

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2017-11-26 through 2017-12-02



Bangladesh

Fr Walter William Rozario (aged 41, assistant pastor, secondary school headmaster, brother of Premol Rozario, disappeared, ransom demanded)

Fr Subroto Purification (pastor, later said "He went to the Bonpara church. He then went to the market for some publications and other duties for the parish, but he did not come back and his phone has been turned off. We are very worried for him. We are praying for his return in good conditions. Now I am at the police station for help. We want my assistant back as soon as possible. They want 300,000 Taka [more than US\$3,600] for his release. We're collaborating with the police")

Premol Rozario (brother of Fr Walter William Rozario, said "When we heard the news of my brother's disappearance we visited all hospitals and many other places, but we did not find him. We can't sleep from all the worry")

Date: November 27, 2017

Location: Bonpara

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/As-priest-goes-missing-in-Bonpara,-fear-grows-among-Catholics-on-the-eve-of-papal-visit-42455.html>



China

Bishop John Baptist Li Suguang (asked priests of his diocese to spread news of a raid on a church by municipal officers [not police] in which four elderly parishioners were assaulted and statues and icons were destroyed, a protest march occurred the next day, the municipal government responded with a promise to investigate the incident and compensate for any loss)

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Jian, Jianxi province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/by-law-officers-assault-elderly-catholics-in-jiangxi/80929>



Egypt

Event: Islamic terrorists attacked a Sufi mosque in the Sinai, killing 305

Bishop Serafim (condemned the attack)

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Ismailia

Pope Tawadros II aka Wagih Sobhy Baqi Suleiman (**UPDATE**: condemned the attack and ordered the cathedral to play sad music on its bells)

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Alexandria

Bishop Makarios (**UPDATE**: condemned the attack, cancelled an ordination of new priests, and ordered all churches to play sad music on their bells)

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Minya

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2034&A=33148>

and <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2034&A=33150>

and <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2034&A=33151>

Amir Aiad (aged 42, pharmacist, spoke on the closure of his church by joint agreement with police and Bishop Marcos “We were not used to praying in this church regularly, but after we submitted all the legal papers and notified the authorities, we started opening the church and holding daily [Divine Liturgies] on Nov. 3. There were no objections, nothing happened. On the contrary, local Muslims stood on our side, supporting our right to build a church. I can’t find a justification for what happened”)

Date: November 17, 2017

Location: Shubral-Kheima, Qalyubiya district, north Cairo

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/christians-egypt-lose-worship-sites/>

Badawy Makram (on trial with Muslim Brotherhood members for attacking public property, said his name was added to the defendants by a corrupt policeman)

Date: November 30, 2017

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2037&A=33198>



India

Archbishop Thomas Ignatius Macwan (issued a letter on [November 24, 2017](#) to various communities regarding the upcoming elections: "The forthcoming legislative elections in the state of Gujarat will affect the future of our country. We are aware that the secular

and democratic fabric of our country is at stake, where human rights are violated and constitutional rights trampled. There are episodes in which churches are attacked, ecclesiastical staff, faithful or institutions are affected. There is growing sense of insecurity among minorities. Nationalist forces are about to conquer the country. The election results of the State Assembly of Gujarat can make a difference...The Bishops of the State of Gujarat invite you to organize prayer liturgies in your parishes and convents, hoping that the people who are elected will remain faithful to our Indian constitution and respect every human being without any discrimination"; **UPDATE:** accused of generating "fear" in his letter, accused of violating the Model Code of Conduct in a complaint filed with the state Election Commission)

Date: November 25, 2017

Location: Gujarat state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Gujarat-Election-Commission-accuses-archbishop-of-generating-%E2%80%9Cfear%E2%80%9D-42433.html>

Archbishop Thomas Ignatius Macwan (accused of generating "fear" in his letter, accused on November 25, 2017 of violating the Model Code of Conduct in a complaint filed with the state Election Commission; **UPDATE:** denied internet rumors that he had been arrested for his letter, said "They served me notice on the 25th and I responded on the 27th. There has been no response after that. I hope the issue is over")

Samson Christian (said "...this is the first time the Hindu nationalists are targeting the church leader to polarize the Hindu voters...Archbishop Macwan has all the right to protect the people and ask them to pray. The complaint against the archbishop is politically motivated")

K P George SJ (said "I fully support the concerns raised by Archbishop Thomas Macwan...If every party and every leader can ask his/her followers to vote for a particular person/party, why should that right be denied to the archbishop and for his members?")

