

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2018-06-25 through 2018-06-30



Bosnia-Herzegovina

Fr Miljan Radjenovic (church largely destroyed in an arson attack, had been undergoing renovations due to prior vandalism)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: Visoko

Source:

https://www.b92.net/eng/news/region.php?yyyy=2018&mm=06&dd=25&nav_id=104472



China

Aaron Ma (Open Doors International researcher, said "There is now a heightened sense that a breach of regulations will be met by some form of warning, increased surveillance, or punishment. Certainly, most churches feel it is time to take extra precautions, to downsize or maybe even relocate some of their ministries...Christians who used their own church building for meetings were targeted [in 2018], and their buildings closed...In the wake of recent speeches by top leaders, local authorities do not want to appear weak when implementing new regulations. Conversely, they do not want to upset the tentative, but effective, relationship they have with local churches...There is also the possibility that a crackdown will spark demonstrations, or lead to information being leaked to overseas media, so authorities must be extremely prudent in their engagement with the Church. The level of enforcement also varies from region to region, depending on this tentative relationship, and how the Church responds each time pressure is applied...Some surmise that so-called 'foreign' religions, particularly Islam and Christianity, will be forced to cast off their attachment to external forces and morph into Chinese-style religions that fit both culturally and politically. Affiliation with overseas religious groups and receipt of overseas funding are the primary concerns voiced by authorities...Rather than encourage unity based on a celebration of diversity, they have preferred an intentional and sustained process of Sinicization to create uniformity in order to achieve President Xi Jinping's dream of 'rejuvenation of the Chinese nation'. Social stability must be preserved at all cost...The CCP [Chinese Communist Party] believes the Church is a de-stabilizing force,

but not because it is bad, in fact, local communities and authorities tend to believe Christians are good people. Some suggest that because Christians' allegiance is first and foremost to God and not the Communist Party, there is a conflict of interests that the party believes can potentially hinder the process of unification. Others are more concerned by what they perceive as potential 'chaos' arising from the huge number of Christians")

Date: June 22, 2018

Source: [https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/chinas-underground-churches-told-to-
seek-guidance-from-state-approved-bodies/](https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/chinas-underground-churches-told-to-seek-guidance-from-state-approved-bodies/)

Pastor Huang Xiaoning (one of four Christians detained by police after a [June 10, 2018](#) raid on a worship service at their house church, interrogated for hours, and released later that night; **UPDATE:** church assessed a 50,000 yuan [US\$7,685] administrative fine, said "Today, the church received punishment notices from the municipal religious affairs bureau, the district religious affairs bureau, and the sub-district office...I've been a pastor for nearly 20 years. I don't [own] a car or a house. I don't owe anything. Awhile ago [people] asked me, 'Pastor Huang, aren't you afraid of being fined?' I answered, 'No, I don't have any money for them to confiscate.' They also asked, "Aren't you afraid of being imprisoned?' I said that I never feared imprisonment, since I never even feared death", added his church would pursue a legal defense "in order to become witnesses on God's behalf")

Date: June 20, 2018

Location: Guangzhou, Guangdong province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/06/church-ordered-to-pay-hefty-fine.html>

Bishop Joseph Li Mingshu (aged 93, **died of lung cancer**, photography banned at his funeral, mourners limited to 600 persons)

Date: June 15, 2018

Location: Qingdao, Shandong province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/china-puts-restrictions-on-bishops-funeral/82613>

Jiang Tianyong (aged 47, husband of Jin Bianling, son of Jiang Lianghou, human rights attorney, abducted by police in [Changsha, Hunan province](#) on [November 22, 2016](#); charged with 'subversion of state power' on [May 31, 2017](#); sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment on [November 20, 2017](#); **UPDATE:** has been forced to take an unidentified medication in prison and has shown a memory deficit as a possible result, legs appear to have been injured due to torture or shackles, has been denied access to clothing and money sent by his family)

