

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – April 2018

Sunday April 1, 2018

Easter [Pascha] – Western calendar



Indonesia: Jakarta, West Java

Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo (**UPDATE**: spoke out against corruption after six politicians including one Christian were arrested)

Yohanes Handoyo Budhisedjati (**UPDATE**: said Catholics "need to uphold the spirit of a good governance which can unite all social elements")

Hargo Mandirahardjo (chairman of the Association of Catholic Graduates and Intellectuals in Indonesia, said he approved of the Archbishop's comments on corruption and added "We must continue to promote our national unity. If we don't, then who will?")

Church leaders thanked Muslims for attending Holy Week services in a demonstration against intolerance

Indonesia: Jakarta, West Java

Fr Antonius Benny Susetyo (**UPDATE**: said the attendance of the governor at Easter celebrations "gives us hope that the commitment to preserve unity remains strong in society")

Bonar Tigor Naipospos (**UPDATE**: said of the attendance of the governor at Easter celebrations "We need such examples to educate the public, that differences of beliefs should not make us hate and demean each other")

Indonesia: Ambon, Maluku province

Bishop Petrus Canisius Mandagi (thanked dozens of young Muslims for attending a Good Friday procession "This is an example of where religion becomes a unifying tool and this religious celebration becomes a bridge to strengthening relations")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/jakarta-archbishops-easter-message-focusses-on-threats-to-unity/81949>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-muslims-defy-extremism-by-marking-holy-week/81948>



India: Bihabandh village, Orissa state

Fr Bipin Kishore Majhi (vestments destroyed in a church arson attack)

India: Bihabandh and Salangabahal villages, Orissa state

Bishop Kishor Kumar Kujur (denounced the arson attack against one church and the vandalism of another on Easter "It was a premeditated and planned attack. Both incidents occurred during the night, at about the same time. The parishes are 7-8 km away from each other. This is the work of the same group, which is against the Christian community")

Archbishop John Barwa (**UPDATE:** said "We did not expect such an attack in a secular country. These episodes of desecration that offend our religious sentiment must end...this year marks the tenth anniversary of the violence of Kandhamal" in which dozens of Christians were killed and hundreds displaced)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Orissa,-statues-of-the-Virgin-and-Child-Jesus-destroyed-at-Easter-43511.html>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/churches-attacked-in-indias-sensitive-odisha-state/81968>



Pakistan: Sankhatra village, Narowal district, Punjab province

Fr Francis Nadeem OFM Cap (**UPDATE:** reported on the eviction of 50 Christian families from their homes in a corrupt land grab, said "even some Muslim leaders condemned this injustice and asked the government to act immediately against the guilty")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64006->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN_Christian_and_Muslim_leaders_solidarity_with_Christian_families_thrown_out_from_their_homes](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64006-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Christian_and_Muslim_leaders_solidarity_with_Christian_families_thrown_out_from_their_homes)



Congo, Democratic Republic: on the road between Nyarukwangara and Karambi, Rutshuru, North Kivu province

Fr Celestin Ngango (abducted)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63999->

[AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Congolese_priest_kidnapped_on_Easter_Sunday_released](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63999-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Congolese_priest_kidnapped_on_Easter_Sunday_released)

Monday April 2, 2018



Pakistan: Shah Zaman area, Quetta, Balochistan province

A family celebrating Easter was shot dead while going for ice cream

Pervaiz Masih (rickshaw driver, **shot dead**)

Tariq Masih (**shot dead**)

Imran Masih (**shot dead**)

Firdous Bibi (**shot dead**)

Rahib (aged 19, college student, **shot dead**)

Azhar Iqbal (aged 20, college student, **shot dead**)

Sunana Shakeel (aged 10, shot in both legs, hospitalized)

Mehwish William (aged 19, shot in her left leg, hospitalized)

Samuel Masih (aged 38, shot in the neck, hospitalized)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/four-catholics-killed-in-pakistan-terrorist-attack/81957>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/bpca-assists-shooting-victims-and-families-of-those-slain-in-easter-terrorist-attack>



