

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2017-05-07 through 2017-05-13



### Bangladesh

Pastor Stephen Tripura (church attacked by Muslim settlers, said "They stormed into the church after kicking and smashing in the door. They attempted to rape my sister and niece who live there by tearing off their clothes. After hearing their cries, local Christians rushed over to help and the attackers fled")

Date: May 10, 2017

Location: Khagrachhari district, Chittagong Hill Tracts

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/muslims-attack-protestant-church-in-bangladesh-hills/79207>



### Burundi

Fr Adolphe Ntahondereye (abducted on the Concorde Bridge over the Ruzizi River on [April 9, 2017](#); released on [April 26, 2017](#), hospitalized in ill health; **UPDATE: died**)

Archbishop Evariste Ngoyagoye (object of a [May 31, 2015](#) assassination attempt while in a religious procession; **UPDATE: said "the priest [Fr Adolphe Ntahondereye], who had not left his hospital bed where he had been admitted after his release, died as a result of ill-treatment that had been inflicted on him"**)

Date: May 11, 2017

Location: Bujumbura

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/62267-AFRICA\\_BURUNDI\\_A\\_priest\\_died\\_in\\_April\\_because\\_of\\_the\\_ill\\_treatment\\_suffered#.WRXJv\\_krKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62267-AFRICA_BURUNDI_A_priest_died_in_April_because_of_the_ill_treatment_suffered#.WRXJv_krKM8)



### China

Pastor Li Mutian (ordered by the Religious Affairs Bureau and the DSPS on [March 23, 2017](#) to 'suspend all gatherings' of his church, refused; officers returned on [April 1, 2017](#) and told church members they would be criminally liable should they continue to meet;  
**UPDATE:** locked in his home to prevent him from leading a church service)

Date: [April 30, 2017](#)

Location: Xining, Qinghai province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/05/authorities-lock-pastor-in-own-house-to.html>

Pastor Li Peng (husband of Huang Xiaorui, **UPDATE:** church service raided by police, beaten when he tried to record the raid with his cell phone, detained along with 30 congregants)

Huang Xiaorui (wife of Pastor Li Peng, detained, released, said "They didn't let me see my husband. I insisted that I was there for a justification. I wanted justice. I waited at the police station all morning, to no avail. The other brothers and sisters were released in different orders and each of them were questioned for a very long time. I myself was interrogated for more than an hour. The oldest believer they detained is a grandmother, more than 80 years old. There were also children")

Date: [May 3, 2017](#)

Location: Dongguan, Guangdong province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/05/over-30-christians-including-american.html>

Archbishop Emeritus Andrea Aniceto Wang Chongyi (aged 97, **died of natural causes**, had been arrested during the Cultural Revolution and sent into forced labor)

Date: [April 20, 2017](#)

Location: Guiyang, Guizhou Province

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/62228-ASIA\\_CHINA\\_Death\\_of\\_Mgr\\_Andrea\\_Wang\\_Chongyi\\_one\\_of\\_the\\_oldest\\_Bishops\\_in\\_mainland\\_China#.WRHX5vnyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62228-ASIA_CHINA_Death_of_Mgr_Andrea_Wang_Chongyi_one_of_the_oldest_Bishops_in_mainland_China#.WRHX5vnyuM8)

Li Heping (husband of Wang Qiaoling, brother of Li Chunfu, civil rights attorney, disappeared on [July 10, 2015](#); convicted in Tianjin of 'subversion of state power' in a secret trial on [April 28, 2017](#), sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment and 4 years' suspended sentence;  
**UPDATE:** released, arrived home)

Date: [May 9, 2017](#)

Location: Beijing

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/05/two-years-after-he-disappeared.html>

Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin (aged 59, detained in Fuan on [April 6, 2017](#) for 20 days to 'to study and learn'; **UPDATE:** released)

Fr Zhu Ruci (underground diocesan vicar general, detained, forced to attend a class on religious regulations, released)

Fr Xu Wenmin (underground diocesan chancellor, detained, forced to attend a class on religious regulations, released)

Fr Peng Zhenshen (underground diocesan procurator, detained, forced to attend a class on religious regulations, released)

Date: [May 6, 2017](#)

Location: Mindong

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/three-stubborn-chinese-priests-held-as-bishop-goes-free/79194>



## Cuba

Felix Yuniel Llerena Lopez (aged 20, student, arrested after bringing accounts of Christian persecution to a congressional committee in Washington DC in the U.S.)