Virginia Saldanha (**UPDATE:** said "What the archbishop did is absolutely right. In no way is it campaigning or alignment with anyone. It only shows the caliber of the [Hindu nationalist] BJP and its nervousness about the elections")

Fr Dominic Emmanuel (**UPDATE:** spoke after the only Catholic cabinet minister denied that Christians had been attacked under Prime Minister Modi "K.J. Alphons has to learn to tell lies like his masters Modi and Amit Shah [the BJP president]...Don't be surprised if K.J. Alphons, to remain on his ministerial seat, will tomorrow repeat...[the] statement that Mother Teresa's work was all a facade for conversion")

Date: December 1, 2017

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/india-archbishop-served-notice-raising-human-rights-ahead-gujarat-elections/>

Event: Christians spoke on their government's failure to invite Pope Francis to visit

Cardinal Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal (**UPDATE**)

Cardinal George Allencherry

Johana Xalxo (aged 52, school principal, said a new generation had grown up since the last papal visit)

Fr Nicholas Barla SVD (**UPDATE**: said that a papal visit would have helped Christians and Muslims who face persecution)

Peter Lobo (aged 59, retired police officer, said that the government failed to invite the Pope "to keep the Hindu nationalists in good humor")

M D Lawrence (college principal, said the government lost a great opportunity since the Pope was loved by people of other faiths)

Shaji George (said "The government and BJP [the Hindu nationalist party] simply lost a chance to express solidarity with a globally accepted spiritual leader and his efforts for world peace")

Date: November 27, 2017

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-catholics-feel-left-out-as-pope-francis-visits-myanmar/80899>

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: said "It was with a heavy heart, we received the news that the Holy See cannot visit India. A Holy Visit would have been a prestige for the whole country in the eyes of the world. The Pope is visiting two smaller countries and not India: as an Indian, it hurts...In this climate of vigilantism and murderous lynchings, the Pope would have come as a Messenger of Peace, bringing a salve to the people who are powerless in the face of the forces of hate and evil, we are really disappointed that the Pope Francis will not visit India. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister have never said 'no' to a papal visit, only that they are always considering it. I am hopeful the Holy See can visit us soon as we are in continuous talks with the government. A papal visit would be a pride for India and all Indians")

Date: November 28, 2017

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/63302-ASIA_INDIA_The_Pope_will_not_visit_India_Catholic_community_disappointed#.WhlowlWnGM8

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE**: wrote "...the citizens of India have much to be concerned about!...the Election Commission of India [ECI], an independent Constitutional body, delays announcing the dates of the Assembly Elections in Gujarat for no explicable reason. Several cases and complaints of how the Electronic Voting Machines [EVMs] can easily be tampered with to benefit the ruling party are not looked into with the urgency and importance they deserve...The Judiciary is the one body that has to safeguard the Constitution. There have certainly been some landmark judgements, however, this seems today more an exception than the rule. We are aware that in several incidents the Judiciary seems to be compromised...Justice A.P. Shah, the former head of the Law Commission has called for an investigation into the mysterious death of CBI Special Judge B. H. Loya in December 2014. Loya was the presiding Judge of the high-profile Sohrabuddin Sheikh encounter killing case, in which the prime accused was Amit Shah the President of the BJP [the Hindu nationalist political party]. The Judge, who succeeded Loya, discharged Amit Shah...Several media persons, who have stood up for justice and truth, like Gauri Lankesh have been killed [on 21 November Sudip Dutta Bhaumik a Bengali language scribe was killed in Tripura], many more are intimidated and harassed and even have false cases foisted on them. A good percentage of mainstream media in

India is corporatized, coopted or just bought up...Only a rare species among them would have the courage to highlight stories like the 'mysterious' death of Judge Loya, the blatant corruption of Jay Shah [the son of Amit Shah], of the suicides by farmers, of how Government policies like demonetization have impoverished millions of Indians..."

