

**Today's Martyrs**  
**2015-06-28 through 2015-07-04**



**Australia**

Greg (aged 70-plus, farmer, Vietnam veteran, jaw broken when punched by a younger man during a pro-life demonstration)

Date reported: July 2, 2015

Location: Albury, New South Wales

Source [with video]: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-70-year-old-aussie-pro-lifer-assaulted-outside-abortion-facility-t>



**Belarus**

Pastor Sergei Nikolaenko (church raided by OMON riot police on [May 31, 2015](#) who asked "Why did you come to this church, not to a normal or correct one?"; denied permission to rent property for religious services on [June 11, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: fined US\$235 for unauthorized organization of a public event, home searched by police, threatened with a criminal investigation which could result in 2 years' imprisonment)

Dates: [June 19 and 25, 2015](#)

Location: Gomel

Aleksandr Chuev (present during the [May 31, 2015](#) police raid on his church; **UPDATE**: home searched by police)

Date: [June 28, 2015](#)

Location: Gomel

Bishop Sergei Komar (contacted by police, asked to sign a statement against Pastor Sergei Nikolaenko, refused)

Date: [June 22, 2015](#)

Nadezhda Daineko (owner of the home raided by police during the [May 17, 2015](#) church meeting; **UPDATE**: charged with improper use of a residential property)

Date: [June 18, 2015](#)

Location: Svetlogorsk, Gomel Region

Lyubov Kundas (present during the [May 17, 2015](#) police raid, accused of reading a Bible; **UPDATE**: fined US\$95 for refusing to testify against the other church members)

Date: [June 25, 2015](#)

Location: Svetlogorsk, Gomel Region

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2077](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2077)



## China

Mark Ma Chao (detained and interrogated for several hours after a police raid on his church;

**UPDATE:** discovered that the large police presence during the raid was due to a second raid on small church meeting on the floor below his, that church did not challenge the police action and disbanded)

Date: May 24, 2014

Location: Baiyun district, Guangzhou city, Guandong province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/06/despite-trying-to-keep-low-profile.html>

Pastor Lu (church service raided by DSPS and RAB agents, ordered to register with the Three-Self Patriotic Movement church or stop meeting)

Date: June 21, 2015

Location: Shenzhen

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/07/shenzhen-house-church-service-disrupted.html>



## Egypt

Bahaa Gamal Mikhael Silvanus (aged 24, military conscript, son of Gamal Silvanus **found dead** in his barracks, death ruled a suicide despite being shot twice and having been hit in the head with a blunt object, had been planning to enter the monastery, a friend had said “he told me that the persecution of the fanatical Muslim conscripts in the battalion against him had been increased the last days, and they threatened him with death that they would kill him if he wouldn't convert to Islam...We lost a sweet spirit and a beloved friend”)

Gamal Silvanus (father of Bahaa Gamal Mikhael Silvanus, said “My son was killed by someone. He didn't kill himself”)

Fr Youannis Saad (said "There is a criminal suspicion behind Mikhail's death")

Dr Joseph Nady (said “Bahaa told me during his last vacation at Rezka village forty days ago ‘you will visit me in prison or you will not see me again’”)

Date: June 24, 2015

Location: Sinai

Sources [with photos]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63490>

and <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63482>

and <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63461>

and [https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/07/article\\_3912611.html](https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/07/article_3912611.html)

Maher Fayeze Habib (secondary school student, reported on [May 18, 2015](#) to have been arrested on a charge of insulting Islam, held for 4 days in jail; judge ordered him held another 15 days on [June 12, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: ordered held another 45 days)

Date reported: June 29, 2015

Location: Beni Suef

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1409&A=19298>

Issa Henry Shamrokh(aged 65, reported on [June 19, 2015](#) to have been abducted while on his way to his own farm; **UPDATE**: rescued by police)

Date reported: June 29, 2015

Location: Dermwas Center, Minya province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1409&A=19303>

B P (aged 28, shipping office owner, beaten and robbed while sitting in a cafe)

Date reported: June 29, 2015

Location: Tama Center, Sohag province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1409&A=19301>

Fr Dawood Botros (expelled from a hospital for attempting to give Communion to a critically ill patient at the request of the patient's family)

Date reported: July 2, 2015

Location: Alexandria

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63524>

Pope Tawadros II aka Wagih Sobhy Baqi Suleiman (**UPDATE**: security tightened due to terrorism fears)