Date: June 27, 2018

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/medicated-06272018131637.html>

Huang Yan (aged 48, wife of Wu Guisheng, human rights attorney, beaten by security officials in [2010](#), miscarried; beaten by security officials in [2012](#), miscarried, the beating continued while she was in the bathroom attending to the miscarriage; reported on [January 3, 2017](#) that government officials forced her doctors to cancel a procedure for ovarian cancer, escaped the country to a 'safe location'; **UPDATE:** husband detained for 10 hours and interrogated, phone tapped)

Date: June 17, 2018

Location: Guangzhou, Guangdong province

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/activist-husband-06222018153319.html>



India

Fr Alphonse Aind SJ (middle school principal, arrested on fabricated charges of organizing the abduction and rape of five social activists by six Pathagadi tribal gunmen after the gunmen had seized his automobile, denied bail)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: said the charges against Fr Alphonse Aind were made to link the church to the anti-Hindu Pathagadi tribal movement)

Fr Xavier Soreng SJ (said Fr Alphonse Aind had been “falsely accused” and “The Catholic Church is no way connected to the Pathalgadi movement...We are made to suffer for helping the poor stand up on their legs”)

Date: June 22, 2018

Location: Kochang village, Jharkhand state

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/abetting-gang-rape-charges-against-indian-priest-fabricated/82656>

Cardinal Telesphore Toppo (aged 78; **UPDATE**: resigned due to age)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: Ranchi

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/64413-ASIA_INDIA_Resignation_of_Archbishop_of_Ranchi_India_and_appointment_of_successor

Samuel Natarajan (aged 27, son of Pastor Jayaseelan Natarajan, accosted by RSS paramilitary members while watering plants at his church construction site who demanded they inspect the unfinished church for prostitutes, no other persons were found, threatened with death along with his father)

Date: June 18, 2018

Location: Thozilpettai, Karur district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Jayaseelan Natarajan (aged 50, father of Samuel Natarajan, said: “Kumar [the RSS paramilitary leader] saw us and blew whistles, and immediately a mob of 20 barged inside the [church] compound. We asked what was wrong and why they were entering the premises. They paid no heed, picked up flower pots and smashed them. They chased me and beat me badly”, the RSS militants prevented an ambulance from answering his call, said: “I walked limping and bleeding around the street and pleaded for the ambulance to stop and told the driver that I was the one who called, but he told me he is only supposed to pick up people from the point/address they mention, and that he can’t pick me up”, the beating resumed when he was seen by an attorney who was an RSS member: “He first hit me and then forcefully pulled me inside his car. He ordered the

driver to take us to a desolate place and said that I should be killed at that spot. By God's grace, after traveling about a kilometer or so, there was a traffic circle and speed breakers on the road, and the driver slowed down the car. I quietly loosened the car's door to my side and jumped out quickly", hospitalized, police refused to record his abduction and threatened death by the RSS attorney)

Samuel Natarajan (aged 27, son of Pastor Jayaseelan Natarajan; **UPDATE**: beaten with wooden sticks, fled the scene)

Date: June 20, 2018

Location: Thozilpettai, Karur district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Raja Thangam (church service invaded by 20 Hindu Munnani members, slapped, dragged to a police station, police refused to arrest him, forced to sign a document stating he would no longer lead religious services)

Date: August 13, 2017

Location: Kulithalai, Karur district, Tamil Nadu state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/hindu-extremists-launch-multifaceted-attack-on-pastor-son-in-southern-india/>



Iran

Ram-eil Beth Tamraz (son of Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez and Shamiram Isavi, arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in Firuzkuh on August 26, 2016; **UPDATE**: charged with 'action against national security')