Date: November 25, 2017

Source: <http://mattersindia.com/2017/11/constitutional-concerns/>

Mahendra Nagdeve (aged 45, convert, husband, father of three, ordered by the municipal government to stop religious services in his home)

Date: November 3, 2017

Location: Lanji area, Balaghat district

Source: <https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/indian-family-receives-notice-to-stop-christian-gathering-in-their-home/>

and <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/christian-family-india-receives-notice-stop-worship-home/>



Iran

Mohammad Ali Torabi (convert, detained on October 10, 2017 by security agents while in his office in Qal'a Sayyed district, Dezful, Khuzestan province; **UPDATE**: released on bail of US\$60,000)

Date: November 22, 2017

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3799>



Kenya

Hadiya Ali (aged 54, Somali refugee, widow, mother of eight; **UPDATE**: children aged 13, 17, and 21 beaten by local Muslims for attending church, two require more medical treatment, said "We are living in great fear and experience sleepless nights. It is not safe for us to stay in this particular place...My family has experienced difficult times since the time we embraced the Christian faith, but God has been always coming to our rescue and meeting our needs. We are grateful to the church and good Samaritans who have stood with my family in trying moments. We are at crossroads. But how long will this kind of life and persecution continue?...We will not recant the Christian faith. We will continue putting our faith in God")

Date: November 17, 2017

Location: outside Nairobi

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/somali-muslims-break-beat-children-christian-widow-kenya/>



Kuwait

Rev Shibu Mathew (aged 42, Indian citizen, husband, father of four, arrested in **Mangaf** for defending Christianity in an ecumenical debate; **UPDATE**: released, has left the country)

Date reported: December 2, 2017

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/indian-pastor-accused-of-blasphemy-during-interfaith-dialogue-event-set-free-by-kuwaiti-authorities>



Nigeria

Pastor Victor Kanayo (**murdered** in his home by a cultic group)

Date: November 26, 2017

Location: Offin, Igbogbo, outside Ikorodu, Lagos state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2017/11/27/pastor-murdered-in-his-home-in-lagos-by-cultist-group/>

Yohanna Audu (aged 45, father of Micah Yohanna Audu, **shot dead**)

Micah Yohanna Audu (aged 18, son of Yohanna Audu, **shot dead**)

Mai'angwa Samaila (aged 50, husband of Safiya Samaila, church elder, said "He [Yohanna Audu] went to find out who were the men on the premises of the church at that time of the night when they shot him, and he died instantly. His son, who heard the sound of the gunshot, ran out to find out what had happened since his dad had just gone to the church, he too was shot and killed...As the shooting and capturing of the women was going on, some residents in our village rushed to the Catholic church and rang the church's bell, alerting others on the attack on the village. This forced the armed Muslim men to beat a retreat. This saved so many lives that would have perished during the attack...I frantically called on heads of security agencies in our area, the police and army, but I was told that they were unable to come to our aid because their vehicles had no fuel or were in bad working condition...We believe that Christian communities here are being persecuted because of our faith. The government is aware about such invasions of Christian communities but has not done anything to put an end to the menace. The sad thing is that it is only Christians that are being killed or kidnapped in our area, as there was never any Muslim community attacked or a Muslim kidnapped")

Safiya Samaila (aged 45, wife of Mai'angwa Samaila, abducted)

Yaha Gabriel (aged 20, abducted)

Hauwa Bebi (aged 18, abducted)

Date: August 15, 2017

Location: Samaila, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Safiya Samaila (aged 45, wife of Mai'angwa Samaila, abducted on August 15, 2017; **UPDATE:** released after a ransom of US\$8,253 was paid)

Yaha Gabriel (aged 20, abducted on August 15, 2017; **UPDATE:** released after a ransom of US\$8,253 was paid)

Hauwa Bebi (aged 18, abducted on August 15, 2017; **UPDATE:** released after a ransom of US\$8,253 was paid)

Date: August 22, 2017

Location: Falgore Forest

Haruna Samaila (threatened by phone with death, said "They threatened that unless I pay them 3 million naira [US\$8,253], I will be killed. I reported the threats to our church leaders, and they asked me to report the matter to police. When I did so, I was instead arrested by the police and detained. It took the intervention of our church leaders to get me released...The government is insensitive to our plight. This is a conspiracy against us Christians in Kano. Those in authority and government know those armed Muslims carrying out these attacks against us, and that is the reason they are not concerned about our plight")

Date reported: November 29, 2017

Location: Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Usman Aminu (husband of Hauwa Usman Aminu, son of Aminu Sallau, **shot dead**)

Hauwa Usman Aminu (aged 25, widow of Usman Aminu, said "He decided to visit his mom in their family home about 200 meters from our house. It was there that the gunmen killed him. I heard sounds of gunshots shortly after my husband had gone out and knew that something was wrong")

Aminu Sallau (aged 59, father of Usman Aminu, said "I was listening to news on the radio when nine armed Muslim men stormed my house. They came on three motorbikes and started shooting into the air. Three of them pointed their guns at my head and demanded I give them money. The gunmen were not happy that I had only a little money on me [US\$220], so they tied my hands and legs and were about to take me away when one of them, who was standing guard in front of my house, rushed in to tell his colleagues that he had shot and killed my son, Usman. On hearing this, I began to cry and shout, and in the midst of the confusion, the gunmen abandoned me and fled")

