

Today's Martyrs
2015-08-02 through 2015-08-08



Azerbaijan

Event: Police raid a worship service in a private home, 13 participants detained for questioning, Bibles, phones, and tablets seized

Goderdzi Kvaratskhelia (Georgian citizen, detained, questioned, released, ordered deported)

Dates: April 9 and July 6, 2015

Locations: Lokbatan and Baku

Event: Two sisters arrested for distributing religious literature on a street, each fined US\$1,425

Matanat Qurbanova

Saadat Muradhasilova

Dates: November 9, 2014 and May 15, 2015

Location: Zakatala

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2086



Bangladesh

Pappu Piter God (protested the failure of police to arrest the Muslim perpetrator who raped a 12-year old Christian girl)

Date perpetrated: August 4, 2015

Location: Dhaka

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Police-fails-to-arrest-the-rapist-of-a-12-year-old-Christian-girl-34988.html>



China

Event: Authorities detained seven Christians from the official Three-Help Church on embezzlement charges after they had tried to prevent the demolition of a cross on their church, pastoral licenses revoked

Bao Guohua (spouse of Xing Wenxiang, detained)

Xing Wenxiang (spouse of Bao Guohua, detained)

Date reported: August 5, 2015

Location: Jinhua, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/demolition-08052015110651.html>

Fr Ambrose (along with 20 of his 2001 seminary classmates condemned the cross demolition campaign and compared it to the persecution during the 1966-67 Cultural Revolution)

Date: July 31, 2015

Event: Three underground bishops condemned the cross demolition campaign

Bishop John Wang Ruowang

Date reported: August 4, 2015

Location: Tianshui

Bishop Joseph Wei Jingyi

Date reported: August 4, 2015

Location: Qiqihar

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin

Date reported: August 4, 2015

Location: Wenzhou

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/protests-over-chinas-cross-removals-gain-steam/74018>

Zhang Chaoxia (reported that 22 Christians camped out on the roof of their church since early July 2015 in an attempt to prevent authorities from removing its cross)

Date: August 6, 2015

Location: Huzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/08/reuters-chinese-christians-hold-protest.html>

Chen (protested to police the removal of his church's cross: "We have violated no law. We do not oppose the government. We have been good, law-abiding citizens")

Date reported: August 5, 2015

Location: Lower Dafei village

Tu Shouzhe (described the removal of his church's cross: "It was a surprise attack. We did not let them in, but they broke in by cutting off the lock. We demanded paperwork, but they showed us none. They cordoned us away from the church. They had 60-70 people. We had just about a dozen or so. Everyone was crying. Our hearts ached. We felt powerless to resist, and only prayed and sang hymns")

Date reported: August 5, 2015

Location: Muyang village

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/08/associated-press-severe-crackdown-in.html>



Iran

Alireza Seyyedian (beaten in [Evin prison, Tehran](#) on [April 17, 2014](#) by Revolutionary Guards who then prohibited prison doctors from treating the inmates until 'trusted' doctors from the intelligence services arrived; illegally transferred on [October 8, 2014](#) from Evin prison in Tehran to [Rajaei-Shahr prison in Alborz province](#), will likely be denied access to each other or to other Christians; **UPDATE**: released from prison)

Date: July 27, 2015

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/iran-a-convert-to-christianity-imprisoned-over-being-baptised-released-from-prison/>



Iraq

Archbishop Yousif Thomas Mirkis (**UPDATE**: while visiting family in Canada described conditions among the refugees: "ISIL forced 130,000 Christians to leave their homes there [around Mosul]. Thirteen towns and villages are empty. No one remains. ISIL said, 'If you become Muslim you can stay.' Nobody did. The world must see it as truly amazing that these Christians considered their faith to be the most precious thing they own...This city of 1.5 million has welcomed 500,000 more. Many have been taken in by relatives. I heard about a family with a three-room house and 71 persons living in it. The grandfather had a heart attack and his sons said, 'Is this because you're tired of the noise and the crowd in the house?' 'No,' he said, 'please don't let them go. It is a sin not to offer hospitality'...ISIL, or Daesh, controls eight million persons. This is an ideology that thinks nothing of beheading people, even on You Tube. You can't see that and not realize that no one is far from barbarity. Nobody can say, 'It doesn't concern me'. This is not a question of Christianity and Islam. This is a question of ideology - a very dangerous ideology. If ISIL takes over any more territory, it will be a cancer very difficult to stop...I fear worse is coming. A German journalist who was somehow allowed to spend some weeks with Daesh says it is much worse than we imagine")

Date reported: August 1, 2015

Location: Kirkuk, Kurdistan

Source:

<http://www.thestarphoenix.com/news/Archbishop+says+Iraq+difficult+time+history/11259231/story.html>

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE**: said at the Knights of Columbus Convention "Our people are asking these questions: how come we apply for the American visa and are denied? This is a clear case of persecution. They're being denied visas while others who have participated [in the violence] or at least were silent can go...All the statements [by U.S. government and media] have not condemned strongly what damage it is doing.

