

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – March 2019

Friday March 1, 2019



China: Henan province

Jiang Tianyong (aged 47, husband of Jin Bianling, son of Jiang Lianghou, human rights attorney, abducted by police in [Changsha, Hunan province](#) on [November 22, 2016](#); charged with 'subversion of state power' on [May 31, 2017](#); sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment on [November 20, 2017](#); as of [June 27, 2018](#) had been forced to take an unidentified medication in prison and has shown a memory deficit as a possible result, legs appear to have been injured due to torture or shackles, has been denied access to clothing and money sent by his family; released from prison on [February 28, 2019](#), disappeared, father and sister disappeared; **UPDATE**: allowed to returned home with his father and sister, wife has begun a petition for him to travel to the U.S. for medical treatment)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/03/lawyers-wife-begs-china-to-let-him-come.html>



Ukraine: Kurozvany

Archpriest Vladimir Koval (church seized by anti-Russian activists, threatened with death for not surrendering his home)

<http://orthochristian.com/119942.html>

Saturday March 2, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Xing (wife of Liu, arrested, beaten, told they would be evicted from their home)

Liu (husband of Xing, same account)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Eleven-children,-including-a-two-month-baby,-from-the-Early-Rain-Covenant-Church-arrested-in-Chengdu-46438.html>

Monday March 4, 2019



India: Kerala state

Fr Varghese Vallikkatt (Kerala Catholic Bishops Council; **UPDATE**: reported to have criticized as unnecessary and unconstitutional a draft law which would create state control of church assets, said "They [state officials] want to keep discussion on this alive to target Christians, especially the socially and politically strong Catholic community...It's all part of a very calculated, engineered move that has been going on for a decade")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-state-retreats-over-church-assets/84644>

Tuesday March 5, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pan Fei (disappeared the day after starting a new job, had lost his previous job due to police pressure)

China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Pastor Li Guozhi aka Yang Hua (husband of Wang Hongwu, detained on [December 9, 2015](#) for 'illegally holding state secrets'; formally charged on [January 22, 2016](#) with 'obstructing justice' and 'gathering a crowd to disturb social order'; sentenced on [January 5, 2017](#) to two and a half years imprisonment; released on [June 19, 2018](#), sang worship songs as he left prison; **UPDATE**: escorted by police to Hainan province for medical treatment)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/couple-beaten-congregation-member-missing-in-persecution-of-church-in-china/>

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/03/officials-escort-guizhou-pastor-on.html>



Pakistan: Iqbal town, Islamabad

Saima Iqbal (aged 35, wife of Naveed Iqbal, mother of Mikael, Danish, and Qamar, abducted at gunpoint on [February 25, 2019](#) and forced into an Islamic marriage, police refused to file a report for over a week; **UPDATE**: recovered by police, placed into an Islamic women's shelter due to documents falsely claiming she converted to Islam)

Naveed Iqbal (aged 37, husband of Saima Iqbal, father of Mikael, Danish, and Qamar, said after his wife's [February 25, 2019](#) abduction "I was living here very happily for the past 18 years until on the night of 25 February 2019 when the mother of my children was kidnapped at the gun point by Pathan Khalid Satti who is part of criminal gang...As soon I came to know what happened to my wife, on the 26th February I reported the incident but the police refused to file my complaint and delayed the registration"; **UPDATE**: said "When I met her [Saima his wife] in the Dar ul Iman [women's shelter] I saw visible marks of torture on her face and body...Nobody is listening to us and every time we are only hear these lines from the people in authority that she has accepted Islam and now is she is in Muslim Nikkah [marriage]. Is this the way the minorities suffer in Pakistan?...This is my request please help me. I am now in hiding along with our children moving from place to place due to threats. They have forcibly taken falsified statements from Saima Iqbal, and she remains in great fear for us")

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pak-christian-mother-of-three-kidnapped-at-gunpoint-and-forced-into-fake-islamic-marriage-husband-hi>
<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/head-line-news-details/7064>

Wednesday March 6, 2019



France: Chalons-en-Champagne

Fr Francois-Jerome Leroy (aged 71, accused of abuse of minors in [March 2018](#), suspended from active ministry; **UPDATE**: cleared of all charges, his accusers were convicted of filing a false report and given a fine and a suspended sentence)

<https://international.la-croix.com/news/french-couple-convicted-over-false-report-of-catholic-priest/9571#>
<https://www.churchmilitant.com/news/article/falsely-accused-french-priest-vindicated>



United States – Utah: Bountiful

William McLeod (fourth grade student, forced to remove Lenten ashes from his forehead by a teacher, cried in embarrassment)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/utah-school-apologizes-after-student-forced-to-remove-lenten-ashes-92683>

Friday March 8, 2019



Kenya: near Garissa

Pastor Abdul (aged 30, convert, father of three aged 8, 5, and 3, beaten with wooden clubs by Muslims for leading an underground church of 30 former Muslims, femur fractured, hospitalized)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/pastor-of-underground-church-in-kenya-beaten-unconscious/>