Date: February 6, 2016

Location: Katsinawa village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Aminu Sallau (aged 60; **UPDATE:** said "the gunmen again sent a letter to me saying they were not yet done with me. They stated in the letter that I should keep aside 3 million naira [US\$8,253] for them, as they'll be coming for the money at any time, and that failure on my part to give them the money would mean death for me. I am prepared to die if that is the only price I have to pay for being a Christian")

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Katsinawa village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Rev Ayuba Hassan (said “Christians here are being persecuted for refusing to embrace Islam. We are constantly under attack. We are not allowed to freely worship as Christians. These kidnappings are aimed at forcing us to recant or make us run away from here so that they can take over our lands and expand Islam’s frontiers”)

Date reported: November 29, 2017

Location: Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Rev Murtala Marti Dangora (**UPDATE**: said "These attacks are being instigated and supported by the agents of the Muslim-controlled Kano state government to force indigenous Hausa Christians, who we are, to embrace Islam. Our refusal to do their biddings is what has made them adopt this strategy of kidnappings and attacks in order to force our people to tow their line. This is a jihad against the church of Jesus Christ”)

Date reported: November 29, 2017

Location: Kano state

Shamaki Ali (abducted)

Bature Hassan (abducted)

Magaji Salisu (abducted)

Date: July 14, 2016

Location: Beguwa village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Abdu (abducted)

Jamilu (abducted along with his son)

Date: July 14, 2016

Location: Jarkaya village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Baba Yaji (abducted)

Date: July 12, 2016

Location: Gidan Kuzuntu village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Fr Julius Gospel (abducted)

Date: June 30, 2016

Location: Jitta Dutse village, Tudun Wada local government area, Kano state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/kidnappings-threats-massacre-terrorize-christians-kano-state-nigeria/>

Esther (aged 17 in 2015, alias, abducted by Boko Haram militants in **October 2015**, father killed; rescued by the Nigerian military in **November 2016**, returned home; **UPDATE**: said “I cannot count how many men raped me. Every time they came back from their attacks, they would rape us...defile us. Each passing day, I hated myself more and more. I felt that God had forsaken me. There were times when I was so angry with God...But still I could not get myself to renounce Him. I found myself remembering His promise to never leave me or forsake me”, after her return gave birth to a daughter, added “They mocked me because I was pregnant. Even my grandparents despised me and called me names. I cried

many tears. I felt so lonely. What broke my heart even more was that they refused to call my daughter Rebecca. They referred to her as ‘Boko’”, said she has forgiven her abductors)

Rebecca (infant daughter of Esther)

Date reported: December 1, 2017

Location: Gwoza, Borno state

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/25770/>



Norway

Dr Katarzyna Jachimowicz (Polish citizen, fired from her job in [Sauherad](#) in 2016 after refusing to implant IUDs; **UPDATE**: an appellate court ruled her termination was illegal, said "God won")

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Skien

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/god-won-doctor-fired-for-pro-life-stance-wins-major-court-case-in-norway>



Pakistan

Event: Nationwide rioting has been reported over a proposed change to the oath of office for elected officials that has been construed as blasphemy

Mehwish Bhatti (British Pakistani Christian Association officer, wrote "The outrageous violence on our streets is typical of the increasingly radical Muslim majority. A minor change of words on an electoral candidate form has led to the calling for our Minister for Law to be declared a blasphemer. This is a predictable exaggeration of slightly altered words that for all intents and purposes hold to the exact same assertions...The protestors are smashing buildings and vehicles, they have caused huge transport delays and people are extremely frightened about what will happen next. Christians and Ahmadiyyah's are most at threat, we are already hated but through no fault of our own the animosity towards us has become more animated...Christian and Ahmadiyyah communities are gearing up for an imminent attack but it was not our communities that requested the change to the form")

Date: November 25, 2017

Location: Islamabad

Leighton Medley (British citizen, husband of Pana Medley, British Pakistani Christian Association officer, wrote "I am stranded at a service station in Kalar Kahar. I have been

left here for 24 hours after our bus could no longer journey on to Islamabad. There is an evening curfew that has been placed across many cities in the country imposed by the military here too but it fills me with little confidence for my safety. To me it seems as Pakistani Authorities took too late in getting themselves in order and allowed this debacle to ensue...Its frightening, I stand out a mile off with my pale skin and protestors have been heard shouting anti-western and anti-minority slogans. Our return flights are on Thursday and for now we cannot even find a way back to Lahore...It's hard to fathom why these protest are so violent or even why they are so well supported. The Law Minister has admitted a clerical error and the Election Bill 2017 changes that caused offence have now been resolved. This reaction simply does not make sense and the riots illustrate to the world just how intolerant Pakistani Muslims have become")

