

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2017-01-01 through 2017-01-07



### China

Zhang Kai (civil rights attorney; arrested on [December 27, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: released)

Date: December 29, 2016

Location: Hohhot, Inner Mongolia

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/12/zhang-kai-released-after-two-day.html>

Ma Huichao (on trial for 'gathering a crowd to disturb public order' for a church meeting, trial currently in adjournment as of [November 30, 2016](#), attorney prohibited from entering a plea of innocent; **UPDATE**: convicted, sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment)

Date: December 30, 2016

Location: Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, Xinjiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/xinjiang-woman-receives-three-year.html>

Huang Yan (aged 47, beaten by security officials in 2010, miscarried; beaten by security officials in 2012, miscarried, the beating continued while she was in the bathroom attending to the miscarriage; **UPDATE**: government officials forced her doctors to cancel a procedure for ovarian cancer, is now in a 'safe location' but may not be able to afford the procedure, donations requested)

Date reported: January 3, 2017

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/urgent-christian-human-rights-defender.html>

Han (described an attack by gang members who were hired by government officials in an attempt to force a church to close so that it could be seized without adequate compensation "My son and his friend went out to eat, and, when they had finished eating, came out [of the restaurant]. Seven or eight gangsters surrounded them, dragged them from the car and beat them up. His friend was injured so badly that he could barely open his eyes. He was bleeding profusely, and his nose bridge was fractured. The police came out after I reported the case, but they colluded with the gangsters. We went to the police station and recorded the incident, but nothing was done about it. On the next day, several church elders went to the municipal government to petition...We are prepared to petition the provincial government," Han said. "First of all, we are not violating any laws. Secondly, we are defending our legal rights. The believers are not afraid of any consequences, even death. Today, the brothers, sisters, and leaders from every church throughout the Langfang area came to support us, promising that they would accompany us even to Beijing. We have about six or seven thousand believers now")

Date: December 29, 2016

Location: Langfang, Hebei province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/christian-protestors-hospitalized-after.html>



## Egypt

Fr Bishoy Youssef (automobile firebombed, reported on [January 22, 2015](#) to have been the second case of a priest's vehicle being firebombed within the past year in his village;

**UPDATE:** **died, no cause of death reported**, had served his church for 48 years)

Date reported: January 4, 2016

Location: Wasti village, Beni Suef province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1809&A=29102>

Youssef Lamei (aged 45, father of Tony Youssef, liquor store owner, **killed** while sitting outside his store)

Tony Youssef (son of Youssef Lamei, attorney, described the video recording of his father's murder "He [the killer] took less than half a minute, he knew what he was doing, he stood behind my father, quickly pulled the knife from the folds of his clothes, cut the vein of my father's neck two times with his knife to make sure that the vein was cut, and fled...[My father had been targeted] because he was a Christian. There is a shop nearby that sells alcohol and is owned by a Muslim man. Why they didn't kill this man as well?...My father was a very kind and respected man and everybody loved him; he had no enemies")

Date: January 3, 2017

Location: Alexandria

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/4814383/>

### **Event UPDATE: Sts Peter and Paul Church bombing**

Emad Tawil (aged 53, widower of Madeleine Tawfiq Hanna, father of Peter Tawil and Verena Emad Amin, plastics factory operator, later said "Every time they bomb a church or attack us, they increase our faith", has been having chest pains since the attack, pointed heavenward and said "I want to go")

Peter Tawil (aged 21, son of Emad Tawil and Madeleine Tawfiq Hanna, brother of Verena Emad Amin, carried his sister from the church before she died "I was carrying my sister and she was saying, 'Help me!' and I couldn't help")

Verena Emad Amin (**killed**; **UPDATE:** had a premonition in November 2016 that she boarded a "train of death")

Nadia Salah (aged 33, widow of Nabil Habib, mother of Fadi)

Date: December 11, 2016

Location: Cairo

Lorise Naguib (aged 62, injured, hospitalized; **UPDATE: died**)

Date: January 4, 2017

Location: Cairo

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20170105215838.htm>



## India

Fr Stanislaus Tirkey (said of the illegal conversion allegations made by the leader of the RSS paramilitary organization "The allegation is completely false. They do this occasionally. Since elections are nearing they want to divert the attention of the people from real issues like poverty")

