

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2017-03-05 through 2017-03-11



Central African Republic

Fr Frederico Trincherio OCD (reported that about 2000 persons moved into the Bangui Carmelite mission after shots were fired in the neighborhood on [December 6, 2013](#), said "Now we are trying to give these people something to eat. But it will be difficult because we cannot go out to do some shopping"; **UPDATE**: said "All refugees have returned home! After three years and three months, our adventure which began on December 5, 2013 ends here")

Date: [March 6, 2017](#)

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/61868-AFRICA_CENTRAL_AFRICA_10_000_displaced_persons_have_returned_home#.WL4H2m8rKM8



China

Event: Six women were detained for 15 days and fined US\$145

Chen Xiangyan (said "We believe in Jesus wholeheartedly. What just happened was not fair. We did not cause trouble. We did not bother the neighbors. All we did was study the Bible. [The police] said that we might be controlled by bad people, but I promised him that we knew what we were doing, because we believed in Jesus, not someone bad. They would not listen to me and directly transferred us to the detention center. They fined each of us 1,000 Yuan")

Zhu Xiaohua

Date: [February 25, 2017](#)

Location: [Wusu, Xinjiang province](#)

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/arrests-and-detentions-sweep-across.html>

Event: Police raided the homes of several Christians without warrants and destroyed religious literature

Chen Daihu

Peng Zuorong

Liu Shouqun

Zhao Jinhong

Jia Qiuyue

Fu Qun (said "The police officers searched every corner of the [home] church. They took away the offering box, the books, the crosses, basically anything. They removed the crosses and the posters on the walls of every household")

Zhou Jianhua

Date: February 24, 2017

Location: Xinjiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/churches-seven-christian-homes-raided.html>



Egypt

Fr Rafik Greich (**UPDATE**: spoke of the help given to the Christians who have fled the Sinai from ISIL "Ordinary Muslims are kind and try to help however they can – they're often first on the scene, rescuing the injured and taking them to hospitals...You can never do enough against jihadist and terrorist attacks, which come, like any criminal acts, at a time no one can foresee. But while no country can be fully secure, I think there's will on government side to act decisively against these constant attempts to destabilize Egypt")

Date: March 6, 2017

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2017/03/06/catholics-in-egypt-are-sheltering-orthodox-families-fleeing-isis/>

Event: Christians reported on the persecution by ISIL in the Sinai

S E (fled al-Arish, said "To date, at least three towns are completely emptied of their Copt inhabitants: Rafah, near the border with the Gaza Strip, Cheikh Zowayed and al-Arish. Unfortunately, the state only heard our cries of pain when it was already too late")

Imad Gad (Member of Parliament, **UPDATE**: said "The government has not reacted quickly and effectively in the face of this catastrophe. Why have they allowed terror to go so long unpunished?")

Kamal Zakher (**UPDATE**: said "The Copts in al-Arish are the responsibility of the Egyptian state, not of the Church. Ensuring their protection is a duty and a right clearly expressed in the Constitution")

Soliman Chafik (said "The Egyptian army leads a fierce and all-out war against terrorism in Sinai, as far as it has been dubbed 'the province of the Islamic State' in July 2011. A conflict that caused 1,034 deaths among soldiers and dozens of Bedouin casualties. Despite everything, when terrorists are attacked their response is to automatically target Copts")

Date: March 7, 2017

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/North-Sinai,-the-stories-of-the-Copts-fleeing-ISIS:-Egypt-intervened-too-late-40123.html>

Rezeiky Adly Girgis (brother of Hanan Adly Girgis, said of her **January 26, 2017** abduction in Esna “There was no disagreement between us, she was very happy. She was engaged to a man she’d chosen to be with. They had planned to go and buy jewelry together the following day; and she had just bought new clothes for her cousin’s wedding on Sunday”; **UPDATE:** informed by the police that the national security services issued his sister a new ID card which stated that her religion was Islam, family protested her abduction outside the national security service headquarters and was then attacked by officers, said “They broke the leg of my 23-year-old brother and wounded my older brother, Amir, who’s 28, [they] dragged my mother and beat my three aunts”)

Amir Girgis (aged 28, brother of Hanan Adly Girgis, beaten)

Shahin (relative of Hanan Adly Girgis, beaten)

Ayman (relative of Hanan Adly Girgis, beaten)

