

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2017-12-17 through 2017-12-23



Chile

Events: Churches continue to be destroyed by Mapuche separatists

Pastor Juan Mella (church destroyed, said: “Each human being can have their own views with regard to faith, spirituality. We have never imposed our faith, but we have shared it with everyone because the Lord sent us to every nation, every tribe”)

Date: July 2017

M C (said “I was inside with my children, my husband, my brother-in-law and my brothers. They broke the windows and entered, firing their guns into the air, and then they threw us out. Then they came after us with large guns, machine guns, and they were wearing masks. They told us to leave or they would set us on fire as well – the children and all”)

Date: a Sunday in June 2016

Location: Padre Las Casas

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/chiles-churches-attack/>



China

Bishop Thaddeus Ma Daqin (ordained as bishop on July 7, 2012, then disappeared after stating in his first homily that he would resign from the state-sponsored church; **UPDATE**: still under house arrest)

Date: December 16, 2017

Location: Shanghai

Source: [http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Shanghai's-St.-Ignatius-Cathedral-reopens.-Msgr.-Ma-Daqin-Absent-\(Video\)-42606.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Shanghai's-St.-Ignatius-Cathedral-reopens.-Msgr.-Ma-Daqin-Absent-(Video)-42606.html)

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (detained on May 18, 2017; **UPDATE**: recovering from surgery, still in detention in Xining, Qinghai province, diocese has organized a monthly prayer campaign for his release)

Date: December 19, 2017

Location: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Wenzhou,-a-prayer-campaign-for-Mgr-Shao-Zhumin,-who-is-still-in-detention-42623.html>



Egypt

Abdul Masieh Ezzat (aged 9, sentence of one year's imprisonment for stealing 5 loaves of bread cancelled and conviction revoked after the complainant withdrew his complaint)

Date reported: December 19, 2017

Location: Beni Suef

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2050&A=33383>



India

Fr George Mangalappally (said Hindu radicals interrupted their caroling with allegations the singing was an illegal conversion activity "One of them called police and demanded action against us", detained by police)

Fr Robin (said "The Fathers and Brothers had gone for the program, when a group of Bajrang Dal [the RSS paramilitary youth wing] people had turned up and accused us of carrying out conversions and then the police came...After being taken to the police station, they were beaten up by another group of Bajrang Dal members")

Fr Anish Emmanuel (went to the police station to help the detained carolers, said "We were beaten up in front of the police, but they did nothing. They set our vehicle on fire, forcing us to take shelter inside the police station")

Fr Joseph Ottapurackal, (St Ephrem Theological College rector, wrote concerning the attacks on the 10 priests and 30 seminarians: "We strongly condemn the atrocities against the Christian missionaries and intimidation of religious minorities. We demand immediate action from the civil authorities against those involved in the incident")

Fr Stephen Maria (church spokesman, denounced the attack on the 10 priests and 30 seminarians: "The freedom to practice and profess one's faith is suspended by extremists. The celebrations of Christmas have already been disturbed. This is an attack on the secular nature of the country")

Bishop Joseph Kodakkailil (said he had been accused of offering US\$65 to a villager in exchange for the villager's conversion)

Shibu Thomas (founder of Persecution Relief, **UPDATE:** said that this incident was the 48th attack on carolers this Advent season)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: condemned the attack on the 10 priests and 30 seminarians: “[They were] conducting a routine Christmas carol singing program which has been the practice during the Christmas season for the last 30 years...The charge of conversion on which the priests and seminarians were detained is frivolous and laughable. The violence perpetrated by groups who claim to be ‘nationalists’ and have taken upon themselves the mantle of protecting ‘nationalism’ and ‘religion’ is disgraceful...The complicity of the police who arrested the seminarians and stood by helplessly as the priests and seminarians were assaulted is disgusting and appalling. Such misuse of the police force and the breakdown of law and order is not tolerable in a democracy and in a civilized society...What is even more shocking is that eight priests who later went to inquire about the detained priests and seminarians were also taken into custody. Shamefully, the situation outside the police station was allowed to be so hostile that even those who wanted to approach the detained persons could get no access to them...The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India condemns the behavior of the goons who even went on to torch the vehicle of the priests. All right-thinking Indians will hang their heads in shame at these terrorists who have taken on the garb of ‘religious police’. We are absolutely sure that they do not speak in the name of our very broad-minded and peace-loving Hindu brethren”)