Date reported: July 3, 2015

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1413&A=19366>



## India

P B M Basaiawmoit (National Council of Churches, criticized the government for it's scheduling of International Yoga Day, said "Holding such high profile programs on Sundays and other Christian holydays is a serious concern to us. It's not that we do not welcome yoga minus its religious connotation since it has merits for mind exercise and relieving stress. However, the hype and overboard is just too much")

Date: [June 21, 2015](#)

Cardinal Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal (**UPDATE**: said "Our sacred days are being disrupted under different pretexts")

Date: [June 11, 2015](#)

Kurian Joseph (Supreme Court judge, boycotted a judicial conference that was scheduled on Good Friday)

Date: April 3, 2015

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/06/3909729/>

Rev Prakash Messey (church damaged in two vandalism episodes by four men on motorcycles, said it was "an attempt to provoke tensions in the community")

Date: June 28, 2015

Location: Bhiwani district, Haryana state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vandals-attack-Baptist-church,-damage-cross,-in-Bhiwani-34644.html>

Archbishop Victor Henry Thakur (**UPDATE**: announced that all Christian schools in the state would close in protest over the [June 20, 2015](#) rape of a nun, said "Civil society is appalled and outraged at the violence against the nun, and whilst the administration is working towards capturing the culprits, people are not satisfied at the slow pace of the investigations, and want speedy justice. Around 30 different civil society organizations, and various women's groups, are working together because, as they put it, it is not only a Church issue. It is an issue affecting women and humanity...I have met the nun and her faith is unwavering. Even though she is going through a trauma, her dedication and commitment to Mission is resolute. She is filled with fortitude, evident in the way she recorded her statement. The sister is eager for the culprits to be brought to justice as this will send a strong message to perpetrators of such heinous crimes against women and will continue to serve selflessly for the dignity, equality and justice of women and girls")

Date: July 1, 2015

Location: Chhattisgarh state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Raipur-archbishop:-Catholic-schools-on-strike-to-protest-nun's-rape-34659.html>



## Iran

Homayoon Shokoohi-Gholamzadeh (convert, husband of Fariba Nazemian, arrested during a home church meeting in Shiraz, Fars province on [February 8 2012](#), charged with "acts harmful to the Islamic Regime"; sentenced to a total of four years and two months in prison on [June 16, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: released from prison)

Date: June 28, 2015

Location: Abdel-Abad prison

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=2347>



## Jordan

Wael Suleiman (director of Caritas Jordan; **UPDATE:** said "The UN World Food Program warned a week ago that, due to the lack of resources, will stop sending funds for Syrian refugees, which already decreased in percentage last month. Yesterday the Jordanian media gave news that, unless we get more money from the UN, the distribution of food to 450 thousand people will be stopped. This means they will be forced to steal if they want to survive...This catastrophe is also an effect of policies and reckless military interventions made in the Middle East of foreign Powers. Now, after having contributed to the disaster, they wash their hands even from a humanitarian emergency point of view")

Date: July 3, 2015

Location: Amman

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/38120->

[ASIA JORDAN The UN decreases aid to Syrian refugees The Director of Caritas Jordan the great powers have created the catastrophe and now they wash their hands#.VZdKOMLJAfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38120-)



## Nigeria

Fr Patrick Tor Alumuku (**UPDATE:** said after Boko Haram attacks on two mosques "The new President, Muhammadu Buhari, a devout Muslim, wants to defeat Boko Haram. Buhari appears more decided than the previous President, who was a Christian, in the fight against Boko Haram. The measures taken by the Head of State have put in serious difficulties the Islamist sect. For example the transfer of the command of military operations against Boko Haram from the federal capital, Abuja, to Maiduguri, capital of Borno State, is seen by Boko Haram as a non-acceptable challenge. All this is putting Boko Haram in difficulty, especially since the Muslim community are denouncing the atrocities committed by Islamists. Faced with the rebellion of Muslim communities, Boko Haram has decided to punish them, because in their ideology you are either with them or against them. But in the end this is a sign of weakness and not of strength")

Date: July 3, 2015

Location: Abuja

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/38118->

[AFRICA NIGERIA Boko Haram wants to punish Muslims who rebel against their violence says a priest from Abuja#.VZdLGMLJAfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38118-)



## Pakistan

**Event: Christian families attacked after a transactional dispute over the sale of a 'flex' with pictures of books and Arabic lettering to a Muslim, after the dispute began the Muslim alleged that the lettering was Quranic, husband, wife, and sister-in-law beaten, heads shaved, faces blackened, forced to ride donkeys through the village, all Christians in the village threatened with death by arson**