Date reported: March 8, 2017

Location: Luxor

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4929839/>

Bishop Makarios (**UPDATE:** complained of security forces preventing Christians from attending Divine Liturgies, said “As the crisis was aggravated today, there was the possibility that security personnel would clash with the people. Bishop Botros Aziz is still banned from accessing the village. Thus I proposed that all worshippers gather at one of the people’s homes to perform the Liturgy there, so as to prevent strife. We await actions by security to resolve the problem and confirm the sovereignty of government as well as citizenship rights”)

Bishop Botros Aziz (banned from the village by security forces)

Date: March 5, 2017

Location: Nazlet al-Nakhl village, Minya province

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/03/08/minya-copts-say-they-were-banned-from-prayers-by-security/>



Germany

Shorena Tetrushvili (personal secretary of Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarch Ilia II, victim of an attempted murder via poison, was present in the country while the Patriarch received gall bladder surgery, alleged perpetrator was a priest of the church who was arrested with cyanide while leaving Georgia)

Date: February 10, 2017

Location: Berlin

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/101717.htm>



India

Pastor Basanna (prayer meeting attacked by 70 Hindu radicals, worshippers severely beaten including women and children, not present because he was meeting Pastor Rudresh at the bus station to bring him to the meeting, the radicals found him at the station and beat him, said "The general public remained as silent spectators. Nobody tried to rescue us despite the several pleas from myself and my wife. They even pushed my wife to the ground which caused her severe pain due to the stitches she had from a recent C-section. The said while beating me, that they will kill me if I try to run a church in their village...Even if I have to die, I will stay in this village", found that the Hindus had filed an illegal conversion complaint against him with the police)

Pastor Rudresh (beaten at the bus station on his way to speak at a prayer meeting)

Date: January 26, 2017

Location: Kondhapally village, Karnataka state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/06/pastor-in-india-defies-radicals-by-continuing-ministry-despite-persecution/>



Iran

Anousheh Reza-bakhsh aka Veronika (convert, mother of Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani, arrested, whereabouts unknown)

Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani aka Augustine (convert, son of Anousheh Reza-bakhsh, senior psychology university student, arrested, whereabouts unknown)

Date: February 20, 2017

Location: Urmia, Western Azerbaijan province

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3381>



Iraq

Mariyam Petrayus (aged about 50, blind, reported to have fled ISIL after living under their control for over two years, described an attempt by an ISIL member to convert her to Islam "He told me 'why don't you convert to Islam? Why are you Christian?' I told him

that everyone is on their religion, and nobody leaves their religion...'I do not want to become one like you,' I told him. He asked 'why? What is wrong with me?' I told him 'you don't say your prayers, you kill humans, you earn haram [sinful] earning, and you harass people.' He said, 'me?' I said 'yes,' He said no. I said yes, 'I swear to God.'", was not harmed for her outspokenness)

Date reported: March 9, 2017

Location: western Mosul

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20170309180011.htm>

Aniseh Marqus (wife of Jamil for 57 years, refugee from [Batma](#), fled from ISIL in [2015](#), said "They bombed the church in our neighborhood and destroyed everything around it. My home was nearby so naturally it was destroyed too. I wish I could return home, but I have no home left really")

Jamil (husband of Aniseh Marqus for 57 years)

Date reported: March 9, 2017

Location: Alqosh

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20170309013132.htm>



Jordan

Fr Khalil Jaar (**UPDATE:** commented on the reduction of international aid for Iraqi and Syrian refugees "The situation of Iraqi Christians refugees is critical and dangerous. They have finished their money and they aren't allowed to work. How can they live in human dignity?...At any month we might have to close the school, because we don't have the money to run it. Everything is gratis for the children: transportation, uniforms, school supplies. I hope our good friends can help")

Ra'ed Bahou (regional director of the Pontifical Mission, said "This is now the third year of displacement for the Iraqi Christians. It's very tough. Donations are becoming less, while global attention is waning. That means that more problems will be created for these Iraqis. We are trying our best to help them with health care, education, housing and logistics. But the problem is bigger than us")

Omar Abawi (Caritas Jordan program manager)

Wael Suleiman (director of Caritas Jordan; **UPDATE:** said of the refugees "I am always struck by their desperate words about losing hope and the miserable conditions they live under: frustration, loneliness, isolation, despair and sadness over their forced exodus from their country, families, history, current situation and future...We are here to heal the wounds, lift the morales, help to restore hope, enhance human relationships and reflect the concept of living as one human family")

Date: March 3, 2017

Location: al-Um-Kundun

Source: <https://www.ncronline.org/news/world/situation-iraqi-refugees-jordan-critical-and-dangerous>



Kazakhstan

Asaf Gadzhiaga ogly Guliyev (aged 43, husband, Azeri citizen, arrested on **January 18, 2017** for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 5 years' restricted freedom)