Date: December 14, 2017

Location: Satna, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Indian-Church-slams-attack-on-seminarians-and-priests-in-Madhya-Pradesh-42600.html>

and <https://www.ucanews.com/news/hindu-activists-in-india-beat-eight-priests-torch-car/81086>

and <http://mattersindia.com/2017/12/satna-attack-converted-man-changes-statement/>

and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/False-charges-of-forced-conversions-over-Christmas-carols-in-Madhya-Pradesh-42615.html>

Pastor K K Oommen (aged 75, beaten after handing out a Gospel tract)

Evangelist Mukesh Kumar (beaten)

Date reported: December 20, 2017

Location: Karoli village, Pathankot Tehsil, Gurdaspur, Punjab state

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.persecution.in/node/4501>

Pastor Enosh Rajendran (month-old church demolished despite having had permission for construction, said "We were allegedly facing threats from supporters of a Hindu-outfit to remove the church from the locality for the past two weeks. We have sent petitions to various government authorities seeking protection. The district administration authorities were forcing us to remove the church...When all of us came to meet the [tax] collector during the grievance day meeting, the church was demolished totally in presence of the police force")

Date reported: December 20, 2017

Location: Ganapathipalayam Panchayat

Source: <http://www.persecution.in/node/4503>

Rev Shine P Lawrence (attacked in [Amboori, Kerala](#) on [December 14, 2017](#) while escorting a young caroler home, beaten; **UPDATE**: church vandalized, furniture, sound system, and 'articles used for prayer' destroyed)

Date: [December 18, 2017](#)

Location: [Kuttamala, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala](#)

Source: <http://www.persecution.in/node/4504>

and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Hindu-fundamentalists-against-Christmas-in-India-42636.html>

Event UPDATE: Seven Christians who had been arrested on illegal conversion charges on [December 4, 2017](#) were released on a bail of US\$780 each

Stanley Jacob

David Jacob

Vijay Kumar

Amit Kumar

Sumit Varghese

Anita (sister of Mamta Singh)

Dinesh

Pramod Singh (attorney, president of the Christian Legal Association; **UPDATE**: said “I am happy that the rule of law has been upheld by the Honorable Judge [who rejected] the frivolous and false accusations by some political ideologues seeking to restrict the fundamental rights of individuals to express their beliefs”)

Dr Michael Williams (United Christian Forum president, **UPDATE**: said “We have requested the SSP of Mathura to provide protection to all those granted bail today. My prayer is that in this month of Christmas may there be peace and harmony among all communities. I thank all for their prayers and encouragement who stood by together at this time”)

Date reported: [December 20, 2017](#)

Location: [Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh state](#)

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Hindu-fundamentalists-against-Christmas-in-India-42636.html>

Osmand Charles (activist; **UPDATE**: criticized Hindu nationalists in the Hindu Jagran Manch [HJM] who demanded that Christmas not be celebrated in Christian schools: “[It] has come as a shock for Christians in Aligarh. There is fear in the community, [they are] spreading insecurity among minorities”)

Fr Johnson Digal O.Carm (teacher, said "It is abominable that the hard-line Hindu outfit groups continue to issue repeated dictate, intimidations and threats to Christians and attacking them in different parts of India. Most of all the students are Hindus and Muslims here, but they are cooperative with us so far. Last year one Pastor was forced to tonsure his head and was paraded on a public road, thinking he was converting people without any solid evidence")

Date reported: [December 19, 2017](#)

Location: Madhya Pradesh state

Fr Savarimuthu M SJ (teacher, said "False propoganda of religious conversions, intimidating minority institutions in the name of religion under the patronage of ruling parties has become a great threat to the very constitutional right of citizens in India. Slowly but steadily India is moving towards pseudo-theocracy. It is a time that all the Indians woke up to realize this and defend India against these fascist forces")

Date reported: December 19, 2017

Location: Jharkhand state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Uttar-Pradesh:-Hindus-want-Christmas-banned-in-Catholic-schools,-claim-it-lures-Hindu-students-to-Christianity-42627.html>
and [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63429-ASIA INDIA Threats of Hindu extremists to Christian schools in view of Christmas](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63429-ASIA_INDIA_Threats_of_Hindu_extremists_to_Christian_schools_in_view_of_Christmas)