Iran: Tehran

Hadi Askary (aged 40, arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in **Firuzkuh** on **August 26, 2016**; sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on **June 11, 2017**; **UPDATE**: request for release on bail while pending appeal reported to have been denied)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3953>



Iraq

Sr Ban Madleen (denied a visa to visit her ill sister in the UK)

Fr Benedict Kiely (founder of Nasarean.org, commented on the UK government's refusal to issue a visa to Sr Ban Madleen for her lack of recent travel there “Do they not know what happened [in Iraq] between 2014 and now?”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/04/02/iraqi-nun-displaced-by-islamic-state-denied-uk-visa/>



United States - New Mexico

Colonel Leland B H Bohannon (as of [October 20, 2017](#) had been stripped of his command at [Kirtland Air Force Base](#) and promotion to Brigadier General reversed after he declined to sign a thank you certificate for a retiring airman and his husband, had obtained the signature of a superior officer in a religious accommodation; **UPDATE:** subject of a letter for the Secretary of the Air Force to Congress which stated "[Col Leland Bohannon] had the right to exercise his sincerely held religious beliefs and did not unlawfully discriminate when he declined to sign the certificate...The Air Force has a duty to treat people fairly and without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, or sexual orientation and [Bohannon] met that duty by having a more senior officer sign the certificate”)

<https://www.stripes.com/news/air-force-colonel-had-religious-right-to-refuse-signing-same-sex-spouse-appreciation-letter-1.520156>

Tuesday April 3, 2018



Philippines: Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, Manila

Fr Quirico Pedregosa Jr OP (seminary rector, said that church organizations need to help protect tribal peoples and their schools during military operations against Communist rebels)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholic-university-steps-in-to-aid-persecuted-filipinos/81912>



Mexico: Cuernavaca, Morelos state

Fr Moises Fabila Reyes (aged 83, abducted)

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/04/26/for-the-third-time-in-a-week-a-priest-is-found-dead-in-mexico/>

Thursday April 5, 2018



Vietnam: Hanoi

Pastor Nguyen Trung Ton (sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for supporting democratic reforms)

Nguyen Van Dai (attorney, sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for supporting democratic reforms)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/vietnam-jails-human-rights-lawyer-for-15-years/81999>



Congo, Democratic Republic: Bunyangula village

Fr Celestin Ngango (abducted on [April 1, 2018](#) on the road [between Nyarukwangara and Karambi, Rutshuru, North Kivu province](#); **UPDATE**: released)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/63999->
[AFRICA DR CONGO Congolese priest kidnapped on Easter Sunday released](#)

Sunday April 8, 2018

Pascha [Easter] – Eastern Calendar



Congo, Democratic Republic: Kyahemba

Fr Etienne Sengiyumva (**killed** after celebrating Mass)

Bishop Theophile Kaboy Ruboneka (**UPDATE**: reported on the murder of Fr Etienne Sengiyumva: "Around 3pm, after celebrating Mass in Kyahemba a circumscription of his parish, Fr Etienne had gathered his collaborators, when an armed man, accompanied by other people, entered the meeting room and killed the priest...it is difficult to say who was

responsible of this terrible act. There are different armed groups in our region, at least 15, which cannot be dismantled despite the presence of the regular army and the Blue Helmets of MONUSCO [UN Mission in the DRC]...Fr Etienne is the third priest killed in the area. Investigations on the perpetrators of these deaths never lead to anything. On our behalf, we will do everything to identify Fr Etienne's murderers. In these cases, the witnesses fear for their lives and that of their loved ones and hardly offer useful information...I repeat: in our region there are so many armed groups that it is difficult to understand who commits the action. Here in North Kivu we live in total chaos. The situation in my diocese of Goma, like that of Butembo-Beni, is incredible. We are completely abandoned by everyone, we live only thanks to Providence. I ask the faithful of the universal Church to pray for our region so that they can rediscover peace")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64003->

[AFRICA DR CONGO We are abandoned by all says the Bishop of Goma after t
he murder of Fr Etienne Sengiyumva](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64003-)

Monday April 9, 2018



Pakistan: Fateh Sher, near Sahiwal city

Razia Bibi (aged 12, alias, daughter of Razaq Masih, abducted, forced into an Islamic marriage)

