



### **Pakistan: Lahore**

**Three Christian men were attacked by hospital security staff and by doctors wielding surgical instruments, a pane of glass, chairs and belts, the attack was triggered after**

**the Christians had complained of inadequate medical care for a pregnant family member and were called insolent**

Kiran Saleem (aged 30, wife of Kashif Shafeeq, denied medical care for her late term pregnancy until family members protested)

Kashif Shafeeq (husband of Kiran Saleem, attacked, treated for injuries)

Sunil Saleem (aged 28 or 34, husband of Asiya, father of four, brother of Kiran Saleem, attacked, **died from his injuries**)

Asiya (widow of Sunil Saleem, mother of four)

Anil Saleem (aged 27, brother of Kiran Saleem, attacked, treated for injuries, described the attack as "harrowing" and said "About 20 security guards and 14 doctors punched and attacked my brothers and cousins with batons, chairs and belts. We received internal injuries and called the police. The ribs and legs of Sunil were fractured. He fainted and later died in the same hospital")

Saleem Johnson (aged 60, father of Kiran Saleem)

Mehwish (aged 26, sister of Kiran, Anil and Sunil Saleem, said "I am deeply disturbed by what has happened to our family, we were expecting the birth of a new child into our growing family, but have now lost our eldest brother...The men who murdered our brother are meant to be doctors - people who save lives - how could this happen? Medical instruments were used to kill Sunil I saw the wounds myself and now I will be emotionally scarred for life. At this moment in time I just want to cry forever...I pray to God that he cares for my brother Sunil and seek his help now in obtaining justice")

Fr Qaiser Feroz (**UPDATE**: later said "This is a first of its kind tragedy...People visit hospitals for treatment and doctors are supposed to save lives")

**Christian leaders condemned the acquittal of 20 perpetrators of the November 4, 2014 lynching of Shahzad and Shama Masih**

Tahir Naveed Chaudhry (attorney, **UPDATE**: said "Unfortunately, government prosecutors often fail to do their job which results in the acquittal of culprits")

Hyacinth Peter (**UPDATE**: said "None of those arrested in mob attacks on religious minorities have been punished in the history of the country. Courts are pressurized by fanatics who use both their finances and influences to free their goons. They openly abuse judges")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/court-sets-free-20-in-pakistani-christian-couple-lynching-case/81898>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/hippocratic-oath-breaking-doctors-kill-christian-man-in-disgraceful-pakistani-hospital>

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/hospitals-security-guards-brutally-beat-christian-to-death/>  
<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6817>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistani-catholic-beaten-to-death-by-hospital-staff/81939>

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1397967/10-medics-15-guards-booked-after-attendant-dies-in-services-clash>



### **United States – Alabama: Huntsville**

Alison Harris (aged 66, arrested on [May 26, 2017](#) for disorderly conduct outside an abortion clinic; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/victory-alabama-sidewalk-counselors-vindicated-in-court>

**Tuesday March 27, 2018**



### **China: Mindong, Fujian province**

Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin (aged 59, underground bishop, abducted by police on March 26, 2018 after refusing to concelebrate Easter Mass with an excommunicated bishop; **UPDATE**: returned to his residence, prohibited from public Mass)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mindong,-Msgr.-Guo-is-back,-but-banned-from-celebrating-Christm-Mass-as-bishop-43480.html>



### **India: Meghalaya state**

P B M Basaiawmoit (National Council of Churches; **UPDATE**: had sent a letter to the state government opposing the cancellation of Good Friday as a holiday, the cancellation was rescinded following widespread protests, said “This episode shows that the BJP [the Hindu nationalist political party] will do anything wherever they are in power. We have to be on the alert...I cannot understand why national organizations should issue orders to offend a community in a particular state. This cannot be seen in isolation from the BJP becoming a part of the ruling coalition after the February election”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/good-friday-holiday-reinstated-in-christian-majority-indian-state-after-protests/>

**Wednesday March 28, 2018**



### **India: Fatehpur, Uttar Pradesh state**

#### **Twenty Hindu radicals attacked a church service**

Pastor Jose Prakash (said “Just five minutes in, we were making some arrangements [for the baptisms] and all of a sudden the 20 people in saffron clothes appeared with wooden sticks. I went to talk, and find what they are up to, but they held me by my collar and alleged: ‘You are carrying out conversions here!’ I tried to calm them down and make them understand that I only baptize those who come forward willingly, and there is no force. But they were not convinced. They started punching me, and rushed inside the kitchen in the church building and picked some knives. I did not want them to cause harm to anyone, so I quietly took the beatings”, after prayer decided to not file a police report)

Dinesh Kumar (aged 25, attempted to protect Pastor Jose Prakash, "badly" beaten, detained by police, hospitalized with head, eye, and ear injuries and headaches, nausea, and vomiting, "condition is worsening")

Prem (aged 45, new convert, baptismal candidate, beaten, detained by police, hospitalized)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/india-baptism-service-halted-by-hindu-mob-claiming-forced-conversions/>

**Thursday March 29, 2018**



### **Indonesia**

Trinita Hutahayan (aged then 3, church in [Samarinda, East Kalimantan](#) attacked with Molotov cocktails by an ISIL sympathizer on [November 13, 2016](#), hospitalized in serious condition; **UPDATE**: now aged 5, has continued to undergo medical treatments)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/03/indonesia-church-bomb-attack-victim-trinita-5-healing-well-father-says/>



### **El Salvador: near Santiago de Maria**

Fr Walter Osmin Vasquez (aged 36, **shot dead** after celebrating Mass)

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/63975-AMERICA\\_EL\\_SALVADOR\\_Fr\\_Walter\\_assassinated\\_like\\_the\\_Gospel\\_s\\_grain\\_of\\_wheat](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63975-AMERICA_EL_SALVADOR_Fr_Walter_assassinated_like_the_Gospel_s_grain_of_wheat)

**Friday March 30, 2018**



**Iran: Evin Prison, Tehran**

Naser Navar Gol-Tapeh (aged 47, convert, arrested on [June 24, 2016](#); sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [June 22, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: has been suffering from a severe and untreated gum infection, may be at risk of losing all of his teeth)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3951>

**March 2018, date unknown**

**Today's Martyrs**

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

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