Pastor Vinodh Kumar (aged 38, beaten by Hindu extremists along with three other Christians at a Christmas charity event for destitute widows, arrested, said "The police are attempting to show the incident as a fight between Christians and Hindus in a way so it protects the attackers. They want to say there was exchange of words and that both parties quarrelled, so that they have taken me into custody. But it is not true. I was beaten, but they took me into custody instead of arresting the attackers", submitted photos and videos of the attack to the police "But the police did not make any arrests so far. They arrested three or four men who are not related to the attack. We are not sure what the police are up to")

Pastor Karthik Chandran (aged 30, convert, father of two, beaten, suffered a serious head wound and US\$3,116 worth of property damage, said "We made bulk purchase of sarees and shirts to distribute them to the poor, aged and widows. They were gathering in our church premises, but all of a sudden the Hindu Munnani activists barged inside. They came with steel rods and big stones and started beating us", added that a 55 year old Christian woman tried to help "But the attackers were very aggressive – they beat her also, and she is suffering fractures in her hand...I am very joyful that I have been persecuted for Christ's sake. The extremists broke the music equipment, chairs and glass windows into pieces. I have forgiven my attackers, and I am to proclaim Christ even more boldly after this incident. This has actually made me and my family stronger in faith")

Arun Kumar (aged 25, beaten)

Date: December 9, 2017

Location: Periyanaickenpalayam, Coimbatore district, Tamil Nadu state

Source [warning - graphic]: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/police-complicit-hindu-extremist-attack-christians-tamil-nadu-india-sources-say/>



Indonesia

Event: Christian leaders refused to participate in a Christmas event at the National Monument [aka Monas], the government's invitation and prior approval of Islamic use was a reversal of the policy of now imprisoned Christian former governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama aka Ahok

Manuel Raintung (Council of Churches of Indonesia, said "We must make sure that Monas remains a national monument where the spirit of unity among the different Indonesian peoples can show itself")

Fr Suyadi (said "In our meeting with the city administration, I told them that we Catholics of the Archdiocese of Jakarta are called to celebrate Christmas in our respective parish churches. Celebrating Christmas in churches rather than in open public spaces has been our tradition for decades")

Date: December 18, 2017

Location: Jakarta, West Java

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christians-say-no-the-Christmas-event-organised-by-Jakarta%E2%80%99s-Islamist-governor-42614.html>



Iran

Event: Four Christians were detained after raids on their homes

Alireza Nour-Mohammadi

Pastor Amin Khaki (UPDATE)

Milad Goudarzi

Shehabuddin Shahi

Date: December 12, 2017

Location: Karaj

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3813>



Iraq

Amir Yaqu (said that circumstances are "even worse" for Christians now that the Islamic State [ISIL] has been replaced by the Shia militia Hashd al-Shaabi which is "systematically trying to change the Christian demography of these places")

Date reported: December 18, 2017

Location: Mosul and the Nineveh Plain

Source: <http://www.thealabamabaptist.org/iraqi-christians-now-fearing-shiafication/>



Nigeria

John Garba (reported: “In Rimi village, the son of the Baptist pastor there, the Rev Nathan Maidoya, was shot dead when the Fulani kidnappers could not find the pastor at home. This pastor left the village immediately after his son was killed. [A Christian identified as Mr Habila was shot and killed...In Taso village a pastor was abducted and tortured: he] was disfigured by machete cuts wounds, when the kidnappers released him, he packed out of the village”)

Date: [December 18, 2017](#)

Location: [Kankomi village, Kaduna state](#)

Rev Nathan Maidoya (son shot dead, fled his village)

Mr Habila (**shot dead**)

Date: [2017](#)

Location: [Rimi village, Kaduna state](#)

Events: One village reported repeated attacks by Fulani Muslims

Emmanuel Yohanna (abducted, released after a ransom of US\$413 was paid)

Date: [March 2016](#)

Location: [Kwanti village, Kaduna state](#)

Hassan Madami (aged 24, son of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, brother of Suzie Madami and Eli Madami, abducted, ransom paid)

Sabade Musa (aged 35, abducted, ransom paid)

Peter Mai'angwa (aged 21, abducted, ransom paid)

Bala Yohanna (abducted, ransom of US\$275 paid, released)

Date: [November 2016](#)

Location: [Kwanti village, Kaduna state](#)

Madami Agiya (aged 60, husband of Martha Madami, father of Suzie Madami, Eli Madami and Hassan Madami, abducted, said “The Fulani kidnappers came to my house around 2 a.m. in the month of March [2017], on a date I cannot now remember. They shot into the air and dragged me out of the house. They took me away and held me in a forest for five days before they released me after my children paid a ransom. I don't know how much my children paid to get me released from captivity, but I know that the kidnappers demanded 10 million naira [US\$27,530] as ransom.”)

