

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – May 2018

Tuesday May 1, 2018



China

Rev John Cao San Qiang (husband of Jamie Powell, father of Amos and Ben, U.S. legal resident, minister to Myanmar Christians, arrested at the Myanmar border with China on [March 5, 2017](#) and charged with illegal border crossing; sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment and fined US\$3,168 in [Pu'er, Yunnan province](#) on [March 23, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/huffington-post-asian-american-pastors.html>



Central African Republic: Bangui

Fr Albert Toungoumale-Baba (aged 71, **killed along with 23 worshippers** during a gun and grenade attack on a Mass, 170 were injured)

Fr Frederico Trincherio OCD (**UPDATE**: said that Fr Albert Toungoumale-Baba was “well known, esteemed and loved by the people” and that he had sheltered large numbers of refugees of various faiths at his church during the recent conflict)

Cardinal Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: spoke after mourners attempted to carry the body of Fr Albert Toungoumale-Baba to the presidential palace and burned down a mosque “The whole Christian community, not just in our country, has been plunged into mourning, after brothers and sisters who came here for Mass encountered suffering, injury and death instead. It’s at most difficult moments like this that true heroes arise and find the strength to propose an alternative, saying no to the evil of violence, barbarism and destruction, and choosing the good of love, forgiveness and reconciliation...behind these events, I ask myself if there’s also manipulation and instrumentalization, a wish to divide the country and a hidden agenda”)

<http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/05/06/dont-seek-revenge-for-church-massacre-urges-cardinal/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64148->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Fr Albert a pastor esteemed for his action for reconciliation between Christians and Muslims](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64148-)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64124->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Cardinal Nzapalainga after the massacre Is there a willingness to divide the Country Is there a hidden agenda](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64124-)

Wednesday May 2, 2018



Nigeria: Bang, Nyanga, Bonki and Nzomосу villages, Adamawa state

Harold Wilson (reported on Fulani Muslim attacks in which at least 15 Christians were killed, said “About 400 armed Fulani herdsmen carried out the attacks”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/christian-death-toll-from-herdsmen-attacks-mounts-in-adamawa-state-nigeria/>

Saturday May 5, 2018



India: Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Govrathnam Anbarasan (church destroyed by arson, later said “That week, we conducted a VBS [Vacation Bible School] program for children in the church. There was opposition from Hindu fundamentalists in Thiruvannamalai, but we continued the church services...As the roof was woven with coconut leaves, it is enough to ignite a small portion [after the children left] and the fire can spread all over easily in short time. I was visiting a believer’s family about three miles away to pray for their son...Since the past two months, we have been worshipping in open air under a tent. A relief organization had come forward promising to help, but I received nothing from them. We don’t have enough means to rebuild the church, even if temporarily”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/arson-attacks-hit-churches-in-tamil-nadu-india/>



Uganda: Kadoto village, Bulangira sub-county, Kibuku district

Event: Three Christian children were abducted from [Kabuna villiage, near Budaka, Kaderuna district](#) on [December 9, 2015](#) by Muslims, **UPDATE: escaped, reunited with their family**

Madengho Badir (aged 45, convert from Islam, father of Nabukwasi Shakira, Gessa Amuza and Wagti Musitafa, children abducted; **UPDATE:** recovered his children after their escape, said “It seems the person who took my children had an intention of Islamizing them as well as wanting them to join a terrorist group. Thank God for saving my children in a miraculous way. Though the children looked miserable, sickly and confused, now with counseling they will be restored back. The God who saved them is able to restore them back to good, sound mind”)

Nabukwasi Shakira (aged 7, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped)

Gessa Amuza (aged 10, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped)

Wagti Musitafa (aged 12, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped, later said “Daily we were taught the Quran, and on some occasions we lacked food to eat. After two years, the man who was caring for us told us that he was planning to take us outside Uganda, and this made us fearful, such that after lunch while being all alone we managed to escape from that house without knowing where we were heading to”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/children-kidnapped-by-islamists-in-uganda-in-2015-are-found/>

Sunday May 6, 2018



Uzbekistan: Karshi

Viktor Toshpulatov (**UPDATE:** home raided during a worship service of 50 people, said "Police banged on our doors when we were holding our worship service, and immediately they entered officers began filming the worshippers without asking permission...none of us wrote statements or signed the police report")

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2380

Monday May 7, 2018



Azerbaijan: Barda

Emil Mehdiyev (aged 18, conscientious objector, case charging him with evasion of military service opened on [January 5, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: trial begun)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2408

Tuesday May 8, 2018



China: Xicheng district, Beijing

Yin (reported on government pressure to cancel church lease agreements, said "The police called us today and forbade us from organizing religious activities in any form...In the morning, the government forced the brother who rented the building to sign a letter guaranteeing that he would not participate in any religious activities. We haven't met with any representatives from the religious affairs bureau yet, and we don't know how to handle all of this")

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

Wednesday May 9, 2018



Philippines: Davao, Mindanao

One missionary was arrested and two prevented from leaving the country for investigating human rights abuses

Tawanda Chandiwana (Zimbabwean citizen, arrested)

Miracle Osman (Malawian citizen, barred from leaving the country)

Adam Thomas Shaw (U.S. citizen, barred from leaving the country)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-arrests-missionary-prevents-2-others-leaving/82674>



Nepal: eastern part of the country

Pastor Hasta Lova Limbu (church damaged in an arson attack by suspected Hindu extremists)