France: Angouleme

Pastor Joseph Miall (church vandalized, US\$12,400 in damages)

<https://barnabasfund.org/en/news/vandals-cause-thousands-of-euros-of-damage-in-latest-attack-on-a-french-church>

Sunday March 10, 2019



Ethiopia: Addis Ababa

Several missionaries and church officials were killed in a commercial airliner crash

Fr George Kageche Mukua CMM (Kenyan citizen, **killed**)

Sr Florence Wangari (Kenyan citizen, aged early 30s, **killed**)

Sara Chalachew (Catholic Relief Services staff, **killed**)

Getnet Alemayehu (Catholic Relief Services staff, **killed**)

Sintayehu Aymeku (Catholic Relief Services staff, **killed**)

Mulusew Alemu (Catholic Relief Services staff, **killed**)

Pastor Norman Tendis (Austrian citizen, World Council of Churches official, **killed**)

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/03/world-council-of-churches-official-dies-in-ethiopian-plane-crash/>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/65711->

[AFRICA ETHIOPIA Ethiopian plane crash among the victims also a missionary a nun and 4 lay operators of the Catholic Relief Services](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65711-)

Monday March 11, 2019



Philippines

Church leaders announced the receipt of death threats

Fr Albert Alejo SJ (**UPDATE**)

Fr Flavie Villanueva SVD

Fr Robert Reyes

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (**UPDATE**)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-catholic-priests-make-death-threats-claim/84712>

Wednesday March 13, 2019



Australia: Melbourne, Victoria state

Cardinal George Pell (aged 77, charged with multiple child sex abuse crimes in [June 2017](#), the police had opened a case against him a year before a complainant was found, most charges were then dismissed for "fundamental defects in evidence"; reported on [December 11, 2018](#) to have been convicted on five counts despite the trial having been held in secret, a previously unreported trial had ended in mistrial after 10 jurors voted to acquit, trial witnesses anonymously reported extensive prosecutorial misconduct; verdict announced on [February 27, 2019](#) after prosecutors decided to drop the remaining charges, taken into custody; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment, appeal underway)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/03/13/cardinal-pell-sentenced-to-six-years-in-prison/>



India: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Fr Alphonse Aind SJ (middle school principal, arrested on [June 22, 2018](#) on fabricated charges of organizing the abduction and rape of five social activists by six Pathagadi tribal gunmen after the gunmen had seized his automobile, denied bail; **UPDATE**: granted bail)

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/03/jesuit-priest-gets-bail-in-alleged-gangrape-case/>

Thursday March 14, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Zhang Ying (apartment invaded by police with her landlord, threatened with rape in front of her three daughters, ordered her eviction by the end of the month for unspecified lease violations)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/couple-beaten-congregation-member-missing-in-persecution-of-church-in-china/>



India: Dadra and Nagar Haveli, and Daman and Diu

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: expressed regret over the government's decision to cancel Good Friday as a holiday in two of the former

Portuguese colonies: "This is very very sad. A clear discrimination is being practiced by the Administrator. We appeal to all including the Administrator of these centrally administered territories to respect the sentiments of the people and to avoid their divisive methods", Christians will now have to request the day off from work)

A C Michael (**UPDATE:** said "These moves are part of a pattern to oppress Christians. At least 12 states in India are set to have elections on April 18, this year's Maundy Thursday. That itself is a big setback")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Two-Indian-territories-scrap-Good-Friday-holiday.-Msgr.-Mascarenhas:-Very-serious-46500.html>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/scrapping-good-friday-holiday-upsets-indian-catholics/84745>



Netherlands

Converts from Islam described continuing death threats

Faraidoun Fouad (convert, said "I converted in 1999. In 2002 God called me to reach out to my own people. Directly after my conversion to Christianity I received the first threats. People who I thought were my friends, became my enemies. Even Muslims who are not very conservative told my wife that they would kill me...I receive threats every day. When I post something on Facebook, I often receive hateful reactions")

Esther Mulder (convert, said "After my conversion, the threats started. Especially on Facebook. Most of the time they're coming from other Somalis. They write to me in Somali, so no one else is able to understand what they're saying. We once posted a picture of a Somali conference where everyone was standing in front of a cross. People didn't like it and we received several threats")

Brother Jassim (convert, Facebook account blocked, said "In 2015 I became a Christian. I was baptized on April 24, 2016, on my birthday...My mother taught me to respect everyone and to be kind. That was in stark contrast to what Islam was teaching me. I had to hate and curse Jews and Christians. Muhammed was my big role model, but his life was bad. He killed Jews and married a girl of six. How could he be my role model?", printed 8 pages of threats for the police)

<https://cruxnow.com/church-in-europe/2019/03/14/muslim-turned-christian-refugees-in-the-netherlands-face-threats/>

Friday March 15, 2019



Egypt: Beni Suef

Three Christians reported to have been killed

Paul Najib (aged 32, **shot dead**)

Emad Ghattas (aged 54, **shot dead**)

Mosi Najah Hanna (aged 29, **shot dead**)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2360&A=37868>

March 2019, date unknown

Today's Martyrs

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

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