Razaq Masih (aged 55, alias, father of Razia Bibi)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/12-yr-old-pakistani-christian-girl-forcibly-married-to-a-disabled-muslim-man/>

Tuesday April 10, 2018



Congo, Democratic Republic: Seka-Mbote district, Boma

Fr Pierre Mavinga (beaten and robbed along with another priest, hospitalized, said "It was about 8 o'clock when a dozen hooded bandits, some in military uniform, invaded our premises, fired point-blank range with real ammunition. They beat us and took our phones, computers and a little money")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/64030-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Two_priests_attacked_The_Church_is_intimidated_and_threatened_Church_sources_tell_Fides

Friday April 13, 2018



United Kingdom: Scotland

The BBC posted an 'anti-homophobia' video on Facebook that said '[Jesus] saved a lot of time when he died for our crimes, that he would've wasted teaching small minds that love is no sin' and said of women receiving Communion 'But under all that din, it tastes like cardboard and smells like hate'

Bishop John Keenan (condemned the video “It is ridiculing and demeaning the faith of ordinary Catholics especially at a time when Catholics are experiencing more and more abuse and prejudice in Scotland...The BBC has to be careful. It has to ask itself if it has ceased to be a broadcaster in the public interest, and is just promoting particular interests. You cannot imagine it treating any other religion like this”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/04/13/bbc-scotland-video-says-holy-communion-smells-like-hate/>

Sunday April 15, 2018



Pakistan: Shahdara

Pastor Yousuf Aziz (church attacked with a firebomb "We have not received any threats and we are not in conflict with anyone, this criminal act is shocking for all of us, everything was burnt: mats, rugs, chairs, furnishings, crosses, sacred books like the Bible, hymn books, catechism books...The members of the community are in tears in seeing their Church like this, we pray for the guilty and leave everything in God's hands. God will protect his people")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/64047-ASIA_PAKISTAN_A_church_burned_in_Lahore_by_unknown_persons

Monday April 16, 2018



Philippines: Quezon City

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen; **UPDATE**: arrested for 'illegal political activity')

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-authorities-arrest-71-year-old-australian-nun/82076>

Tuesday April 17, 2018



Philippines

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen; arrested in [Quezon City](#) on [April 16, 2018](#) for 'illegal political activity'; **UPDATE**: released after a prosecutor found no probable cause for the arrest)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-authorities-arrest-71-year-old-australian-nun/82076>

Wednesday April 18, 2018



Pakistan: Sialkot

Asma Yaqoub (aged 25, subjected to an acid attack after she resisted being forced into an Islamic marriage, hospitalized)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/the-cecil-iris-foundation-demands-justice-for-asma-yaqoub/>



Nigeria: Jebbu-Miango village, Plateau state

Adam Sunday (aged 38, **killed**)

Jatau Akus (aged 39, **killed**)

Chohu Awarhai (**killed**)

Marcus Mali (aged 22, **killed**)

Rev Sunday Zibeh (described the attack “The four victims were construction workers working on site when they were attacked...The sad reality is that the Nigerian government headed by President Muhammadu Buhari, himself a Muslim and a Fulani man, has not acted in any way to end these attacks”)

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

Thursday April 19, 2018



China: Beijing

Xu Yonghai (**UPDATE**: said “[W]e gathered for a Bible study on Friday, April 20. On April 19, the police showed up at my house and asked me: ‘Who is going to attend the gathering tomorrow? Will there be reporters?’ A few reporters visit our church frequently and attend the Bible study sessions. Two reporters had planned to come on April 20”, one reporter cancelled when he saw the police outside the church)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/christian-times-chinese-officials.html>



Mexico: Cautitlan Izalli

Fr Ruben Alcantara (aged 50, **stabbed to death**)

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/04/26/for-the-third-time-in-a-week-a-priest-is-found-dead-in-mexico/>

http://www.fides.org/en/news/64056-AMERICA_MEXICO_Priest_murdered_in_his_office

Friday April 20, 2018



Mexico: Guadalajara

Fr Juan Miguel Contreras (aged 33, **shot dead** in church)