Date: [March 2017](#)

Location: [Kwanti village, Kaduna state](#)

Elisha Samaila (aged 35, **killed**)

Suzie Madami (aged 20, daughter of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, abducted)

Abigail Isuwa (abducted)

Yohanna Sarki (aged 60, abducted)

Date: May 2017

Location: Kwanti village, Kaduna state

Ayigyehu Adamu (aged 18, killed)

Garba Ajiya (aged 70, abducted)

Paulina Hassan (aged 28, abducted)

Gbahi Hassan (aged 7, abducted)

Yewayan Isuwa (aged 29, abducted)

Kumatu Isuwa (aged 3, abducted)

Maigishi Isuwa (aged 2, abducted)

Date: July 14, 2017

Location: Kwanti village, Kaduna state

Hosea Yohanna (threatened with death, paid extortion of US\$162, fled the village)

Ibrahim Yohanna (aged 25, brother of Hosea Yohanna, said “I was the person that took the money to the spot where the kidnappers instructed me to drop it for them. In fact, they even told me the type and color of dress I should wear to enable them identify me. I did as instructed, and after which we had leave the village. I only rushed down here to take few belongings and then leave”)

Date: August 2017

Location: Kwanti village, Kaduna state

Madami Agiya (aged 60, husband of Martha Madami, father of Suzie Madami, Eli Madami and Hassan Madami, abducted in March 2017, ransom paid, released; **UPDATE:** home attacked by Muslim Fulanis, said “They started shooting, and as we made efforts to run out of the house they shot and killed two of my sons...We pray God will convict our attackers and make them to repent from these evil acts against us. Pray for us, as we have been forced to abandon our homes. We do not know what to do, as security agencies in Kaduna State are unable to stop the attacks on us”)

Eli Madami (aged 30, son of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, brother of Suzie Madami and Hassan Madami, shot dead)

Hassan Madami (aged 25, son of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, brother of Suzie Madami and Eli Madami, abducted in November 2016, ransom paid; **UPDATE:** shot dead)

Martha Madami (aged 50, wife of Madami Agiya, mother of Suzie Madami, Eli Madami and Hassan Madami, abducted)

Chili (aged 22, niece of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, abducted)

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Kwanti village, Kaduna state

Martha Madami (aged 50, wife of Madami Agiya, mother of Suzie Madami, Eli Madami and Hassan Madami, abducted in [Kwanti village](#) on [November 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: released, ransom of US\$13,770 paid)

Chili (aged 22, niece of Madami Agiya and Martha Madami, abducted in [Kwanti village](#) on [November 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: released, ransom paid)

Date: [December 3, 2017](#)

Location: [Kaduna state](#)

Pastor Emmanuel Abu (aged 30, fled his village with all of his parishioners, said “We had to leave too because we were not safe. There are pastors that were kidnapped in other places too around here, and so if we had not left the village we would have become victims too. Out of the 85 members of my church, one was killed, and five were kidnapped by the Muslim Fulani kidnappers this year alone”)

Ibrahim Yohanna (aged 25, brother of Hosea Yohanna, fled his village; **UPDATE**: reported on the attacks: “Yohanna Sarki was kidnapped, and we had to pay 600,000 naira [US\$1,650] as ransom to secure his release from the Fulani kidnappers. So also, Emmanuel Yohanna was in March last year kidnapped, and we had to pay a ransom of 150,000 naira [US\$413] to get him released. In November 2016, again one of my relatives, Bala Yohanna, was kidnapped, and we had to pay a ransom of 100,000 naira [US\$275] to the Fulani kidnappers to get him released”)

Date: [December 18, 2017](#)

Location: [Kwanti village, Kaduna state](#)

Yohanna Sarki (abducted, ransom of US\$1,650 paid, released)

Date: [2017](#)

Location: [Kwanti village, Kaduna state](#)

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/muslim-fulani-kidnappers-ravage-village-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