Awais Qamar aka Gareeba (husband of Rukhsana, father of Farzana, Waqas, Wickson and Sherry, son of Saraj Masih)

Rukhsana (wife of Awais Qamar, mother of Farzana, Waqas, Wickson and Sherry, sister of Rehana)

Rehana (wife of Ashraf Masih, sister of Rukhsana, mother of Chand and Sawera)

Pastor Asif (threatened with death for allegedly teaching Christians to desecrate the Quran, asked the mob to release the three accused of blasphemy and hold him instead)

Date: July 1, 2015

Location: Chak 460, Matikay village, Sheikhpura district, Punjab province

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5445>

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/another-pakistani-christian-accused-of-blasphemy-awais-qamar-and-family-face-news-horrors/>



### **Palestine**

Bishop Atallah Hanna (arrested by Israeli Forces during a peaceful demonstration against the illegal seizure and sale of a church-owned hospital)

Date: June 27, 2015

Location: Beit al-Baraka

Source [with photo]: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/80326.htm>



### **Philippines**

Maria Isabella Climaco Salazar (aged 48, mayor, opposed inclusion of her city in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)

Date reported: June 26, 2015

Location: Zamboanga City

Jojo Sibug (tribal chieftain, said “Our ancestors were already here even before Islam came to Mindanao. This Philippine government should consider the welfare and plight of the indigenous tribes, and the Aquino administration should not only focus on one sector, but it should remember the indigenous people were also the first inhabitants of Mindanao”)

Date reported: June 26, 2015

Location: Cotabato

Rolly Pelinggon (opposed a government agreement with Islamic militants that will introduce sharia law to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)

Date reported: June 26, 2015

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/06/christians-fear-creation-of-muslim-sub-state-in-philippines/>



## Sudan

**Event UPDATE: A judge ruled that sufficient evidence existed to charge two pastors with crimes punishable by death**

Rev Peter Yein Reith

Rev Yat Michael

Date: July 2, 2015

Location: Khartoum

Source [with photo]: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/07/judge-in-sudan-says-south-sudanese-pastors-can-be-charged-with-crimes-punishable-by-death/>



## Syria

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem II (aged 50; **UPDATE:** said "When we look at martyrs we see that the Church is not just one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Throughout its journey through history the Church has also been a suffering Church...Jesus suffered for no reason, gratuitously. Given that we follow him, the same could happen to us. And when it happens, Christians do not make demands, protesting 'against' martyrdom. After all, Jesus promised us that he would never abandon us, he never deprives us of his rescuing grace, as the stories of the early martyrs and today's martyrs too, attest. They face martyrdom with a joyous expression and peace in their heart. Christ said so himself: blessed are you when they persecute you because of me. Martyrs are not defeated people, they are not discriminated people who need to free themselves from said discrimination. Martyrdom is a mystery of gratuitous love")

Date: June 19, 2015

Location: Rome, Italy

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150630200318.htm>

Archbishop Jacques Behnan Hindo (**UPDATE**: has fled from Hassake along with nearly all Christian families after ISIL gained control of a southern suburb, said "One must also point out that a part of the local population is on the militants' side: when these arrived in the south-eastern district of al-Nachwa, women and children were asked to leave the city. But young boys and adults remained, and have sided with Daesh [aka ISIL]. And now that very large neighborhood is at the center of the most violent clashes between government forces and those of the so-called Islamic State", said of the refugees "the needs increase day by day. There are no wounded among Christians, but many of them, like everyone else, are concentrated in makeshift camps. Many sleep in the open, and the situation gets more and more complicated by the day, due to the unbearable heat")

Date reported: June 30, 2015

Location: Qamishli

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/38085-ASIA\\_SYRIA\\_Thousands\\_of\\_Christian\\_families\\_fleeing\\_Hassake\\_Archbishop\\_Hindo\\_jihadists\\_have\\_found\\_support\\_in\\_the\\_local\\_population#.VZNwMsLJAfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38085-ASIA_SYRIA_Thousands_of_Christian_families_fleeing_Hassake_Archbishop_Hindo_jihadists_have_found_support_in_the_local_population#.VZNwMsLJAfg)

Shigho (aged 19, **executed** by ISIL for converting to Christianity)

Date: June 25, 2015

Location: Kobane

Source [with photo]: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Syrian-Christians-flee-their-homes-after-fresh-assaults-on-Hassake-and-Kobane>



## **Thailand**

### **Event: Pakistani refugees extremely ill**

Salmoon Barkat (caught a skin infection while in the Immigration Detention Center)