Fr Vincent Ekka (said that conversions do occur "But conversion is never done forcefully or in any fraudulent manner", added that the Hindu caste system is to blame "In such circumstances, if people find a religion more meaningful and satisfying, they will naturally move toward it")

Fr Denzil Fernandes SJ (Executive Director of the Indian Social Institute said the RSS paramilitary stance is a "project under which they want to make India a Hindu nation...They rake up the conversion issue to create a Hindu vote bank, to distract people from real problems")

Date: January 3, 2017

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/conversion-allegations-irk-indian-catholic-leaders/78005>



## Iraq

Sr Diana Momeka (reported on [April 30, 2015](#) to have been denied a visa to travel to the U.S. due to a U.S. government decision that she would likely overstay her visa, she was the only Christian in a delegation of Iraqi religious minorities who were to speak in the U.S. and the only member of the delegation to be denied a visa; decision reversed on [May 11, 2015](#), visa issued; **UPDATE:** described the damage done by ISIL "We went to see what happened to our hometowns, we could not believe the hatred and the revenge that ISIL has against us...It's a total mess. There was some hope to have a future, [but] we feel that there's no future left for the Christians. It's kind of a sign for us, 'you should leave, we've destroyed everything you have'")

Fr Behnam Benoka (**UPDATE:** said So many families are leaving Iraq. The faith of the people is strong, even if they are leaving the country or they are staying there. But they're still praying, they still have hope in a big miracle for their lives")

Date reported: January 4, 2017

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20170103212952.htm>



## Pakistan

Munawar Gill (described an attack on 20 Christians by police which was motivated by a effort to drive them from their homes)

Bishop Kaleem John (**UPDATE**: condemned the attack n which 20 Christians were injured)

Date: December 31, 2016

Location: Sukkur, Hyderabad district, Sindh province

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61458->

[ASIA PAKISTAN Land grabbing and assault on Pakistani Christians in Sindh#.WG0YiVMrKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61458-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Land_grabbing_and_assault_on_Pakistani_Christians_in_Sindh#.WG0YiVMrKM8)

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/sukkur-mission-compound-attack-draws-a-ripple-of-protest-from-church-of-pakistan/>

Fr Joseph Louis (aged 66, **UPDATE**: **died of cardiac arrest**)

Date: December 27, 2016

Location: Lahore

Source: [http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fr-Joseph-Louis,-%22activist-for-Lahore%E2%80%99s-poor%22,-has-died-\(photos\)-39540.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fr-Joseph-Louis,-%22activist-for-Lahore%E2%80%99s-poor%22,-has-died-(photos)-39540.html)

Pastor Babu Shahbaz (aged 41, son of Vero Masih, arrested on Quran desecration charges)

Date: December 30, 2016

Location: Kamahan village, near Lahore

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61462->

[ASIA PAKISTAN A Christian arrested for alleged blasphemy#.WG0X31MrKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61462-ASIA_PAKISTAN_A_Christian_arrested_for_alleged_blasphemy#.WG0X31MrKM8)

and <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/christian-pakistan-jailed-vindictive-blasphemy-charge-sources-say/>

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lahore-police-arrests-christian-over-alleged-blasphemy-charges/>



## Sudan

Rev Kowa Shamal (arrested by the NISS secret police without charge on **May 24, 2016**; charged in court on **August 14, 2016** with espionage, complicity to execute a criminal agreement, waging war against the state, calling for opposition of the public authority by violence or criminal force, and inciting hatred between classes; **UPDATE**: acquitted, released)

Date: January 2, 2017

Location: Khartoum

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/sudan-acquits-pastor-trial-christians-charged-capital-crimes/>



## Uganda

Sandra Summaya (aged 24, convert, coerced into taking poison, hospitalized)

Date: January 1, 2017

Location: Bugayi village, Pallisa district

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/christian-woman-eastern-uganda-coerced-taking-poison/>



## United States - Missouri

John Ryan (arrested on domestic terrorism charges while standing on a sidewalk outside an abortion clinic, clinic was searched for explosives but was not evacuated, released on his own recognizance the following day, the arrest was allegedly made to justify newly proposed anti-protest legislation)

Date: December 31, 2016

Location: St Louis

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/missouri-pro-lifer-begins-2017-in-jail-after-suspicious-arrest-outside-plan>

## Today's Martyrs

For more information please visit our web site at <http://todaysmartyrs.org/>

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