Date: June 18, 2018

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6873>



Mexico

Pastor Eduardo 'Lalo' Garcia (father of Abraham and Griselda, said "The telephone rang [in October 2009] and I heard my wife yell. I was on the second floor, but I heard her cry 'No!' very loudly. So I went downstairs quickly and asked, 'What happened?' And she just said, 'They killed Abraham'...The pain we feel is really strong. We wouldn't wish it on anyone...We had decided to try to rescue the city, but I never imagined we would become a part of the statistics"; paid a ransom in April 2011 to release his daughter; **UPDATE**: shot dead while fleeing suspected drug cartel members in his automobile)

Date: June 8, 2018

Location: Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua state

Source: <https://www.charismanews.com/world/71868-pastor-brutally-gunned-down-in-murder-capital-of-the-world>
and <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/06/mexican-pastor-killed-nine-years-on-from-sons-murder/>



Nicaragua

Bishop Rolando Jose Alvarez Lagos (**UPDATE**: chancery office attacked by masked armed men in his absence, guards threatened with death, furniture damaged, items stolen)

Date: June 26, 2018

Location: Matagalpa

Fr Vicente Martinez Bermudez (detained by 20 hooded men, threatened with death)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: in or near Matagalpa

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/masked-armed-men-attack-chancery-in-nicaragua-91055>



Nigeria

Event: More than 200 Christians were killed by Fulani Muslims

Thomas Chuwang (aged 45, said “In Nghar village alone, about 70 corpses of Christians were recovered and the entire village has been burnt down by the Fulani herdsmen”)

Dogo Nvou (texted “My uncle, his wife and many relations [were] killed. Over 70 people in my village have been killed. It is only the Lord that can comfort us all”)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: Nghar, Gashish district, Barkin Ladi area, Plateau state

John Isa (reported on the murder of about 60 Christians)

Date: June 24, 2018

Locations: Xland and Gindin Akwati villages, Plateau state

Christiana Audu (aged 35, texted “The church building, pastor’s house and many other houses were destroyed by the herdsmen as they set fire on house. I saw one corpse as I was escaping. More than 200 of us have escaped to the military base near our village”)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: Kakuruk village, Plateau state

Thomas Wurim (Plateau State Polytechnic lecturer, **killed**)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: Dorowa Babuje village, Plateau state

Event: A Christian family was killed in their home

Dauda Mahan (aged 54, **killed**)

Mangai Agwom (aged 46, **killed**)

Christian Mangai (aged 15, **killed**)

John Mangai (aged 10, **killed**)

Date: June 20, 2018

Location: Kai village, Barkin Ladi area, Plateau state

Archbishop Benjamin Kwashi (**UPDATE**: reported to have written “When leadership at any level, including religious, turns its back on the sufferings of orphans, the poor and widows, its next and only option is embrace of wickedness, unexplainable greed and shameless display of God forbidden evil. The poor are dying defenselessly, BUT their blood is crying in the land...Judgment is coming”)

Date: June 27, 2018

Location: Jos, Plateau state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/06/slaughter-of-more-than-200-people-in-plateau-state-nigeria-shocks-christians/>

Bosun Emmanuel (National Christian Elders Forum secretary, **UPDATE**: reported to have said the government "was openly pursuing an anti-Christian agenda that has resulted in countless murders of Christians all over the nation and destruction of vulnerable Christian communities...Realistically speaking, Christianity is on the brink of extinction in Nigeria. The ascendancy of Sharia ideology in Nigeria rings the death toll for the Nigerian Church...In 2018, we can say in 25 years from now, we are facing the risk of being the last Christians in Nigeria. Therefore, Christians should be in the frontline of defending democracy in Nigeria. The Church is the bastion of democracy. A divided CAN [Christian Association of Nigeria] cannot defend democracy and promote justice, equity, and fairness. Consequently, Sharia will grow stronger. As Sharia grows stronger, democracy will become weaker and the Church will be emasculated out of existence”)

Date: June 25, 2018

Location: Lagos

Source: <https://www.christiansinpakistan.com/if-persecution-continues-nigerias-christian-population-could-be-wiped-out-by-2043/>