Pana Medley (wife of Leighton Medley, stranded)

Date: November 25, 2017

Location: Kalar Kahar

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/iran-christian-convert-loses-appeal-10-year-sentence-missionary-activities/>

Sicilia Maerah (aged 6, daughter of Waris Masih, shot by a Muslim after her father was unable to repay a debt, hospitalized, **died**)

Waris Masih (father of Sicilia Maerah)

Date: November 28, 2017

Location: Faisalabad, Punjab province

Source: <https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/6-year-old-pakistani-christian-girl-shot-dead-over-financial-issue/>



Turkey

Pastor Tim Stone (U.S. citizen; **UPDATE**: church stained glass window broken, posted a sign near the window that read “Bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.’ – Jesus Christ”, said “This is a chance for our church to live out our faith, to respond with love and forgiveness. This is how we act on Jesus’ words, not just say them”)

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Malatya

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/turkish-protestant-church-vandalised-second-time-malatya/>



United Kingdom

Tim Farron (Member of Parliament, resigned as leader of the Liberal Democrats on [June 14, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: said "...What appears now to be happening is that while the absence of faith is still thought to be the neutral position, holding a faith is only considered to be tolerably eccentric if it is merely cultural. But if your faith actually affects your world view in any way that puts it at odds with the mainstream, then your faith is considered to be malign and intolerable...If you actively hold a faith that is more than an expression of cultural identity, a faith that forms the center of your world view, you are deemed to be far worse than eccentric. You are dangerous. You are offensive...So, if we relegate Christianity then we hollow out liberalism. Liberalism has eaten itself because it has eaten the very world view [Christianity] that gave birth to it...")

Date: [November 28, 2017](#)

Source: <https://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/in-the-news/2037/11/28/what-kind-of-liberal-society-do-we-want-theos-annual-lecture-2017-full-text>

Event: Christians responded to year-old retweeted comments by a Scottish clergyman that called on people to pray that 4 year old Prince George would grow up to be homosexual and become King while in a same sex marriage

Bishop Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE**: said "If you're going to pray for Prince George, pray for him to be happy...and pray for him to discharge his duty as prince, to be married and have children. It is not a kind prayer. It is not a blessing, it's more like a curse from a fairytale. I would say it is profoundly un-Christian...To use prayer as a mechanism for wishing this on Prince is an unkind and destructive thing to do. It doesn't have the prince's best interest at heart, but uses him as a gender-political football to please 1.7% of the population. What is especially odd and incongruous is the fact that it is suddenly OK to pray for someone to be gay, but totally unacceptable to pray for them to be free from being gay and to resume a sexuality that was in tune with their biology. This seems not only contradictory but hypocritical")

Susie Leaf (director of Reform, said "I was very disappointed that he [the Scottish clergyman] was prepared to bring a child in to this same-sex marriage debate. As a Christian minister he should pray for all people to come to know the love of Christ, rather than a fine young gentleman")

Date: [December 1, 2017](#)

Source: <https://ashenden.org/2017/12/01/the-use-and-abuse-of-prince-george-by-gay-activists/> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZ-iMj1DNpM&feature=youtu.be&t=973>



United States - District of Columbia

Ed McFadden (archdiocesan secretary for communications, explained the lawsuit against the district for its refusal to allow religious bus ads "Really the issue here isn't so much our specific ad, or how we present it. It's shutting down our ability to promote our faith or to share our faith in the public square, that is really what we're talking about here. [It

removes] any respectable promotion of faith in the public square. We believe that that's just a violation of our First Amendment rights")

Date: November 28, 2017

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/what-are-banned-from-dc-buses-catholic-christmas-ads-85556>



Vietnam

Mary Magdelene Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh (aged 38, mother of two, sentenced in [Nha Trang, Khanh Hoa province](#) on [June 29, 2017](#) to 10 years' imprisonment for anti-government internet postings, which included criticism of hospitals refusing to serve the poor; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Date: December 1, 2017

Location: Tuy Hoa

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/vietnam-upholds-prison-term-for-catholic-activist/80959>

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

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