What they are saying is just ‘This is not the true Islam. This is violating the picture of Islam.’ The issue for them is the image of Islam, but none of these statements speak about the victims, about what has been done to the victims, they are not even mentioned. And that is one of the questions our people have”)

Date: August 4, 2015

Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/if-you-wont-help-our-people-stay-help-them-leave---catholic-bishops-from-the-middle-east-53081/>



Pakistan

Mana Masih (mosque custodian, beaten by a mosque congregant after he told the congregant that he could not take water from the mosque's lavatory after prayers per instructions from the mosque management, arrested on a false charge of attempted sodomy after the congregant filed a police report, charges dropped after the mosque management testified on his behalf)

Dates: June 24 - August 2, 2015

Location: Kasur

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenews.php?hnewsid=5518>

Sikander Inyat (aged 27, church security volunteer, rickshaw driver, only son and caregiver for his ageing father, lost his right eye in the explosion in the [March 15, 2015](#) terror attacks in [Lahore](#), left leg fractured, as of June 16, 2015 requires surgery on his left eye and a prosthetic right eye; **UPDATE**: received surgery to save his remaining eyesight)

Date: August 4, 2015

Location: Lahore

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sight-for-sore-eyes>



Sierra Leone

Fr Themis Adams (Australian citizen, former rock musician; **UPDATE**: has helped start the Sierra Leone Albino Association to protect the country's albinos, more than 60 of whom have been killed in witchcraft rituals since late 2007)

Date: August 4, 2015

Location: Freetown

Source [with photos]: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/08/rock-star-turned-priest-faces-new-challenge-after-dealing-with-the-deadly-ebola-crisis/>



Sudan

Event: Two pastors are acquitted on charges including espionage and waging war against the state, prevented from leaving the country with their families by the NISS secret police

Pastor David Yein Reith (convicted on 'breaching public peace', released)

Pastor Yat Michael (convicted on 'inciting hatred', released)

Date: August 5, 2015

Location: Khartoum

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2015/08/05/sudanese-pastors-acquitted-escape-possible-death-penalty/>

and [with photo]: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/08/two-south-sudanese-pastors-on-trial-in-sudan-released-serious-charges-dropped/>

and <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/08/sudan-bans-freed-south-sudanese-pastors-from-leaving-country/>



Syria

Archbishop Jean Clement Jeanbart (**UPDATE:** said at the Knights of Columbus Convention that it would be cheaper to help Christians stay in the Mideast than to allow them to immigrate: “Help them to stay and help the society there. The first thing they need is peace. Help us to get peace, and then the people will be happy staying in Syria”)

Date: August 4, 2015

Location: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/if-you-wont-help-our-people-stay-help-them-leave---catholic-bishops-from-the-middle-east-53081/>

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem II (aged 50; **UPDATE:** condemned the abduction of over 250 Christians by ISIL)

Date: August 5, 2015

Location: Alqariatin

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/08/08/patriarch-ignatius-aphrem-ii-slams-terrorist-attack-in-qaryat/>

Bishop Constantine Kayal (described threats to a convent by militants)

Date: August 4, 2015

Location: Ma'loula

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/81228.htm>



Thailand

Isaac Byungdo Lee (aged 41, missionary, U.S. citizen, arrested for aiding the illegal entry of seven North Korean refugees into the country, the arrest came one week after the U.S. State Department gave Thailand a failing grade in its human trafficking report)

Date: August 3, 2015

Location: Chiang Mai province

Source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/korea/thailand-korea-08052015174444.html>



United Kingdom

Colin Hart (Christian Institute director, **UPDATE:** wrote a letter to the Education Secretary which stated that Ofsted [the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills] has been refusing to investigate cases of anti-Christian bullying: "You will see they include anti-Christian chanting in assemblies, GCSE pupils who opted to learn Christianity being left to teach themselves, and Christians being called 'ignorant' or 'liars' by teachers")