Bishop William Avenya (reported to have said that 492 people have been killed in his state - which has a Christian majority – in 2018 so far and added “Don’t wait for the genocide to happen before intervening... Please don’t make the same mistake as was made with the genocide in Rwanda. It happened beneath our noses, but no one stopped it. And we know well how that ended...The [militant Fulani] are criminals and terrorists, but they do not do the same things in the majority Muslim areas. We are convinced that what is happening is an ethnic cleansing of Christians”)

Date: June 29, 2018

Location: Gboko, Benue state

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/06/29/anti-christian-violence-in-nigeria-could-become-another-rwanda-says-bishop/>

Rev Gideon Para-Mallam (**UPDATE**: said in a video appeal "Plateau state has become not just a killing field through the years, but now a land flowing with rivers of blood")

Date: June 29, 2018

Location: Jos, Plateau state

Source: <https://www.charismanews.com/world/71900-local-pastor-my-home-is-now-a-land-flowing-with-rivers-of-blood>



Philippines

Event: Church leaders responded after President Duterte called God a "SOB" and "stupid"

Bishop Arturo Bastes (**UPDATE**: said the president was "a psychological freak, a psychopath, an abnormal mind...[he has become] intolerable to normal, well-minded people [who have been praying] that God will deliver us from this evil...I share with the feelings and thoughts with these concerned fellow Filipinos" and called on people to "fervently pray to the Lord that such blasphemous utterances and dictatorial tendencies of this mad man will cease")

Bishop Ruperto Santos (said the president crossed a "red line...[he should] not tempt God as He said vengeance is mine")

Senator Panfilo Lacson (presidential supporter, said "May my God forgive him and make him atone for all his sins...Between him and my God to whom I pray every single day and with whom I've found solace and comfort in all my difficult times, I don't even have to think of my choice")

Senator Antonio Trillanes (presidential opponent, called the president "one evil man...It is the height of arrogance of power not only to disrespect and spit on an individual's faith but also to act as though he is God")

Date: June 22, 2018

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-president-blasts-creation-story-calls-god-stupid/82654>

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Soncuaco Pabillo (**UPDATE**: said during a Day of Reparation "Enough of the lies, enough of the bad words, stop the extrajudicial killings...Let us not use the weapons being used by oppressors. Let us face evil but not in their way. What will be our weapon? Guns? No. Words. Words of God. We will only drive away the evil spirit in [the presidential palace] through prayer with faith. Let us not be silent. Let us fight by praying with penitence")

Date: June 18, 2018

Location: Manila

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/church-leaders-rally-filipinos-to-condemn-killings/82610>

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen; visa revoked on [April 23, 2018](#); appeal to reinstate her visa denied on [May 23, 2018](#), facing imminent deportation; **UPDATE**: the Department of Justice ruled that the revocation of her visa was invalid)

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Soncuaco Pabillo (**UPDATE**: said the visa ruling was "positive development...threats against Sister Fox still exist")

Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza (**UPDATE**: said missionaries "should not be treated as criminals...We thanked God for the ruling")

Sr Elenita Belardo (**UPDATE**: said the visa ruling "gives hope to the poor who [Sr Fox] vows to serve with her life")

Bishop Arturo Bastes (**UPDATE**: said "the struggle is not yet over...What Duterte wants Duterte gets by hook or by crook")

Date: [June 18, 2018](#)

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/australian-nun-not-off-hook-yet-in-manila/82602>

Event: One missionary was arrested and two prevented from leaving the country for investigating human rights abuses

Tawanda Chandiwana (Zimbabwean citizen, arrested)

Miracle Osman (Malawian citizen, barred from leaving the country)

Adam Thomas Shaw (U.S. citizen, barred from leaving the country)

Date: [May 9, 2018](#)

Location: Davao, Mindanao

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-arrests-missionary-prevents-2-others-leaving/82674>