Pakistan

Four suicide bombers attacked a church during a children’s Christmas Nativity pageant, police and parishioners shot two before they could gain entry to the church but one was able to detonate his vest, the other two fled, at least 13 were killed and 56 wounded, 9 critically

Mehak (aged 13, daughter of Sohail Yousaf, sister of Wasiqa, **killed**)

Akash (son of Naseem, **killed**)

Fazal Masih (son of Malik Masih, **killed**)

George Masih (church groundskeeper and security guard, locked the church gate to deny entry to the killers, **killed**)

Gulzar Masih (killed)

Sultan Masih (son of Siraj Masih, killed)

Sona Nazaf (daughter of Noaf Hameed, killed)

Madeeha Barkat (daughter of Barkat Ali, killed)

Ashraf (son of Manzoor, injured)

Sultan (son of Mizaj, injured)

Saiqa (wife of Sohail, injured)

Aaliya Naeem (injured)

Nadia (injured)

Mekal (injured)

Saima (injured)

Sunil (injured)

Shamim (injured)

Yasir Naveed (injured)

Shezadi Shamshad (injured)

Adil (injured)

Khushi (injured)

Salma (injured)

Hanan (injured)

Sadaf (injured)

Jospheen (injured)

Ayeasha (injured)

Tina Qaisor (injured)

Ramish (injured)

Eman Wali (injured)

Zeeshan (injured)

Aksa (injured)

Wasiqa (aged 16, daughter of Sohail Yousaf, sister of Mehak, hospitalized in critical condition)

Haroon James (wounded, younger brother hospitalized in critical condition with shrapnel in his lungs, sister-in-law killed, said " Everybody panicked as Muslim policemen and church volunteers exchanged fire with the terrorists trying to get inside ... We moved towards the altar to protect ourselves, but they continued to bomb the church and hit the doors to enter. When I realized it was an attack, I immediately went to the school of catechism

where the children were: I closed the door and pushed a wardrobe in front of the doors, to protect them")

Aqil Anjum (shot in his right arm, said "The situation was so chaotic that my mind had numbed. My condition was such that I initially didn't even feel the bullet piercing my arm")

Rev Saimon Bashir Masih (said "Suddenly I heard the firing in church compound...Our church gatekeeper, George Masih, was the first person who fell to the terrorists' bullets...The worshippers panicked and cried loud for God's mercy. Seconds later, the windows shattered with explosion at the door. Some people were injured with ball bearings from the bomb. Those who were hit in the head collapsed on church benches...Thanks to our young volunteers and police guards, the terrorists could not enter inside the church hall packed with more than 400 people, including 80 children from Sunday school... We are lucky to be alive, but my congregation is like my family. I was single when I arrived in the city a decade ago and now all of my relatives are here. We spent more than a million [rupees] in decorating the building and polishing the furniture. I saw them die and I could not do anything", has been ordered to temporarily vacate his home, added that the church may not be able to reopen until after New Year's)

Sohail Yousaf (father of Mehak and Wasifa, insurance manager, said "It was a pleasant morning. We had sung songs and children had presented a Christmas program. Pastor Simon Bashir had finished his sermon and we were moving towards the altar when we started hearing gunfire outside the church...We bolted all the doors and were praying that God would protect each of us. Then a suicide bomber blew himself up at the main door. The explosion shattered the door and injured many inside. When some rushed outside, they were injured by gunfire as the terrorists were on the church lawn. But soon the situation was brought under control by the volunteer church security guards and police present there")

Kal Alaxander (aged 52, present with his wife and two children. said "We were in services when we heard a big bang. Then there was shooting. The prayer hall's wooden door broke and fell on us...We hid the women and children under desks [pews?]")