Date: February 24, 2017

Location: Astana

Teymur Sultan ogly Akhmedov (aged 60, husband, father of three sons, arrested on **January 18, 2017** for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants, held in pre-trial detention, denied cancer treatment; **UPDATE**: motion to terminate his case denied, reportedly has been beaten in prison, can barely walk)

Date: March 1, 2017

Location: Astana

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2262



Kenya

John Muriuki (quarry worker, shot in the right hand and left forearm during an al-Shabaab terror attack in **Madera county** on **July 14, 2015**; **UPDATE**: has been unable to work at his old trade, wife has had to take employment)

Date: March 9, 2017

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/08/a-christian-laborers-long-road-to-recovery-in-kenya/>



Mexico

Bishop Salvador Rangel Mendoza (condemned the murder of a journalist)

Date: March 4, 2017

Location: Chilpancingo

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/61860-AMERICA MEXICO Mgr Mendoza condemns the killing of a journalist They wa nt to silence the voice of the people#.WL4M3m8rKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61860-AMERICA_MEXICO_Mgr_Mendoza_condemns_the_killing_of_a_journalist_They_wa nt_to_silence_the_voice_of_the_people#.WL4M3m8rKM8)



Nigeria

Pastor Ejimozor Williams (aged 46, husband of Chinyere Williams, arrested when counterfeit currency was found in his home [allegedly in the possession of his houseboy], tortured, blinded from a blow to the head which caused a stroke)

Chinyere Williams (wife of Pastor Ejimozor Williams, said “We have been married for 18 years and seeing him [blind] like this is like hell. Since he came out from the DSS cell, it has been one sickness after another. I had to carry him on my back several times from the house to hospitals”)

Date: May 9, 2014

Location: Lagos

Source: <http://punchng.com/lagos-pastor-goes-blind-after-dss-torture/>



Pakistan

Kamran Chaudhry (journalist, wrote on the increase of incitement to religious violence in the country's media)

Date: February 24, 2017

Location: Lahore

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistans-dangerous-media-war/78415>



Philippines

Sr Kathleen Melia SSC (aged 70, Irish citizen, beaten, hospitalized)

Date: March 1, 2017

Location: Midsalip, Mindanao

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/irish-nun-attacked-injured-in-the-philippines/78578>



Somalia

Faduma Osman (aged 35, convert, wife of Suleiman Abdiwahab, mother of four including Ahmed Suleiman, **shot dead**)

Ahmed Suleiman (aged 11, son of Suleiman Abdiwahab and Faduma Osman, **shot dead**)

Suleiman Abdiwahab (aged 38, convert, husband of Faduma Osman, father of four including Ahmed Suleiman, shot, hospitalized)

Date: on or near February 10, 2017

Location: Afgol

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/03/islamic-extremists-somalia-kill-secret-christian-son-wound-husband-sources-say/>



South Sudan

Fr Jacinto Nangi (told when he attempted to stop attacks on refugees from the tribal conflict “we’re going to nail you on that tree like Jesus”)

Date reported: March 10, 2017

Location: Ezo

Bishop Eduardo Kussala (reported that 7 of his 22 parishes around Yambio have become refuges for tens of thousands of people fleeing tribal killings, said “The world is busy with itself”)

Date reported: March 10, 2017

Location: Kampala, Uganda

Source: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2017/03/10/south-sudan-refugees-flee-famine-genocide-melinda-henneberger-column/98955148/>



Sri Lanka

Tussawar Khan (Pakistani asylum seeker, said "We are just trying to survive in destitution and poverty here...The Christian community in Negombo pleads to the western world to highlight the cry of the Christian minorities from Pakistan")

Rev Angleena Keizer (has assisted Pakistani refugees)

Date: March 5, 2017

Location: Negombo

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/at-the-mercy-of-charities-and-churches>

Fr Michael Lapsley (aged 67, expelled from South Africa in September 1976; injured in May 1990 in Zimbabwe by a letter bomb sent by a covert branch of the South African apartheid security forces, seriously burned, lost both hands and the vision in one eye; **UPDATE:** met with Christians and Buddhists to discuss healing the victims and perpetrators of violence, said "After a war or national crisis we can provide water, housing, electricity and other facilities to the people but if there is hatred and bitterness we cannot create a better society...We cannot turn the page of history without reading it. If we want to live in peace, we have to accept the damage done to each other")

Date: late February 2017

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/anti-apartheid-priest-advises-sri-lankans-on-healing-after-war/78544>