Kamran (asylum applicant, husband, father of a one month old son, cancerous tumor removed from his foot, is at risk of a leg amputation)

Shafqat Nasir (bedridden, medical testing unavailable)

Date reported: June 29, 2015

Location: Bangkok

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/appeal-for-medical-needs-for-pak-christians-in-thailand>



## **United Kingdom**

Bernadette Smyth (pro-life activist, convicted on [November 19, 2014](#) of harassment of the director of an illegal abortion facility, her defense attorney denied that any harassment had occurred and that the director had initiated all contacts with his client; **UPDATE:** conviction overturned after the appellate court decided that the clinic director's professions of fear were not credible, in part due to the director's links with a Protestant paramilitary group)

Date: [June 29, 2015](#)

Location: [Belfast, Northern Ireland](#)

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/abortion/victory-for-pro-life-campaigner-in-harassment-battle>

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns; **UPDATE:** criticized comments by the Education Minister who said that incidents where schoolchildren state negative comments about homosexuality might lead to them being reported to the police, wrote "Christians believe that homosexual practice is wrong and that marriage between a man and a woman is the pattern given by God and the only proper place for sexual expression. Is Nicky Morgan now saying that that is an 'extremist' view that needs to be monitored or punished?...We are on the verge of a sinister new era of 'thought-policing' in our schools. This is the imposition of a new sexual ideology under the guise of fighting extremism. The real problem is violence and terrorism that has sprung out of Islamic ideology. But if Nicky Morgan gets her way, Christians and others with mainstream views on marriage will fall under suspicion and be punished...Nicky Morgan's deliberate choice of homosexuality as an example in this morning's interview is further evidence that a right desire to fight Islamic-inspired terrorism is having the effect of creating a Trojan Horse to impose a new sexual ideology")

Date: [June 30, 2015](#)

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/homosexuality-comments-could-be-sign-of-extremism-says-education-secretary>



### **United States - Tennessee**

Pastor Cleveland Hobby III (church damaged by arson, said ""When I look at this I see, I think of an intention to try to destroy this entire church. It makes it sad. It's sad either way that someone would put their mind to try to damage a church that's trying to help people")

Date: [June 22, 2015](#)

Location: [Knoxville](#)

### **United States - Georgia**

Assistant Pastor Jeanette Dudley (church damaged by a 'suspicious' fire, said "The times that we're living in...it's not going to get any better. It's going to get worse")

Date: [June 23, 2015](#)

Location: [Macon](#)

## United States - North Carolina

Pastor Mannix Kinsey (church damaged by arson, said "We have already forgiven them and we're hoping that the investigation will take its place and do what's necessary. These buildings can be repaired, they can be built over. This is the opportunity for God to really touch the hearts of individuals ... we don't have any malice against anyone else")

Date: June 23, 2015

Location: East Charlotte

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/black-churches-targeted-burned-in-wake-of-charleston-massacre-fbi-launches-probe-140980/>

## United States - New York

Fr Jonathan Morris (spat upon by two men who recognized him as a priest)

Date: June 28, 2015

Location: Manhattan

Source: <http://insider.foxnews.com/2015/06/29/father-jonathan-morris-i-was-spat-2-men-gay-pride-parade>

## United States - Mississippi

Linda Barnette (circuit court clerk, resigned her position of 24 years rather than grant wedding licenses for same-sex marriage, said "The Supreme Court's decision violates my core values as a Christian. My final authority is the Bible. I cannot in all good conscience issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples under my name because the Bible clearly teaches that homosexuality is contrary to God's plan and purpose for marriage and family...I choose to obey God rather than man")

Date: June 30, 2015

Location: Grenada

Source [with photo]: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/06/30/mississippi-circuit-clerk-same-sex-marriage/29520689/>

## United States - Oregon

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

Aaron Klein

Melissa Klein

Date: July 2, 2015

Location: Gresham

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/oregon-christian-bakers-ordered-to-pay-135k-after-refusing-to-work-gay-wedding-told-to-stop-speaking-about-obeying-god-not-man-141137/>



## **Vietnam**

Le Quoc Quan (aged 43, husband of Nguyen Thi Hien, attorney, blogger, and human rights activist; convicted on tax evasion charges in a two-hour long trial in Hanoi on [October 2, 2013](#), sentenced to 30 months in prison and a US\$56,000 fine, denied a Bible in prison; **UPDATE**: released)

Date: June 27, 2015

Source [with photo]: <http://directory.ucanews.com/news/vietnam-releases-dissident-catholic-blogger/2381>

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