Taiwan

Huang Yan (aged 48, wife of Wu Guisheng, human rights attorney, beaten by Chinese security officials in [2010](#), miscarried; beaten by Chinese security officials in [2012](#), miscarried, the beating continued while she was in the bathroom attending to the miscarriage; reported on [January 3, 2017](#) that Chinese government officials forced her doctors to cancel a procedure for ovarian cancer, escaped the country to a 'safe location'; **UPDATE**: subjected to an attempt to deport her back to China, deportation stopped by the UN)

Date: [May 29, 2018](#)

Source: <https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/activist-husband-06222018153319.html>



United Kingdom

Bishop Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE:** wrote "...I encountered the dictatorship of Marxism as I carried Bibles and theology books behind the Iron Curtain to help sustain the severely persecuted Christians. The control and repression of the Marxist state was murderous, brutal and total. [If our analysis is correct, the Christians in Russia may soon need to return the favor and smuggled soon-to-be-banned Christian books and Bibles {see hate crime} to us in the UK.]...The family is not no longer about generation, but about sexual and romantic self-expression. It is co-opted into a sexualizing of society into a perversion and distortion of God's intentions as we encounter them in revelation. It was not enough for this new movement has set out to capture not only the secular society in the West primarily, it has set out also to capture the Church...Secularized Christians have no immunity against the zeitgeist, the spirit of the age. By swallowing the values and language of cultural Marxism Christians have deprived themselves of the protection they needed in the spirit and cosmic struggle against evil...Can we win? In the West? Almost certainly not. This project has captured education, the law, medicine, and even the armed forces. The situation is too far gone. We may argue and pray as long as we can, but even that may not be open to us for very long. [Leading Presbyterian theologian] Robert Gagnon was thrown off, suspended from Facebook a few weeks ago. Already as Christians committed to scriptural anthropologies, we fail the terms and conditions of Facebook, twitter and YouTube...The catacombs was where we begun. And like them, we face a dangerously repressive culture determined to persecute the church. What we face, unpalatable as it is, is not a wave of revival to capture our culture, but a season of persecution. It is part of what we signed up to when we became Christians, and it is not without honor to share in the sufferings of Christ as we bear faithful witness to who He is, what He has done for our souls, and what He will do at the end of time, as we are ushered into His presence...", presented an expanded version the following day at the Global Anglican Future Conference [GAFCON] in Jerusalem)

Date: June 21, 2018

Source: <https://ashenden.org/2018/06/21/the-challenge-of-cultural-marxism-to-the-church-jerusalem-2018/>

and <https://ashenden.org/2018/06/22/the-threat-of-cultural-marxism-to-orthodox-christianity-a-presentation-given-in-jerusalem-for-gafcon-june-2018/>

Georgia Savva (aged 48, Palm Sunday cross on her front door recorded on CCTV to have been destroyed by a takeout delivery driver who then proceeded to cheerfully deliver their food)

Date: June 11, 2018

Location: Southgate

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/london-christian-family-catch-takeaway-driver-destroying-cross-by-front-door-on-cctv>



United States - Kansas

Mary Anne Sause (retired nurse, ordered by police to cease silent prayer during a [November 22, 2013](#) search of her [Louisburg](#) home during investigation of a noise complaint; **UPDATE:** the U.S. Supreme Court reversed an appellate court decision that held she had experienced no police infringement of her right to free exercise of religion)

Date: [June 28, 2018](#)

Source: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/supreme-court-reverses-ruling-against-kansas-woman-told-stop-praying-in-her-home-225530/>



Vietnam

Nguyen Ngoc Lua (beaten by police and dragged into a bus after attending Mass on suspicion she was about to join a demonstration against a new cybersecurity law and new economic zones, taken to a detention center, questioned, released)

Date: [June 17, 2018](#)

Location: [Ho Chi Minh City](#)

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholics-injured-as-police-suppress-protests-in-vietnam/82601>

Today's Martyrs

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

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