Nepal: Tehrathum district

Dinesh Subba (aged 28, arrested)

Ashish Subba (aged 22, arrested)

Dipak Subba (aged 28, arrested)

Manatula Dhital (aged 44, arrested)

Barshiya Dhital (aged 40, Indian citizen, arrested)

Pawan Rai (aged 33, Indian citizen, arrested)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>

Thursday May 10, 2018



Nepal: Doti district

Pastor Shyam Thapa (church damaged in an arson attack by suspected Hindu extremists)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>



Canada: Ottawa

Twenty-two thousand anti-abortion demonstrators were forced by police to re-route their march to Parliament Hill when the route was blocked by up to 100 pro-abortion demonstrators

Cardinal Thomas Collins (**UPDATE:** told the pro-life marchers “Soon you will come upon people yelling and screaming...There is great power in silence. [Make this a] silent

pilgrimage of deep prayer. Only in that disposition will we see the way in which these great evils will be overcome”)

Jim Hughes (march organizer, said some marchers were angry that the police did not clear the counter-protestors from the permitted route)

Cardinal Gerald Cyprien Lacroix (attacked at a May 8, 2014 National March for Life rally in Ottawa, Ontario by two topless Femen members, protected by RCMP officers;
UPDATE: marched)

Archbishop Terrence Prendergast (marched)

Archbishop Christian Lepine (marched)

Archbishop Brendan O'Brien (marched)

Jeff Gunnarson (march organizer, said “Instead of the cops doing their duty and clearing the streets for us, and making it safe for us, they allowed the pro-abortion protestors to be a presence in such a way that they were forced to reroute our march, and so thereby really giving them a sort of victory. I just can't help but think that why do peaceful protestors have to be diverted? Why not take the ones that are causing the trouble and getting them moved away? That's just common sense to me. And the fact that we have a permit, they don't, so they're in our space, and yet we have to be diverted to avoid them...The police should do everything they can to avoid any kind of disturbance or violence. You certainly don't get violence coming from our side. But I think they should clear the pro-abortion protestors out. 'You're not allowed to be here. These people have a permit.' I mean, can you imagine if we all decided to lie down on the streets in front of the Gay Pride Parade to protest their actions within the parade? We would be pepper sprayed and handcuffed and picked up”)

<http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/05/14/cardinal-defiant-after-pro-abortion-protesters-try-to-block-canadian-march-for-life/>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/ottawa-police-cut-march-for-life-short-over-pro-abortion-protest>

Friday May 11, 2018



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong; **UPDATE:** visited at home by police on the night prior to a planned memorial service for earthquake victims, ordered to cancel the service, replied “Then come tomorrow and do whatever you are going to do according to the law. We will still meet tomorrow. Feel free to arrest us or do whatever. We will safeguard our legal rights according to the law, apply for petitions and administrative review, and file lawsuits”, detained)

Li Yingqiang (detained)

www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/hundreds-seized-for-churchs-earthquake.html



Nepal: midwest region

Pastor Dhirendra Rana (aged 34, church damaged in an arson attack by suspected Hindu extremists, said “The miscreants broke the lock of the church and formed a heap of all the stuff present in the building, including the records of the church, 300 kilograms of grain and electric appliances, and they set everything ablaze...I reported the matter to the local police, but I have not heard anything back from them since then”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>

Saturday May 12, 2018



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong; **UPDATE**: released from detention, while detained over 200 parishioners including 11 children were detained for attending the memorial service for earthquake victims, most were released, 15,600 Bibles and 930 DVDs seized)

Li Yingqiang (**UPDATE**: released)

Song Enguang (husband of Feng Xiaojing, theology student, detained after he attempted to attend a church memorial service for earthquake victims, beaten, released)

Feng Xiaojing (wife of Song Enguang, detained, released)

Zhu Hong (detained, released)

Rev Li Yongqiang (detained, released)

Deacon Tan Defu (detained, released)

Ding Dao-er (detained, released)

Ye Yin (detained, released)

Zhang Qi (detained, released)

www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/hundreds-seized-for-churchs-earthquake.html



India: Mohanpur, West Singhbhum district, Jharkhand state

Eleven Christians were accused of illegal conversions

Ajay Champiya (convert, husband of Suman Champiya)

Suman Champiya (convert, wife of Ajay Champiya, accused along with her family)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/christians-arrested-at-their-wedding-site-on-forcible-conversion-charge-in-india-relatives-say/>



Nepal: Dhangadhi

Pastor Birendra Kariya (church damaged in an arson attack by suspected Hindu extremists)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>

Sunday May 13, 2018



Indonesia: Surabaya, Java

A family of suicide bombers attacked three churches, killing 12 and wounding over 50

Aloysius Bayu (new convert, church security coordinator, stopped the suicide bomber from entering the church, **killed**)

Fr Alexius Kurdo Irianto (three parishioners killed in the suicide bombing, said "Despite our profound sadness we forgive the perpetrators of crimes and pray for the guilty and organizers of these horrible acts: may the Lord enlighten their minds")

Fr Siprianus Hormat (condemned the suicide bombings of the three churches that killed 12 and injured over 50 "The Indonesian Bishops are shocked, they expressed strong disappointment and solidarity towards the families of the victims and wounded. It is traumatic to know that a whole family of suicide bombers carried out the attacks: what do we instill in the minds of children? Extremism? This is the most profound question that these attacks bring with them ")