Date: April 27, 2017

Location: Santa Clara

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue28107.html>



## Egypt

Nabil Saber Ayoub (aged 50, husband, father of two, barber, fled his home in February 2017 with his family; **UPDATE: shot dead** by ISIL in his shop, had returned two weeks earlier)

Date: May 6, 2017

Location: el-Arish, Sinai

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/North-Sinai,-a-50-year-old-Christian-executed-by-the-Islamic-State-40672.html>

and <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/05/08/egyptian-christian-killed-outside-his-barbershop/>

and <https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/05/08/islamists-shoot-dead-arish-copt-who-returned-home/>

and <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1894&A=30645>



## Germany

Ado Greve (Open Doors spokesman, said of persecution in Germany of refugees who are Christian converts from Islam "The isolated case theory has been disproved. Fifty-six percent [from 750 interviews] spoke about physical attacks and 83 percent of those who we questioned admitted that they were attacked several times...How many affected refugees do we need so we do not treat these as isolated cases anymore? Five hundred? One thousand?")

Date: May 6, 2017

Location: Frankfurt

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20170505205121.htm>



## India

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: reported on the desecration of a statue of Mary the mother of Jesus [Our Lady of Vailankanni])

Date: May 6, 2017

Location: Ghodbunder village, 35 miles from Mumbai

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mumbai,-two-Christian-religious-symbols-desecrated-in-intimidating-theft-40674.html>

Pastor Sikandar Kumar (aged 45, attacked along with his congregation by Hindu radicals on February 10, 2017; **UPDATE**: lured from his home by a boy on a bicycle, severely beaten by Hindu radicals, lost his hearing due to neurological damage)

Pastor Arun Kumar (**UPDATE**: described the attack on Pastor Sikandar Kumar “When the pastor stepped out [of his home], 15 men started beating him and accused him of conversions in the village. They badgered his head with iron swords and sticks. Pastor Sikandar fell down unconscious: he had a deep injury on his head. He was bleeding severely”, has assumed pastoral leadership in Pastor Sikandar Kumar's absence, has received death threats, added "More than 100 families attend the church. The police have provided us security for the Sunday worship")

Date: April 5, 2017

Location: Jadhua village, Bihar state

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/05/pastor-india-loses-hearing-assault-hindu-extremists/>



## Indonesia

Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok (**UPDATE**: sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment on blasphemy charges despite the court ruling there was no evidence of guilt and the prosecutorial recommendation of a suspended sentence, detained, said he will appeal)

Justina Rostiawati (president of the Indonesian Catholic Women Association, said "I am disappointed over the “distorted” conclusion of the judges panel albeit the prosecutor’s recommendation seeking two-year long probation for Ahok. The judges’ verdict has been massively influenced by the current political situation in Indonesia. If this impression is right, then the conclusion of the judges is potentially dangerous for the development of justice and law in the country")

Koerniatmanto (professor of law, said "The sentence is strange and commonly called 'ultra petita', which means that the verdict is 'heavier' than the prosecutors demanded. For the College of Judges, this verdict is socially 'friendly' for security reasons. Angry crowds will not 'attack' the judges and Ahok will be taken to jail in total security")