Sunil Pervaiz (present in the church with his sister, said: "We hid the women and children under the benches, but just then a deafening explosion occurred, breaking the wooden door and the glass windows. I saw several people covered in blood ... some were lying on the floor, some limping away to safety. It was sheer chaos")

Mehreen Joseph (aged 43, 17-year-old son suffered multiple wounds, said "I am thankful to God Almighty that my son is alive, but my heart grieves for the families of our congregation who have lost their loved ones today. The church was brimming with activity for the pre-Christmas service, and we all were very excited to be there, but our happiness has been turned into sadness")

Jacob Masih (said "People started running to the corners of the church when the firing started. All of this happened very quickly, leaving most of us in a state of shock and disbelief. Many, including myself, thought that it was the last day of our lives")

Sidra Shams (said many of the children participating in the Nativity pageant were unharmed)

Alizah (younger sister of Maryam George, hospitalized with two broken legs and other injuries)

Maryam George (aged 20, sister of Alizeh)

Sheezan William (Caritas Executive Director, said "I came to know what was happening while the exchange of fire was taking place. I phoned two youths in the choir. I could hear gunfire on the phone and then rushed to the church...The injured were taken to the Civil Hospital, CMH, Akram Hospital and other private hospitals. Relatives picked up two bodies from the church and took them away, which is why they are not counted in official numbering...A team of about 70 youths is working day and night to provide blood supplies, food or any other assistance to the injured, and coffins for the burial")

Bishop Sadiq Daniel (said at the funerals following the church attack in which 14 were killed: "We are all in the same boat, terrorists are targeting everyone, they are attacking mosques, schools, universities, hospitals, armed forces, they want to destabilize Pakistan, they have their own political agenda. We, as followers of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, are opting for peace and we will work to maintain serenity and coexistence...Once again we are being put to the test...Our God, Emmanuel, the God-with-us who we celebrate at Christmas, is beside us and will console us, he takes care of us, he is fair and will do justice for his people")

Archbishop Sebastian Francis Shah OFM (**UPDATE:** said "It was a day of sorrow for all Pakistanis and especially for Christians. It proves they don't believe in any religion, they neither respect worshippers or God...Military and religious leaders assured us that we are united as a nation. We are receiving messages of condolence from all religious communities...The enemy is not at the borders, but in our streets and surroundings")

Date: December 17, 2017

Location: Quetta, Balochistan

Source [warning - graphic]: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/innocent-christians-massacred-by-muslims-during-nativity-service-in-quetta>

and <https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/pakistan-quetta-church-under-suicidal-attack/>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6716>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6717>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6718>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6719>

and [http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Quetta,-pastor-of-the-Methodist-Church:-The-faithful-implored-God's-mercy-\(Video\)-42612.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Quetta,-pastor-of-the-Methodist-Church:-The-faithful-implored-God's-mercy-(Video)-42612.html)

and <https://www.charismanews.com/world/68757-suicide-bombers-murder-9-injure-dozens-in-sunday-morning-church-attack>

and <http://www.fides.org/en/news/63418->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN_In_Quetta_the_funerals_of_Christians_victims_of_the_attack_that_wants_to_destabilize_Pakistan](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63418-ASIA_PAKISTAN_In_Quetta_the_funerals_of_Christians_victims_of_the_attack_that_wants_to_destabilize_Pakistan)

and <http://www.fides.org/en/news/63427->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN_Methodist_Bishop_Christians_are_being_put_to_the_test_the_God_with_us_will_console_us](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63427-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Methodist_Bishop_Christians_are_being_put_to_the_test_the_God_with_us_will_console_us) and <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/12/suicide-attack-church-pakistan-darkens-christmas-celebrations/>

and <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/12/pakistan-bomb-attack/>

and <https://www.ucanews.com/news/quetta-church-bomb-survivors-recount-horror/81110>

Khalil Tahir Sindhu (provincial Human Rights and Minorities Affairs Minister, **UPDATE**: said 1,100 police officers will be deployed to churches for Christmas: "Even the smallest church will have five police guards. We are vigilant, the rest depends on God. We are ready to die and will not compromise on religious obligations. However, this Christmas will be celebrated with simplicity", a police officer added that police have trained more than 100 church volunteers in armed self defense skills)

Date: December 19, 2017

Location: Punjab province

Rev Saimon Bashir Masih (**UPDATE**: said "I used to travel around the province with visitors without fear. Christians, living in scattered communities across the province, lived silently in peaceful co-existence. But Daesh [ISIL - Islamic State] terrorists are now targeting us one by one")

Date: December 19, 2017

Location: Quetta, Balochistan

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/church-security-to-have-weapons-at-christmas-services/81111>

Fr Victor Sawera (church attacked and vandalized by 50 armed men from a 'moderate' political party in retaliation for his refusal to allow a Protestant group to use the premises, said "This is our internal matter and Muslims should not get involved")

Fr Bhuro Mangho (church attacked)

Date: December 19, 2017

Location: Sambrial. Sialkot district, Punjab province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/second-pakistan-church-attacked-by-armed-mob/81132>



Philippines

Sr Mary John Mananzan OSB (said she was "appalled" by a government announcement that there would be no Christmas truce with Communist rebels: "Many more civilians will be endangered. We will see many new evacuations and victims in crossfire. How much more suffering can tribal and poor people face?")