Fr Aloysius Widyawan (later said “That day was very terrible for us, because Surabaya was a safe city, with many moderate Muslims”)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64181->

[ASIA INDONESIA Attacks on three churches the Catholic parish priest Let us forgive the terrorists](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64181-)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64183->

[ASIA INDONESIA The Bishops Attacks against coexistence and pluralism](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64183-)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2018/08/27/their-churches-were-attacked-but-indonesias-christians-showed-the-power-of-forgiveness/>

Monday May 14, 2018



Central African Republic: Bambari

Fr Firmin Gbagoua (**UPDATE:** reported on a militia attack on his city "The population is devastated, houses burned and looted. The bodies of the victims lie on the ground")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64217->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Assault on Bambari even the Church is not spared](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64217-)



Cameroon: Douala

Archbishop Samuel Kleda (**UPDATE:** reported to have been the object of an apparent assassination attempt when gunshots were fired into his residence)

Msgr Alan Nibile (threw himself on the floor after bullets were fired into his room, uninjured)

Msgr Dieudonne Bayemeg (said “Projectiles were shot at the Archdiocese of Douala headquarters, breaking its windows. There were no human injuries, and the police arrived immediately, accompanied by the Archbishop, cathedral rector and household guards”)

<http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/05/14/cameroon-archbishop-survives-gun-attack-after-criticising-government/>



Sweden: Vaxjo

Fr Ingvar Fogelqvist (church denied the right to ring bells 15 years ago, said he will reopen the application after a nearby mosque was granted the right to use 110 decibel loudspeakers)

<https://sputniknews.com/europe/201805141064430526-sweden-mosque-loud-prayer-calls/>

Tuesday May 15, 2018



China: Xiamen, Fujian province

Pastor Yang Xibo (locked out of his church by the landlord under government pressure, led children in prayer outside the building)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/officials-interrupt-seminary-arrest.html>



Uzbekistan: Mubarek, Kashkadarya region

Vladimir Khanyukov (present during an [April 15, 2018](#) SSS secret police raid on a worship service, said "As soon as the officials arrived at the Church they began filming the worshippers without asking our permission. They also without showing a search warrant confiscated our Christian literature"; **UPDATE:** fined 5 times the minimum monthly wage by a judge who would not identify himself)

Vitaly Provodin (called the regional police headquarters to complain about an [April 15, 2018](#) SSS secret police raid on a worship service, was subsequently arrested and interrogated; **UPDATE:** fined 5 times the minimum monthly wage by a judge who would not identify himself)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2380

Thursday May 17, 2018



Myanmar

Bishop Francis Daw Tang (reported that over 7,000 Kachin Christians have fled their homes "In early April, the Burmese army began to attack the region on the border with China. Many villages were attacked and the population started to flee. Many have been trapped in the jungle for at least three weeks, without food and without freedom to move, because they are suspected of being rebel collaborators...The refugees have come to the parish of Tanghpri. At the moment there are 243 families in the parish territory, a total of 1,200 people. Another 600 displaced people have arrived in Palana, in a Baptist church complex, and other groups have found shelter in other churches")

Than Htoi (social worker, said a Christian school complex was destroyed in a bombing raid: "It is an invisible war")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/64200-ASIA_MYANMAR_Bishops_alarm_Over_7_000_Kachin_Christians_forced_to_flee



Nepal: Tehrathum district

Six Christians were arrested on May 9, 2018; UPDATE: jail time extended for seven more days

Dinesh Subba (aged 28)

Ashish Subba (aged 22)

Dipak Subba (aged 28)

Manatula Dhital (aged 44)

Barshiya Dhital (aged 40, Indian citizen)

Pawan Rai (aged 33, Indian citizen)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>



United States – Alabama: Montgomery

Daniel French (husband of Valerie French, anti-abortion protestor, cited in a criminal complaint that he had damaged an umbrella that was property of an abortion clinic, the damage actually occurred when a clinic volunteer hit him over the head with the umbrella)

United States - Rhode Island

Michael Smalanskas (aged 22, college dormitory resident advisor at Providence College, former seminarian, reported on March 19, 2018 to have been threatened and harassed after having posted a defense of traditional Christian marriage on a bulletin board, moved by

campus security to a secure undisclosed location, threatened with homosexual rape, fiancée threatened; **UPDATE:** threatened with death during his senior prom by two students, later asked the college to ban the two from graduation but was told their disciplinary hearing was scheduled for after graduation)

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/threats-murder-go-unpunished-providence-college>
<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/judge-declares-pro-life-advocate-not-guilty-of-absurd-charge-in-montgomery>

Saturday May 19, 2018



India: Kota, Rajasthan state

Ivania (aged 8, daughter of Maria Demari, Christian boarding school resident, seized along with other students by child welfare agents)

Maria Demari (mother of Ivania, wife, domestic worker, attempted to recover her daughter from child welfare custody, said "But when I went to CWC with the documents, they refused to acknowledge that she is my daughter. I was told that because I am a Christian, my daughter wouldn't be given back to me. They also asked me to convert to Hinduism")

<https://persecutionrelief.org/now-raje-govt-targets-missionary-schools-under-juvenile-justice-act/>



Russia: Grozny, Chechnia

Artemy (Uzbekistani national, **killed** in an Islamic attack on a church)

Vladimir Gorskov (church security guard, wounded, hospitalized, was baptized in the hospital)