Fr Franz Magnis-Suseno SJ (German national, **UPDATE:** commented on the blasphemy conviction and imprisonment of Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok: "This is an unfair sentence, endorsed by judges under strong Islamist pressure. Extremists will try to continue their campaign in view of the 2019 presidential election to beat President Joko Widodo [aka Jokowi]. They will try to highlight that Jokowi is not a true Muslim...For more than a year, a silent coalition between former generals and Islamic militants is developing. An increase in disorder and social chaos could 'force' the military to assume power, with Islamist support. It should be noted that the old generals have never accepted the democratic reform implemented after the fall of dictator Suharto", added that two lessons could be drawn from the trial: "The first is that Islamic extremism has been underestimated by the great Muslim organizations of civil society, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama [NU]. In the last six months, behind the extremist leader Habib Rizieq Shihab young followers of the NU and especially of Muhammadiyah have also enthusiastically gathered, so it is possible that there is already a change in balance in Indonesian Islam. Radicals proclaim themselves as representatives of all Indonesian Islam, beating on Islamic identity and taking a central role on the political scene", the second lesson is "Ahok's words and his presence as a candidate represented a provocation right from the beginning. Indonesia is still not ready for a Christian to become a national leader, especially a Christian of Chinese origin...Christian citizens have offered Ahok peaceful support, in sign of solidarity they accompanied him to the jail, singing the national anthem and launching this message: the baptized do not want to let Indonesia fall into the hands of fanatics and extremists")

Fr Fransiskus Funan SVD (said at the candlelight service held after the imprisonment of Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok "I came here to support Ahok. We know he was jailed because of outside pressure")

Sr Laurentina CDP (said at the candlelight service held after the imprisonment of Governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok "We have seen the legal proceedings in Ahok's case and to me it does not make sense. There seems to be political influence behind all this")

Date: May 9, 2017

Location: Jakarta

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Ahok-condemned-to-two-years-for-blasphemy.-Shock-and-consternation-in-Indonesia-40684.html>

and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Ahok-trial:-'Judgement-influenced-by-current-political-climate'-40689.html>

and <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/05/09/jakartas-christian-governor-sentenced-to-2-years-in-prison-for-blasphemy/>

and <http://www.fides.org/en/news/62241->

[ASIA INDONESIA Former Christian governor of Jakarta condemned for blasphemy Christians appeal to the Pancasila#.WRHWQvnyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62241-ASIA_INDONESIA_Former_Christian_governor_of_Jakarta_condemned_for_blasphemy_Christians_appeal_to_the_Pancasila#.WRHWQvnyuM8)

and [http://www.fides.org/en/news/62248-ASIA\\_INDONESIA\\_A\\_Jesuit\\_Islamic\\_populism\\_danger\\_for\\_Indonesia#.WRMWIvkrKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62248-ASIA_INDONESIA_A_Jesuit_Islamic_populism_danger_for_Indonesia#.WRMWIvkrKM8)  
and <http://www.ucanews.com/news/jakartas-christian-governor-sentenced-to-jail-for-blasphemy/79172>  
and <http://www.ucanews.com/news/ahoks-sentence-seen-by-many-as-miscarriage-of-justice/79183>



## Nigeria

Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan (**UPDATE**: spoke after 82 girls who had been abducted by Boko Haram in April 2014 were released "We thank God that these girls have re-embraced their families, but I wonder why they had to wait three years for this to happen...In all these years I was among those who insistently asked the government to do everything possible to free the girls. The government replied that it could not negotiate for their release with terrorists, exchanging them with some Boko Haram prisoners. But that is what eventually happened. For their release some Boko Haram leaders were released and an important figure was paid. Why did this not happen before, saving three years of suffering for these girls and their families? Three years of anguish that could be avoided. Among them is a girl with an amputated leg...If these girls had been the daughters of some powerful leader would they have lost all this time? We also forget that there are still more than 100 girls whose fate we know nothing about. Some of them probably died during fights, illness or childbirth. At least let families know the fate of these poor girls. I invite everyone to pray for their release")