Sr Susan Bolanio (Hesed Foundation executive director; **UPDATE** identified the dead in a government attack on a village as local leaders)

Maridel Fano (Rural Missionaries of the Philippines project coordinator, said "Tribal communities are the most vulnerable right now. They have long been accused of being members of armed groups. Their mere existence in their remote communities have made them a target")

Date reported: December 19, 2017

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-tribal-communities-brace-for-deadly-christmas/81102>

Fr Edwin A Gariguez (**UPDATE**: condemned a Communist rebel attack on soldiers who were providing emergency relief following a typhoon, two were wounded)

Date reported: December 20, 2017

Location: Catubig, Northern Samar province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/caritas-condemns-attack-on-soldiers-helping-victims/81119>



United Kingdom

Wilson Chowdhry (**UPDATE**: called police after a Christmas display hosted by nine local churches in a shopping district was interrupted by an unauthorized Islamic display that used loudspeakers with Islamic chants to drown out the Christmas music, the chants caused panic among some shoppers, police ordered the chanting to cease, the Muslims were from a mosque with known extremist ties)

Date: December 16, 2017

Location: Ilford

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/police-called-to-ilford-town-centre-after-allah-akhbar-chant-played-during-christian-event-set-of-te>

Pastor Oluwole Ilesanmi (aged 62, arrested in [Wood Green, London](#) on [June 24, 2017](#) for saying there were connections between terrorism and the Quran while street preaching;
UPDATE: charges dropped)

Date reported: December 20, 2017

Location: London

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/pastor-oluwole-ilesanmi-acquitted>



United States

Event: Christian and Muslim leaders issued the joint statement "Created Male and Female: An Open Letter from Religious Leaders" which condemned gender ideology: "...We acknowledge and affirm that all human beings are created by God and thereby have an inherent dignity. We also believe that God created each person male or female; therefore, sexual difference is not an accident or a flaw...Children especially are harmed when they are told that they can "change" their sex or, further, given hormones that will affect their development and possibly render them infertile as adults. Parents deserve better guidance on these important decisions, and we urge our medical institutions to honor the basic medical principle of "first, do no harm." Gender ideology harms individuals and societies by sowing confusion and self-doubt. The state itself has a compelling interest, therefore, in maintaining

policies that uphold the scientific fact of human biology and supporting the social institutions and norms that surround it...The movement today to enforce the false idea — that a man can be or become a woman or vice versa — is deeply troubling. It compels people to either go against reason — that is, to agree with something that is not true — or face ridicule, marginalization, and other forms of retaliation..."

Bishop Joseph C Bambera

Archbishop Foley Beach

Bishop John F Bradosky

Archbishop Charles J Chaput OFM Cap (**UPDATE**)

Bishop James D Conley

Bishop John A M Guernsey

Rev Dr Matthew Harrison

Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz

Archbishop Melchisedek

Bishop Eric V Menees

Rev Eugene F. Rivers III

Rev Dr Gregory P Seltz

Bishop Emeritus Paull Spring

Rev Tony Suarez

Very Rev Nathanael Symeonides

Rev Dr L Roy Taylor

Andrew Walker (Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission Director of Policy Studies)

Rev Dr David Wendel

Elder Paul Winter

Date: December 15, 2017

Source: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/marriage/promotion-and-defense-of-marriage/created-male-and-female.cfm>

United States - Michigan

Usama "Sam" Hamama (father of Lindsey Hamama, supermarket manager, facing deportation to Iraq for a prior conviction, came to the U.S. in the 1970's as a child)

Lindsey Hamama (aged 12, daughter of Usama "Sam" Hamama)

Date: December 20, 2017

Location: Detroit

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20171220175900.htm>



Vietnam

Fr Dominic Pham Xuan Ke (led parish opposition to a government attempt to remove the parish's Nativity display)

Date reported: December 18, 2017

Location: Dien My commune, Nghe An province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/government-demand-for-removal-of-nativity-sparks-tension/81090>

Today's Martyrs

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

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