Fr Sergei Abasov (church rector, said of Artemy "He was sitting in church all day, reading Holy Scripture, praying on his prayer rope. His prayer rope was in his hand when they killed him... He departed to the Lord with the name of Christ on his lips")

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/3-killed-in-muslim-terrorist-attack-on-chechen-church/>



United States - Rhode Island

Michael Smalanskas (aged 22, college dormitory resident advisor at Providence College, former seminarian; **UPDATE**: subjected to a restraining order and told he would be banned from graduation after he publicly complained of the school's inaction after it received notice of the death threats against him [the administrator claimed to have been 'threatened' by his complaint], the college said the banishment from graduation would be lifted if he apologized which he refused, the ban was later rescinded but the restraining order remained in effect)

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2018/threats-murder-go-unpunished-providence-college>

Sunday May 20, 2018



Pakistan

Archbishop Joseph Coutts (aged 72, **UPDATE**: named to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis)

www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2018/05/22/who-are-the-14-new-cardinals/



Uzbekistan: Karshi

Viktor Toshpulatov (home raided during a [May 6, 2018](#) worship service of 50 people, said "Police banged on our doors when we were holding our worship service, and immediately they entered officers began filming the worshippers without asking permission...none of us wrote statements or signed the police report"; **UPDATE**: ordered by police to bring the two members of his church who were hearing impaired in for questioning, refused: "I told him that it is his duty to do so and not mine")

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2380



Iraq

Patriarch Louis Raphael I Sako (aged 69, **UPDATE**: named to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis)

www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2018/05/22/who-are-the-14-new-cardinals/



Burkina Faso: Arbinda

Basnere Mathieu Sawadogo (husband of Alizeta, catechist, abducted)

Alizeta (wife of Basnere Mathieu Sawadogo, abducted)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/second-christian-leader-in-two-weeks-kidnapped-in-burkina-faso/>

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/burkina-faso-kidnappers-release-pastor-and-his-family-after-four-days/>

Monday May 21, 2018



India: Karnataka state

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE:** commented on state elections "The elections for the Karnataka State Assembly were a crucial moment in the history of the country. Outgoing Prime Minister of Karnataka Siddaramaiah, of the Congress Party, carried out a worthy job, but in the final race he had to deal with the Baratiya Janata Party [BJP], the Hindu nationalist party, which through money, manipulation and power, was very successful")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/64218->

[ASIA_INDIA_A_Jesuit_In_Karnataka_the_nationalist_forces_have_not_triumphed](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64218-ASIA_INDIA_A_Jesuit_In_Karnataka_the_nationalist_forces_have_not_triumphed)



Nepal

Christian leaders commented on the arson attacks against four churches in a single week by suspected Hindu extremists

Pastor B P Khanal (said of the church arson attack "Though it might appear that these attacks have been carried out by the same person, geographically this is not possible. Which means that these are performed by people who are in a network and are well connected to each other")

Tanka Subedi (Religious Liberty Forum Nepal chair; **UPDATE**: said of the police “They have not made any arrests yet, as it seems that they have been clearly notified to not carry out arrests in these cases”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/05/christians-in-nepal-suspect-hindu-extremists-in-sudden-attacks-on-churches/>



Pakistan: Lahore

Tariq Masih Gill (Member of the Provincial Parliament, called a 'churha' ["sweeper", a derogatory term for Christians] by a Muslim Member of Parliament)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6859>



Kazakhstan: Zhaksy

Pavel Chernov (fined 50 MFIs for offering religious literature)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2392

Tuesday May 22, 2018



China: Zhengzhou, Henan province

Wei Jindang (church raided by police, several members arrested)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/06/christians-in-custody-after-henan.html>



India: Bihar state

Sarah (wife of Subash, sister of Rajini, arrested at her church on allegations of illegal conversion on [April 29, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: released on bail)

Rajini (sister of Sarah, arrested at her church on allegations of illegal conversion on [April 29, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: released on bail)

India: Raia village, Goa

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: reported on the desecration of a cross)

India: 14 Bd village, Khajuwala Tehsil, Bikaner district, Rajasthan state

Three evangelists were attacked by a mob for handing out Bible tracts, arrested

Kansiram Meghwai (aged 46)

Sahiram Nayak (aged 34)

Vijender Singh (aged 32)

<http://asianews.it/news-en/Goa-cross-smashed.-Sajan-K-George:-Intolerance-against-Christians-43976.html>

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

<https://persecutionrelief.org/brethren-evangelists-arrested-rajasthan/>

<https://mailchi.mp/morningstarnews/christians-in-rajasthan-india-harassed-with-false-charges-church-leaders-say?e=823b55da1c>



Pakistan: Bahawalnagar, Punjab province

Saqib Masih (aged 19, contractor, **died from asphyxiation** in a sewer, had been denied safety equipment)

Mushtaq Masih (aged 45, sanitation worker, **died from asphyxiation** in a sewer while trying to rescue Saqib Masih, had been denied safety equipment, had applied for retirement but was forced to continue work after denial of back pay)

Gamma (retrieved Saqib Masih and Mushtaq Masih from the sewer)