Date: May 8, 2017

Source: Abuja

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/62234-AFRICA\\_NIGERIA\\_Chibok\\_Girls\\_Why\\_have\\_we\\_waited\\_three\\_years\\_to\\_negotiate\\_their\\_release\\_asks\\_Cardinal\\_Onaiyekan#.WRHY9fnyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62234-AFRICA_NIGERIA_Chibok_Girls_Why_have_we_waited_three_years_to_negotiate_their_release_asks_Cardinal_Onaiyekan#.WRHY9fnyuM8)



## Pakistan

**Event: Christian leaders continued to call for prosecution of the killers of Muslim college student Mashal Khan**

Fr Shahid P Mairaj (**UPDATE**: said "The government must reject any expediency and do what is good for the nation. We want to honor the sacrifice of Mashal Khan. we demand clear punishment for his assassins. What we ask for is an impartial country that unfortunately

is disappearing! For years we have been victims of these extremists. Politicians should go beyond power games and begin to save people's lives")

Cecil Shane Chaudhry (**UPDATE**: said "Only the state can stop these elements; civil society is helpless. Law enforcement should take note of this kind of talk: they are an open challenge to the state itself. Looking at social media after this tragedy shows how the level of radicalization has become extremely alarming...If the perpetrators of Mashal Khan's assassination and of all assassinations perpetrated in the name of religion are not put in jail, they will continue and multiply...Taking justice in one's own hands is indicative of an absent government, the failure of the civil administration to enforce the law, and the ambiguity of the judicial system. The latter continues to allow such crimes against humanity to go unpunished. Impunity linked to violence in the name of religion must end")

Date: May 5, 2017

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/pakistani-christians-demand-action-legal-against-murderers-of-mashal-khan/>

Salim Masih (aged 35, husband of Salma, father of Anum, Naveed, and Nabeel, home invaded by a former employer's henchmen, beaten, abducted, ransom of US\$382 demanded, police took no action, whereabouts unknown)

Salma (wife of Salim Masih, mother of Anum, Naveed, and Nabeel, home invaded by a former employer's henchmen, husband abducted, said "I have cried and prayed every day since Salim was taken from me. I have no idea if he is still alive and my children ask me time after time. My children and I had to watch Salim being beaten and we are still traumatized. The pain will not go away till Salim is returned to us. We paid off Sheikh Mustafa's debt through hard work over a year. We waited till our loan had been completed before leaving as we did not want any anger. We only wanted a better future but the cruel man has destroyed our hope")

Anum (aged 8, daughter of Salma and Salim Masih, witnessed her father's beating, threatened with rape)

Naveed (aged 5, son of Salma and Salim Masih, witnessed his father's beating, threatened with rape)

Nabeel (aged 4, son of Salma and Salim Masih, witnessed his father's beating, threatened with rape)

Date: April 21, 2017

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pakistans-police-refuse-to-emancipate-christian-ex-brick-kiln-slave-kidnapped-and-tortured>



**Philippines**

Bishop Carlo Morales (husband of Maria Teofifina Morales, arrested with others at a police checkpoint while travelling with an alleged member of a rebel group)

Maria Teofifina Morales (wife of Bishop Carlo Morales, arrested)

Sadome Dalid (driver, arrested)

Bishop Antonio Ablon (condemned the arrest of Bishop Carlo Morales, called for his release)

Date: May 11, 2017

Location: Gango

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-independent-church-condemns-arrest-of-bishop/79202>



## Spain

Bishop Jesus Murgui (met with the nuns of the Monastery of the Holy Face after their chapel containing a reputed relic from the passion of Jesus was vandalized by an apparent Satanist)

Date: May 7, 2017

Location: Alicante

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/satanic-attack-on-relic-of-christ-found-at-spain-monastery-94411/>



## Sudan

Demas James (attorney, wrote about the government destruction of the last remaining church building in the area “You can see there is no place for worship left now for the believers to worship”)