Date: July 30, 2015

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/11771487/Ofsted-accused-of-ignoring-the-bullying-of-Christian-students.html>

Simon Calvert (Christian Institute; **UPDATE:** commented on a letter from a Member of Parliament which stated that the new antiterrorism law would be employed against Christians who opposed same sex marriage "I am genuinely shocked that we have an MP supporting the idea of teachers being branded extremists for teaching that marriage is between a man and a woman. This is exactly the kind of thing we've been warning about...The Government says we've got nothing to worry about from their new extremism laws, but here is one of its own MPs writing to a constituent saying EDOs [Extremism Disruption Orders] would stop teachers teaching mainstream Christian beliefs...EDOs will be a gross infringement of free speech and undermine the very British values they claim to protect")

Date: August 3, 2015

Source: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/11780517/MP-use-anti-terror-powers-on-Christian-teachers-who-say-gay-marriage-is-wrong.html>



United States - New Mexico

Event: Two churches targeted by explosive devices

Dennis Llewellyn (former Marine, said "It was a real bomb, I saw all the parts", helped keep parishioners away until police arrived)

Mike Stewart (inside church during the explosion, helped keep parishioners away until police arrived)

Associate Pastor Scott Rogers (will be meeting with other church leaders, said "We are certainly having conversations about safety")

Fr John Anderson (said "I was right in the middle of saying the words 'take and eat, this is my body' and there was a 'pow!' I mean, I knew it had to be more than a gunshot. It didn't know if it was a shotgun blast, I didn't know what. But it was very loud and I just kept on saying the words")

Ann Marie Sullivan (college student, said "It sounded like something had fallen off and shattered the glass in the back")

Deacon David McNeill Jr (said the diocese will be reviewing security practices in all churches)

Date: August 2, 2015

Location: Las Cruces

Source: http://www.lcsun-news.com/las_cruces-news/ci_28574553/police-mailbox-explodes-near-calvary-baptist-las-cruces
and http://www.lcsun-news.com/las_cruces-news/ci_28580281/few-details-but-calls-information-church-bombings

United States - Texas

Craig James (former NFL player, has brought suit against Fox Sports for his wrongful September 2013 termination due to his traditional Christian marriage views)

Date: August 3, 2015

Source: <https://www.libertyinstitute.org/craigjames>



Uzbekistan

Pastor Sergei Rychagov (fined US\$3,675 for illegal religious activities at a court hearing of which he was unaware with statements coerced from five orphans, found out about the hearing four months later)

Dates: February 27 and June 22, 2015

Location: Dostobod, Kuyichirchik district, Tashkent region

Gulzhahon Kuzebayeva (home entered and searched by police without warrant on [July 11, 2014](#), friends under constant questioning by police; reported on [April 14, 2015](#) to have been in hiding since July 2014 due to fear of torture under interrogation, police have been unable to arrest her; police visited the homes of relatives every day between [May 7-16, 2015](#) in a search for her, finally attempted on [May 18, 2015](#) to force entry to her home but left after seeing they were video recorded; **UPDATE**: police arrived at her home and accused her of abducting her grandson for three days, the boy had been left there voluntarily)

Date: [July 24, 2015](#)

Location: [Karshi, Kashkadarya region](#)

Stanislav Kim (home raided by police, passport, books, and automobile seized, detained, interrogated, released at 1 AM, summoned the next day for more questioning)

Mirzabek Kuranbayev (present when police raided the home of Stanislav Kim, detained, interrogated, released at 1 AM, summoned the next day for more questioning)

Dmitry Krasnokutsky (aged 15, present when police raided the home of Stanislav Kim, detained, interrogated, released at 1 AM, summoned the next day for more questioning)

Date: [July 20, 2015](#)

Location: [Urgench, Khorezm region](#)

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2087



Vietnam

Paulus Le Van Son (convicted on [January 9, 2013](#) for "carrying out activities aimed at overthrowing the people's administration" for posting accounts of official corruption on the internet, sentenced to 13 years imprisonment; sentence reduced to 4 years imprisonment on appeal on [May 24, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: released)

John Nguyen Van Oai (convicted on [January 9, 2013](#) for "carrying out activities aimed at overthrowing the people's administration" for posting accounts of official corruption on the internet, sentenced to 13 years imprisonment; sentence reduced to 4 years imprisonment on appeal on [May 24, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: released)

Date: [August 3, 2015](#)

Source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/vietnam-releases-two-jailed-activists-with-ties-to-religious-groups-08032015163833.html>

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