Rashid Masih (municipal councilor, said “They were assigned to open up a clogged sewerage line on Qaziwala Road. The line had been clogged for almost a year. First Saqib went down and opened one side of the clogged pipeline. But as soon the line was cleared poisonous gases in the pipeline for months started leaking into the gutter and Saqib quickly fell unconscious. Then Mushtaq went down but he also fell unconscious. We called rescue services, but no help arrived. Another Christian, Gamma, tied a water-soaked handkerchief over his mouth, went down and brought out both the unconscious men. We took them to hospital where they were pronounced dead...After the two were declared dead, we held a protest and the civil administration assured us of support. The protest ended after the civil administration negotiated. They then arranged for the funerals and also provided 250,000 Pakistani rupees [c. US \$2,170]. We are struggling to ensure that now the bereaved families be given a pension as their children are still young”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/05/two-pakistani-christian-sewerage-workers-die-from-poisonous-gases/>



Turkey: Tur Abdin

Kuryakos Ergun (member of the Mor Gabriel Monastery; **UPDATE**: commented on the return of the monastery deeds by the government "This is the first time our property deeds have been returned. These returned deeds have created great joy here among the Syriac Christians in Mardin and those who live abroad. At the same time, this also means the return of our minority rights, as birthed in the Lausanne Treaty...We still have a legal dispute over ownership of [additional] lands belonging to the community")

Mor Timotheus Samuel Aktash (leader of the Mor Gabriel Monastery; **UPDATE**: received the returned deeds)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/turkey-returns-confiscated-syriac-church-property-deeds/>

Wednesday May 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; visa revoked on [April 23, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: appeal to reinstate her visa denied, facing imminent deportation)

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



China: Xuzhou, Jiangsu province

Police raided an underground seminary

Pastor Fang (detained, released)

Pastor Wang (detained, released)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/officials-interrupt-seminary-arrest.html>



India: 14 Bd village, Khajuwala Tehsil, Bikaner district, Rajasthan state

Three evangelists were attacked by a mob on [May 22, 2018](#) for handing out Bible tracts, arrested; UPDATE: denied bail under mob pressure

Kanshiram

Sahiram

Vijender Singh

<https://persecutionrelief.org/brethren-evangelists-arrested-rajasthan/>



Azerbaijan: Barda

Emil Mehdiyev (aged 18, conscientious objector, case charging him with evasion of military service opened on [January 5, 2018](#); trial begun on [May 7, 2018](#); UPDATE: motion to dismiss denied)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2408



United Kingdom

Jacob Rees-Mogg (aged 49, Member of Parliament; UPDATE: replied in a BBC interview to a question regarding whether his faith meant he 'had a problem' with a pregnant lesbian co-member "I make no criticism of any of my colleagues, but do you believe in religious tolerance? So why do you pick on this view of the Catholic Church?...You are saying that tolerance only goes so far and you should not be tolerant of the teaching of the Catholic Church, so isn't this stretching into religious bigotry?...The act of tolerance is to tolerate things you do not agree with not just ones you do agree with and the problem with liberal tolerance is it has got to the point of only tolerating what it likes")

Bishop Mark Davies (UPDATE: commented on the BBC interview of Jacob Rees-Mogg "The hounding of a Member of Parliament like Jacob Rees-Mogg for simply sharing the faith of Catholic Church indicates that the BBC and its interviewers see Catholic teaching as being somehow beyond public tolerance. It is hard to see this treatment of Catholic politicians as being other than a new bigotry")

Bishop John Keenan (**UPDATE:** commented that during the BBC interview of Jacob Rees-Mogg the interviewer had to “hide behind the old red-herrings of ‘other people say’, and ‘members of your own party say’. When that particular trick wasn’t working, she had to lay her cards on the table and put to him the notion – as a serious question, can you believe! – that being a practicing Catholic should be a barrier to high public office. In short, that Catholics like Rees-Mogg simply can’t be Prime Minister because it’s just not British in this day and age. She openly wondered if it was a ‘problem’ to hold ordinary Catholic beliefs in high office, and seriously suggested that Catholics who were against the likes of abortion and same-sex marriage should be barred from decision-making in public life. Rees-Mogg was quite right to call this secular bigotry. What else is it?...[Rees-Mogg was right to] point out that this aggressive secularism has nothing liberal about it. He was right to call out the BBC for picking on the Catholic Church particularly, and to signal that it would not treat Muslims or Jews in anything like the same prejudicial way in which it now routinely and casually treats Catholics...Jo Coburn asked, in the end, if you can divorce your personal views from your politics. It is clear that there are elements in the BBC who find it quite impossible to make such a separation, and who find it quite acceptable to bring their own personal animus against the Catholic Church to the front and center of their work, in an aggressive propaganda that runs ‘Pro-Choice-LGBT good, Catholics bad’. They peddle this idea without a care for its compromising effect on the best values of their own public service broadcasting mission. In that sense it is not just the Catholic Church that they offend but their own founding values of balance and fairness...I wonder, when the dust settles and this era moves on, if the BBC will be able to emerge with any reputation intact from having so boldly pinned its colors to the mast of a present but surely time-limited ideology whose worrying and deleterious effects on tolerance and on the common good are becoming plainer to see by the day”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/05/23/bishops-accuse-bbc-of-bigotry-after-rees-mogg-interview/>

Thursday May 24, 2018



East Timor: Dili

Bishop Virgilio do Carma da Silva (reported to have received credible death threats from Islamic militants, security increased at churches)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/terrorist-fears-spread-to-timor-leste-as-bishop-threatened/82396>



India

Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto (**UPDATE**: accused by RSS paramilitary and BJP party leaders of undermining the country on Vatican orders after he began a prayer campaign for the preservation of pluralistic democracy)