Sylvester John (son of Peter and Naseen John, fled Pakistan on July 31, 2013; asylum application on religious persecution grounds denied on August 1, 2013 despite having been shot five times on January 22, 2012 after refusing the invitation to Islam, uncle killed; appeal to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees denied on April 24, 2015)

Naseen John (mother of Sylvester John, Adnan John, Nida John, Nobility Zain John and Hina Milword, fled Pakistan on July 31, 2013)

Perez John (father of Sylvester John, Adnan John, Nida John, Nobility Zain John and Hina Milword, fled Pakistan on January 3, 2014)

Hina Milword (sister of Sylvester John, fled Pakistan on July 18, 2013)

Shahid Keshwan Milword (aged 7, son of Hina Milword, fled Pakistan on July 18, 2013)

Nida John (sister of Sylvester John, fled Pakistan on July 31, 2013)

Adnan John (husband of Tehmina Naz, father of Minaule Adnan John, brother of Sylvester John, fled Pakistan on March 11, 2012; detained September 11, 2014)

Tehmina Naz (wife of Adnan John, mother of Minaule Adnan John, fled Pakistan on January 3, 2014)

Minaule Adnan John (daughter of Adnan John, born in Sri Lanka)

Nobility Zain John (brother of Sylvester John, fled Pakistan on July 31, 2013)

Prince Joseph (uncle of Sylvester John, fled Pakistan on July 18, 2013)

Rev Angleena Keizer (**UPDATE:** said of Sylvester John's asylum request "I have seen the photos and medical reports and x rays of Sylvester [showing his gunshot wounds] and newspaper clipping of the death of the uncle. The family are known to me and been receiving pastoral support from me since last August")

Wilson Chowdhry (Chairman of the British Pakistani Christian Association, said "Paucity of evidence [in asylum applications] is not a surprise to the BPCA. In our opinion when you flee a country seeking refuge the last thing you want to do is go to local police for evidence of your imprisonment and few people video every moment of their lives. Sadly despite increasing evidence of the hatred meted out towards Christians in Pakistan, most western nations ignore their plight. This has meant thousands are stranded in countries

such as Thailand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka where visa restrictions are more lax and tourism visas are notably inexpensive. For this victims life has a constant threat of capture and detainment and they are vigorously exploited working for almost nothing just to get some food on their table")

Date reported: March 7, 2017

Location: Negombo

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/family-of-asylum-seekers-desperately-needs-our-help>



Sudan

Rev Mubarak Hamad (**UPDATE**: has been ordered by the government to not discuss the demolition of churches or the imprisonment of two pastors)

Date reported: March 10, 2017

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue27992.html>



United Kingdom

Carol Monaghan (Member of Parliament, wore Lenten ashes on her forehead into Parliament, another Member said "but this is going to be broadcast", the BBC posted on Facebook that her actions may not have been appropriate or legal)

Date: March 1, 2017

Location: London

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/BBC-mocks-Christian-MP-for-keeping-Lent>



United States - Kentucky

Kim Davis (aged 51, Rowan county clerk, jailed on [September 3, 2015](#) for contempt of court for refusing to issue same sex marriage licenses, court denied her request to remove her pro forma signature from the licenses, still being held despite the fact her office has complied with the law by issuing licenses, appeal underway; released on [September 8, 2015](#); a suit against her by the American Civil Liberties Union was declared moot on [April 19, 2016](#) after the state legislature passed legislation granting her the accommodation she sought;

UPDATE: a Federal judge denied the American Civil Liberties Union claim that she pay their court costs totaling \$231,000 because their suit against her did not prevail)

Date: March 9, 2017

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/aclu-loses-charge-kim-davis-legal-fees-miller-v-177151/>



Venezuela

Archbishop Ulises Antonio Gutierrez Reyes O. de M. (said "I recently met a gentleman who was looking for food in the garbage, and chatting with him he told me he works, but his salary does not allow him to feed his children...I think this government is administering the resources and wealth of the country in a very bad manner")

Date March 7, 2017

Location: Ciudad Bolivar

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/61880-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_People_rummaging_in_the_garbage_looking_for_food_increases_highlights_Mgr_Gutierrez#.WMAVtm8rKM8



Yemen

Fr Tom Uzhunnalil SDB (aged 57, Indian citizen, abducted when armed men attacked a nursing home in Aden on March 4, 2016, killing 16 employees and residents including 4 nuns; **UPDATE:** still in captivity)

Date: March 7, 2017

Source: <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2017/03/07/indian-catholics-still-pray-release-salesian-kidnapped-yemen/>

Today's Martyrs

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

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