Date: May 7, 2017

Location: Khartoum

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/05/church-building-demolished-two-christians-arrested-sudan/>

Abdulmonem Abdumawla Issa Abdumawla (convert, held in jail as of [May 24, 2016](#); convicted in [Khartoum](#) on [January 29, 2017](#), sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment; still in captivity as of [February 26, 2017](#) despite his conviction as an accomplice of the now-pardoned Petr Jasek; **UPDATE**: released in a presidential pardon)

Rev Hassan Abdelrahim Tawor (husband, arrested in [Omdurman](#) on [December 18, 2015](#) by the NISS secret police; convicted in [Khartoum](#) on [January 29, 2017](#), sentenced to 12 years'

imprisonment; still in captivity as of [February 26, 2017](#) despite his conviction as an accomplice of the now-pardoned Petr Jasek; **UPDATE**: released in a presidential pardon)

Date: May 11, 2017

Location: Khartoum

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/05/eu-envoy-calls-on-sudan-to-release-two-convicted-of-aiding-czech-spy/>



## Syria

Patriarch Gregorios III Laham (aged 83; **UPDATE**: resigned from the patriarchate of the Greek Catholic Melkite church)

Archbishop Jean Clement Jeanbart (**UPDATE**: appointed administrator of the Greek Catholic Melkite church)

Date: May 8, 2017

Location: Damascus

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Gregory-III-Laham:-From-Greek-Melkite-patriarch-to-pilgrim-of-peace-and-love-40677.html>  
and <http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/05/08/greek-melchite-patriarch-resigns/>



## Thailand

Chen Guiqiu (wife of imprisoned human rights attorney Xie Yang, 14 year old daughter detained and released in China, fled China and illegally entered the country on [February 24, 2017](#); safe house raided by police with the assistance of the Chinese embassy on [March 2, 2017](#), detained; rescued from detention by U.S. embassy personnel on [March 3, 2017](#) due to her 4-year old daughter's status as a U.S. citizen, taken to the airport under pursuit from Chinese diplomats, officials from all three countries argued over the family's fate; **UPDATE**: arrived in the U.S.)

Date: March 17, 2017

Location: Bangkok

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/05/abc-news-ap-exclusive-china-lawyers.html>



## United Kingdom

Noushin (convert from Islam, Iranian citizen, granted asylum)

Date: February 2017

Location: London

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/international-persecution/iran-was-my-egypt-christian-convert-from-islam-finds-asylum-i>



### **United States - District of Columbia**

Dr Mark E. Green (aged 52, physician, state legislator, withdrew his nomination for Secretary of the Army after attacks on his Christian views)

Date: May 5, 2017

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/trumps-army-secretary-nom-forced-out-over-christian-view-of-marriage>



### **Venezuela**

Archbishop Emeritus Roberto Luckert Leon (**UPDATE**: commented on government actions "This is what they want to impose here, a dictatorship disguised as democracy. The amount of tear gas that the government is using to silence the protests is scandalous, but they will not be able to stop them, people are tired, for 18 long years the situation worsens every day, and now there is anxiety because there is no food, no security, and of course people do not want this, so they protest, to look for a way out of this crisis")

Date: May 8, 2017

Location: Coro

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/62238-AMERICA\\_VENEZUELA\\_They\\_want\\_to\\_impose\\_a\\_dictatorship\\_disguised\\_as\\_democracy\\_warns\\_Mgr\\_Lueckert#.WRHWzvnyuM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/62238-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_They_want_to_impose_a_dictatorship_disguised_as_democracy_warns_Mgr_Lueckert#.WRHWzvnyuM8)



### **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**: seen in a new video, appealed for his release from captivity)

Date reported: May 9, 2017

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/kidnapped-indian-priest-pleads-for-help-in-new-video-55405/>

## **Today's Martyrs**

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

*or write to*

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