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Delhi, **UPDATE**: said of the attacks on Archbishop Couto "prayers are part of Christian life and it has nothing to do with politics. [The archbishop] of course mentioned the background. Media reports are enough to understand how violently people were attacked [for their faith...The RSS and BJP reactions] means that either they are afraid of our prayers or they are promoted by their own guilt")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/vatican-game-seen-in-indian-archbishops-prayer-campaign/82391>



Egypt: near Benha University

Amany Magdi (aged 20, college student, abducted while on her way to final exams, police informed her parents that she had converted to Islam and could not be seen by them)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/egyptian-christians-celebrate-the-return-of-abducted-young-woman>



United States - Colorado

Two affiliated pregnancy crisis centers have brought suit against a pro-abortion group for posting a video to Facebook which falsely stated that the centers did not employ medical professionals)

Jan McIntosh (vice president of a pregnancy crisis center)

Dede Chism (executive director of a pregnancy crisis center)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pro-life-pregnancy-center-demands-removal-from-libelous-video-13368>

Friday May 25, 2018



Philippines

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen; visa revoked on [April 23, 2018](#); appeal to reinstate her visa denied on [May 23, 2018](#), facing imminent deportation; **UPDATE**: deportation delayed)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/deadline-extended-for-australian-nun-to-leave-the-philippines/82430>



China: Hebei province

Peter (reported on a government order to diocesan media "If the pro-government *Faith Weekly* cannot report pilgrimages, it might be regarded as a warning that religious policy applied to Hebei will be tightened after recent suppression against churches in Zhejiang and Henan provinces...If the large Christian provinces are suppressed, the small ones are easier to handle")

China: Lanzhou, Gansu province

Pastor Qian Rou (arrested along with six other Christians for 'setting up religious venues and organizing religious activities without permission', all were released)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/hebei-bans-pilgrimage-reports-as-china-steps-up-repression/82412>
www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/armed-officials-disrupt-church-seize.html



India

Richard James (**UPDATE**: condemned a Hindu nationalist leader who called in a social media video for all Christians to be expelled from India)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: said "The video is an aberration and not expected")

India: Bihar state

Subash (husband of Sarah, arrested at his church on allegations of illegal conversion on [April 29, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: released on bail)

India: Puducherry, Karaikal district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor David Santosham (church destroyed by arson, later said “It has been nearly two months, and police could not find the culprits. I met the sub-inspector of police recently, and he told me that the investigation is underway. We are building the church again by the grace of God. Please pray for the construction work”)

<https://persecutionrelief.org/update-bro-subash-released-after-26-days-in-jail-bihar/>
<https://www.ucanews.com/news/popes-image-trampled-amid-call-to-make-india-christian-free/82448>
<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/arson-attacks-hit-churches-in-tamil-nadu-india/>

Saturday May 26, 2018



Egypt: Abou El-Shuqaf, Beheira province

Fr Aghabius Mounir (church attacked by a mob incited by a local mosque's loudspeakers, automobile destroyed, nine Christians were later arrested despite no involvement with the attack in an attempt to pressure him to drop charges against the eleven Muslims who were arrested)

Mina Maher (motorcycle destroyed)

Wahid Fahim (said “A large Muslim mob then gathered in the front of the church building and began pelting it with Molotov cocktails, bricks and stones, while shouting ‘Allahu akbar’ [God is the greatest] and chanting slogans against the church. They burnt down the main wooden gate of the church building and another door, and broke some windows...They then pelted the Coptic houses next to the church with stones and bricks. Seven Copts received minor injuries”)

Wagih Moussa (said “Despite everything that happened to us, we have still received threats from some Muslims in our village. They have threatened us, telling us, ‘We will purify the village of you, oh kafir [infidel]’”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/05/copts-persuaded-to-drop-charges-against-mob-who-attacked-their-church/>



United States – Ohio: Columbus

Fr Demetrios Gardikes (church vandalized, over \$100,000 in damages incurred)

<http://orthochristian.com/113456.html>

Sunday May 27, 2018



Nicaragua: Managua

Fr. Jose Alberto Idiaquez SJ (University of Central America rector, denounced a mortar attack on the university campus "...this cowardly night attack by para-police forces that, protected by the impunity guaranteed by the current [government], have been using the hours of the night to intimidate and kill innocent citizens in the neighborhoods of the capital and other cities...Although they did not succeed in wounding or killing any of our guards, that was the intent, because of the charge of gunpowder used and because of the closeness of the shot")

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/priest-condemns-latest-attack-on-jesuit-university-in-nicaragua-as-cowardly-40112>

Monday May 28, 2018



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Several Christians who had been detained on [May 12, 2018](#) during a church memorial service for earthquake victims were again detained when they attempted to file a legal complaint against the police

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong; detained on [May 27, 2018](#), released on [May 28, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: detained)

Rev Li Yongqiang (detained on [May 28, 2018](#), released; **UPDATE**: detained)

Deacon Tan Defu (detained on [May 28, 2018](#), released; **UPDATE**: detained)

Ding Dao-er (detained on [May 28, 2018](#), released; **UPDATE**: detained)

Ye Yin (detained on [May 28, 2018](#), released; **UPDATE**: detained)

Zhang Qi (detained on [May 28, 2018](#), released; **UPDATE**: detained)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/05/christians-detained-while-submitting.html>



India: Simdega district, Jharkhand state

A Christian couple were arrested on the day before their wedding on illegal conversion charges due to opposition to the ceremony along with their pastor and a female guest