<https://cruknow.com/global-church/2018/04/26/for-the-third-time-in-a-week-a-priest-is-found-dead-in-mexico/>
www.fides.org/en/news/64075-AMERICA_MEXICO_Bishops_ask_after_yet_another_priest_is_assassinated_why_hav_e_we_lost_respect_for_life

Sunday April 22, 2018



Pakistan: Lahore

Asma Yaqoub (aged 25, subjected to an acid attack in **Sialkot** on **April 18, 2018** after she resisted bring forced into an Islamic marriage, hospitalized; **UPDATE: died of her injuries**)

<https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/the-cecil-iris-foundation-demands-justice-for-asma-yaqoob/>

Monday April 23, 2018



Philippines

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen; arrested in **Quezon City** on **April 16, 2018** for 'illegal political activity'; released on **April 17, 2018** after a prosecutor found no probable cause for the arrest; **UPDATE: visa revoked**)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/australian-nun-defies-philippine-order-to-leave/82402>



Ivory Coast: Nianda

Fr Bernardin Brou (aged 41, **shot in a roadside robbery attempt**, hospitalized, **died**)

Fr Theophile Ahi (witnessed the shooting of Fr Bernardin Brou)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64085->

[AFRICA COTE D IVORE Priest killed in road robbery](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64085-)

Tuesday April 24, 2018



Nigeria: Ukpor-Mbalom, Benue state

Muslim Fulani gunmen attacked a church during Mass, killing 19, then burned 50 homes

Fr Joseph Gor (**killed**)

Fr Felix Tyolaha (**killed**)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/nigerias-bishops-call-for-processions-to-honor-those-killed-in-church-attack-16760>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64086->

[AFRICA NIGERIA Two priests among victims in central Nigeria massacres](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64086-)

Thursday April 26, 2018



Mexico: Morelos state

Fr Moises Fabila Reyes (aged 83, abducted in Cuernavaca, Morelos state on April 3, 2018;

UPDATE: found dead of an apparent heart attack)

<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/04/26/for-the-third-time-in-a-week-a-priest-is-found-dead-in-mexico/>

Sunday April 29, 2018



Philippines: Gattaran, Cagayan province

Fr Mark Anthony Yuaga Ventura (aged 37, **shot dead** while blessing children after Mass)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/priest-shot-dead-after-mass-in-northern-philippines/82175>



India: Baburia Khera, Uttar Pradesh state

Pastor Kamlesh Kuma (husband of Shashikala, described a Hindu attack on his church: "They manhandled women, beat them, pulled their clothes, spoke to them in a filthy language and disgraced them", threatened with death, said when police arrived "Instead of taking action against our plight, the police began to question us as to, 'Why are you running a church? You are not supposed to worship here...otherwise you will get killed and we can do nothing to help you'")

Shashikala (wife of Pastor Kamlesh Kuma, described a Hindu attack on her church "They were looking for the pastor, saying, 'We will kill him today'. We had hidden him inside a room and locked the room from outside. They went on hunting for him everywhere. This is how we were able to save his life...I saw Ram Prasad fall on the floor bleeding profusely after being hit by a brick, but the attackers continued kicking him and hitting him with wooden sticks until he lay motionless on the floor...The neighbors just stood watching us in fear during the attack. No one came to our rescue for fear of getting beaten up", said police questioned parishioners for evidence of illegal conversions, received medical treatment)

Ram Prasad (aged 55, beaten into unconsciousness, hospitalized)

Mithlesh (received medical treatment)

Kalavati (received medical treatment)

Maya (received medical treatment)

India: Bihar state

Three Christians were arrested at their church on allegations of illegal conversion

Rajini (sister of Sarah, arrested)

Sarah (wife of Subash, sister of Rajini, arrested)

Subash (husband of Sarah, arrested)

<https://persecutionrelief.org/update-bro-subash-released-after-26-days-in-jail-bihar/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/pastors-wife-hides-husband-from-hindu-extremists-seeking-to-kill-him-in-northern-india/>

April 2018, date unknown

Today's Martyrs

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

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