Sumanti Kumari (convert, fiancée of Rupash Manjhi, sister of Tripti, arrested)

Rupash Manjhi (convert, fiancé of Sumanti Kumari, arrested)

Pastor Sudarshan Manjhi (husband of Biyari Devi, arrested)

Tripti (aged 18, convert, sister of Sumanti Kumari, said “My father was drugged with alcohol that day, and the Sarna tribals, including the village president, abetted him to submit the false complaint in the police station pending the wedding so there won’t be a Christian wedding in the village. He is now repentant for what he has done, but it is too late... We have been pleading with my father to testify in the court that he was instigated by the Sarnas, and that the allegations are false. My younger brother and I keep asking him, ‘How can you go against your own daughter? She is in jail because of you. Why are you doing this?’”)

Biyari Devi (wife of Pastor Sudarshan Manjhi, said of the engaged couple "They both come from Sarna [tribal] families but have accepted Christ, and it is obvious that they would want a holy matrimony. Somaru Manjhi [the bride's father] is my uncle also in relation. He has always been against Christ and the church since the house church was established in 2008. But he never became violent or aggressive with us until the question was about his daughter’s marriage”)

Date: May 28, 2018

Location: Simdega district, Jharkhand state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/christians-arrested-at-their-wedding-site-on-forcible-conversion-charge-in-india-relatives-say/>



Nigeria: Jalingo, Taraba state

Fr Cornelius Kobah (shot in the leg during an attack on his seminary by Fulani Muslims)

Fr Stephen Bakari (beaten)

Fr. Emmanuel Atsue (seminary rector, issued the statement "...I, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Atsue want to announce and inform Nigerians and the international community that our diocesan’s Sacred Heart Minor Seminary was attacked in the early hours of this morning at about 12.30am by armed Fulani herdsmen...They shot at my residence, broke window glasses in the process, live bullets were collected by police, broke the windscreen of one of the vehicles belonging to one of the priests. They shot and injured one of the priests, Rev Fr

Cornelius Kobah, in the leg and beat up Fr Stephen Bakari...From their conversation, we were able to understand that their grievance against us is that the security men in the seminary have been challenging their decision to graze right inside the seminary: around classes and football field...")

Bishop Charles Hammawa (said that Fr Cornelius Koba was "badly wounded")

<https://guardian.ng/news/bomber-kills-four-suspected-herders-attack-catholic-seminary/>
<http://mattersindia.com/2018/05/nigeria-catholic-seminary-attacked-priests-injured/>



Venezuela: Ejido

Fr Jose Juan Flores (church seized by people claiming affiliation with the local government, forced to remove his personal property, said parishioners had been threatened prior to the seizure)

Auxiliary Bishop Luis Enrique Rojas Ruiz (said of the church seizure perpetrators “They have insulted the faith on many occasions, scratching highly offensive graffiti on the parish buildings. They want to damage the image of the priests and the diocese and so they damage beautiful works of art with expletives and major insults...We call on the authorities in charge of this case to answer for physical integrity and safety of the parish priests as well as that all of the people who are there”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/church-building-in-venezuela-seized-by-local-government-group-74084>

Tuesday May 29, 2018



Taiwan

Huang Yan (aged 48, wife of Wu Guisheng, human rights attorney, beaten by Chinese security officials in 2010, miscarried; beaten by Chinese security officials in 2012, miscarried, the beating continued while she was in the bathroom attending to the miscarriage; reported on [January 3, 2017](#) that Chinese government officials forced her doctors to cancel a procedure for ovarian cancer, escaped the country to a 'safe location'; **UPDATE:** subjected to an attempt to deport her back to China, deportation stopped by the UN)

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/acyivist-husband-06222018153319.html>



Vietnam: Thien An, Thua Thien Hue province

Br Stanislas Tran Minh Vong OSB (aged 81; **UPDATE:** reported to have complained of arson attacks on his monastery's forested land)

Fr Louis Gonzaga Dang Hung Tan OSB (reported to have said that there have been four arson attacks in 2018 so far" "After examining the scene, we confirm that these fires were caused by people. All fires aimed to cause disorder to the monks' life and religious activities")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/benedictine-monks-see-red-over-vietnam-forest-fires/82435>



India: 14 Bd village, Khajuwala Tehsil, Bikaner district, Rajasthan state

Three evangelists were attacked by a mob for handing out Bible tracts on [May 22, 2018](#), arrested; **UPDATE: released on bail**

Kansiram Meghwai (aged 46)

Sahiram Nayak (aged 34)

Vijender Singh (aged 32)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/christians-in-rajasthan-india-harassed-with-false-charges-of-fraudulent-conversion-church-leaders-say/>



Pakistan: Haider colony [ghetto], Gujrat district, Punjab province

Waqas Masih (aged 24, nephew of Saleem Masih, cousin of Emmanuel Saleem, **beaten to death by police** after his uncle refused to pay the police in an attempted extortion)

Saleem Masih (father of Emmanuel Saleem, uncle of Waqas Masih, rickshaw driver, home invaded by police who threatened to arrest him on false charges if he did not pay them extortion money, refused, nephew beaten to death in retribution)

Emmanuel Saleem (son of Saleem Masih, cousin of Waqas Masih, described the police attack on his home in which his cousin was killed "We asked them what they wanted, to which they said that they had information that we are drug peddlers and that they had raided the house to recover the narcotics. We are poor Christians, but we earn our livelihood with honesty and integrity. We knew that the policemen were there for extorting money, but since we had done nothing wrong, my father chose to confront them rather than succumb

to their blackmail [at which point they repeated their threats to make false arrests]. This must have panicked Waqas, who ran outside the house. The three cops ran after him, as did my other cousins, Qaiser and Dawood. The cops got hold of Waqas soon after and started hitting him mercilessly with punches, kicks and gun butts. Qaiser and Dawood tried to save Waqas from the police torture, but they were pushed back and warned not to intervene in the beating”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/police-in-pakistan-kill-young-christian-man-in-raid-relatives-say/>



Cameroon

Fr Ludovic Lado SJ (commented on continued human rights violations in the English speaking provinces "The situation is dramatic: law enforcement agencies continue to kill civilians, thousands of people seek refuge abroad or in other provinces of the country")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/64251-AFRICA_CAMEROON_A_Jesuit_Serious_violations_of_human_rights_in_the_English_speaking_provinces



Nigeria

Archbishop Musa Panti Filibus (said “It is most saddening that the senseless killings and attacks on our people continues unabated. We are disturbed by the monstrous acts of our attackers and killers, who raid, ransack, and set ablaze our villages and towns sometimes in broad daylight...I call us to continue to put pressure on our government at all levels to rise to their responsibility of protecting citizens from internal and external aggression. We will continue to condemn in strongest terms possible the brutal and gruesome killings of innocent citizens”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/christian-death-toll-from-herdsmen-attacks-mounts-in-adamawa-state-nigeria/>

Wednesday May 30, 2018



Myanmar: Kamaing Kawng Ra village, Hpakant township, Kachin state

Fr Peter Nlam Tu (church and home damaged from military gunfire, said "The next day, the military came and took the unexploded shell. They didn't question me about the attack nor talk about who did it")

Tang Lung (catechist, said "We informed the village administrator, police and firefighters about the unexploded shell and then they talked to the military, who came and took it the next day")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholic-church-attacked-in-myanmars-conflict-torn-kachin/82499>



India: New Delhi

Mrs Tehmina Arora (attorney, **UPDATE:** reported to have said at a human rights conference "we are bound to live according to the dictates of the divisive forces seen to enjoy the approval of the ruling government...I see this program [i.e., the conference] as a positive step ahead because at least now people from all faiths are ready to talk and can come to one platform and express their grievances")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/modis-four-years-have-weakened-indias-tolerance/82441>



Egypt

Fr Rafael Sami (**UPDATE:** reported to have said that several Coptic girls have disappeared due to collaboration between Islamic groups and corrupt government officials who support them)

Egypt: Sharabia neighborhood, Cairo

Mariam Girges (reported to have been abducted, jewelry stolen, escaped)

www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2160&A=34994

www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2160&A=35016

Thursday May 31, 2018



Congo, Democratic Republic

Fr Lucien Ambunga (reported to have contracted Ebola from a dying patient to whom he had ministered, in isolation)

<http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/05/31/dramatic-photo-shows-bishop-blessing-priest-in-ebola-quarantine/>

May 2018, date unknown



China: Ningling county, Henan province

Chen (reported that the local government had forced all churches to remove their crosses in [late May](#))

Wang (said “The government aimed at the Three-Self [official] churches this time. Most house churches do not have their own church buildings. The Three-Self churches feared that the officials would demolish the crosses by force, so they chose to take them down on their own. No one dares defy the orders”)

Li (said that the local government has forbidden more than five people from meeting without permission, that it has posted guards at some churches, and added “The officials from the brigade will show up at your door and ask you to remove or cover up Christian decorations. They will damage your house if you dare to say no. Porcelain tiles that said ‘Jesus loves you’ embedded in the wall were gouged out. They also forbade us from singing hymns”)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/06/henan-persecution-targets-both-official.html>



Belarus

Dozens of Catholic and Orthodox seminarians were conscripted into military service in [early May 2018](#), conscriptions were cancelled after church protests

Fr Andrei Ryulko (confirmed the conscriptions were cancelled)

Fr Sergiy Lepin (**UPDATE:** said "We prepared the lists of students eligible for exemption from the army and handed them to the Plenipotentiary's Office of Religious and Ethnic Affairs")

Fr Yuri Barok (**UPDATE:** said "Under the law, without approved lists everyone should be called up and [Plenipotentiary] Gulyako should have notified Conscription Offices of the delay")

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2387



Greece

Fr Vladimir Vigilyansky (Russian citizen, journalist, denied a three year visa to enter the country along with his wife, told that he would have been granted the visa if he had applied as a journalist and not a priest)

<http://orthochristian.com/114912.html>

<https://rua.gr/news/sobmn/27201-gretsiya-ogranichivaet-poseshchenie-strany-dlya-svyashchennikov-iz-rossii.html> - with translation



Nigeria: Onitsha

Archbishop Valerian Okeke (**UPDATE:** wrote “The Church in Nigeria is passing through a very trying time more than ever before. The recent massacre of two Catholic priests and some parishioners during Holy Mass in Benue State and similar killings in other parts of the country strike deep note on the ears of the populace...Understanding [Islamic] fundamentalists groups, their ideologies and how to counter these ideologies should be an integral part of seminary formation and general Christian formation”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/boko-haram-burns-catholic-building-previously-destroyed-by-boko-haram-90524>

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