

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2018-07-22 through 2018-07-28



Cameroon

Fr Alexandre Sob Nougi (aged 42, pastor, diocesan education secretary, **shot dead** either deliberately or by a stray bullet in a clash between the military and separatists [account vary])

Date: July 20, 2018

Location: on the road between Buea and Muyuka

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/64566->

[AFRICA CAMEROON A priest killed in the English speaking area scene of clashes with separatists](http://www.fides.org/en/news/64566-)



China

Liu (church leader of two churches, village church service interrupted by two government officials, said “They want to tear down the cross. I made it clear to them that the cross must not be dismantled. They said they didn’t mean this and asked again whether or not we could hang the national flag. Now, they have conceded...The church [downtown] unanimously opposed the cross dismantling. They asked the religious affairs bureau ‘By which law do you dismantle our cross? Law enforcement should be carried out in accordance with legal procedures.’ The authorities also said that [we] could not bring children to church, that there were policies [opposing this]. I said, ‘Your policy is in conflict with the Constitution. When the children are born, they are citizens of the People’s Republic of China, and they have freedom of belief. Children’s freedom of belief cannot be interfered with. They can follow their parents’ beliefs”)

Date: July 15, 2018

Location: Xinyu, Jiangxi province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/07/churches-asked-to-replace-crosses-with.html>

Event: Several Christians were reported on **January 16, 2018** to have been sentenced to lengthy prison terms for alleged involvement in the Three Grades of Servants cult; **UPDATE: appeal denied**

Ju Dianhong (sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE: appeal denied**)

Liang Qin (sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Yang Shunxiang (sentenced to between 4 and 8 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Zhang Hongyan (sentenced to between 4 and 8 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Zhang Shaocai (sentenced to between 4 and 8 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Zi Huimei (sentenced to between 4 and 8 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

Date reported: July 25, 2018

Location: Lincang, Yunnan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/07/yunnan-court-rejects-appeals-of.html>

Benedict Rogers (convert, British citizen, journalist and human rights activist, received vague threatening letters as did his neighbors and his elderly mother in England)

Date reported: July 27, 2018

Location: Hong Kong

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/issues/july-27th-2018/china-is-trying-to-bully-me-but-i-wont-be-silenced/>



Colombia

Archbishop Darío de Jesus Monsalve Mejia (**UPDATE:** condemned in a radio broadcast the continuing assassinations of political and social leaders including human rights defenders)

Date reported: July 23, 2018

Location: Cali

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/64565-AMERICA_COLOMBIA_Archbishop_of_Cali_the_systematic_murder_of_social_leaders_and_human_rights_defenders_is_a_real_tragedy

Fr John Fredy Garcia Jaramillo (aged 50, **killed** in an apparent robbery)

Date: July 25, 2018

Location: Bethlehem Los Almendros neighborhood, Medellin

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/64586-AMERICA_COLOMBIA_Another_priest_murdered_in_Medellin



Egypt

Maheer Girgis Tawfiq (aged 45, husband, father of four, brother in law of George Erian, cousin of Sameh, barber, **beaten to death** by police after he made a complaint concerning threats made against him by a Muslim)

Sameh (cousin of Maheer Girgis Tawfiq, said “We headed to the morgue to see Maheer’s body and noticed some bruises on different parts of it – a blue bruise at the back of his neck, his lips turned blue, and we saw white foam coming out of his mouth. There was also blood in his pupils”)

George Erian (brother in law of Maheer Girgis Tawfiq, said A group of police officers threatened Maheer’s brothers that if they insisted that he was killed at the police station or demanded an autopsy, they would receive charges, meaning the police would fabricate charges against them...The perpetrator must be brought to a fair trial. I will not find consolation until the perpetrators are held accountable. We want to feel that we live under the rule of law, with justice and equality, and not in a state of repression within the walls of state institutions, and of bullying outside those walls”)

Date: July 20, 2018

Location: Beni Suef

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/07/coptic-barber-dies-after-fainting-at-police-station-family-say-he-was-killed/>



India

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE**: condemned the July 17, 2018 attack by Hindu radicals on 79 year old Hindu reformer Swami Agnivesh and the lynching of 32 year old computer technician Mohammed Azam: "The tragedy of lynchings in India today is that they apparently have the official sanction by the Government of the day: in fact, some of the central ministers, in the recent past, have publicly anointed those responsible for these bloody murders. All this portends ill for the future of the country")

Date: July 19, 2018

Source: <http://www.mangalorean.com/lynching-indias-murderous-mobs-on-rampage/>

Pastor Thomas George (husband of Vina, accosted by Hindu radicals while walking home, questioned and accused of forced conversion, home invaded later that evening by the same men, ordered to vacate their home, possessions thrown into the street, police arrived and supported the radicals, arrested on forced conversion charges, denied bail until the following Monday)

Vina (wife of Pastor Thomas George, same account)

Ramdas (convert, home invaded by the Hindu radicals while he was away, wife questioned and verbally abused)

Date reported: July 27, 2018

Location: Jangalpur village, Dongargaon Tehsil, Chattisgarh state

Source: <http://persecutionrelief.org/religious-fanatics-trespass-private-property-vandalize-and-allege-conversion-chhattisgarh/>

Fr Varghese Vallikkatt (Kerala Catholic Bishops Council deputy secretary general; **UPDATE:** issued a letter after the Chair of the National Women's Commission recommended that the government ban confessions)

Date: July 27, 2018

Location: Kerala state

Source: <http://persecutionrelief.org/kcbc-protests-the-unconstitutional-recommendation-of-the-national-womens-commission/>

Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Pamplany (attended a youth group candlelight protest against the National Women's Commission recommendation that the government ban confessions, said "Commission chairperson Rekha Sharma has crossed all limits by ridiculing confession and hurting the religious faith of Christians")

Date: July 26, 2018

Location: Tellicherry, Kerala state

Source: <http://mattersindia.com/2018/07/kerala-bishops-decry-women-commissions-call-to-abolish-confession/>



Iran

Massoumeh Taqinejad (aged 30, mother of Artin, arrested in her home on charges of 'proselytizing Christianity' on the internet, computer and personal belongings seized)

Artin Taqinejad (son of Massoumeh Taqinejad, detained)

Date: July 2, 2018

Location: Karaj

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20180719182155.htm>

Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani (aged 39, husband of Fatema Pasindedih Nadarkhani, father of Daniel and Yoel, sentenced to death for apostasy prior to 2012; released on September 8, 2012 from prison with time served; arrested on December 25, 2012; released January 7, 2013; arrested on May 13, 2016; released on May 14, 2016; arrested on July 24, 2016; sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on June 24, 2017; **UPDATE:** attacked by police during an early morning raid on his home, incapacitated with an electroshock weapon and then beaten, arrested, transferred to Evin Prison in Teheran)

Daniel Nadarkhani (teenaged son of Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani, attacked with an electroshock weapon by police when he answered the door during an early morning raid on his home)

Date: July 22, 2018

Location: Rasht

Saheb Fadaie (convert, home raided by VEVAK agents on [February 16, 2015](#); arrested on [May 13, 2016](#); sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [June 24, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: arrested, transferred to Evin Prison in Teheran)

Mohammad-Reza Yohan Omidi – aka Mehdi Reza Omidi Youhan (convert, arrested on [December 31, 2012](#); sentenced to 80 lashes for drinking communion wine on [October 20, 2013](#); sentence executed on [November 2, 2013](#), was flogged; home raided by VEVAK agents on [February 16, 2015](#); arrested on [May 13, 2016](#); sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [June 24, 2017](#); **UPDATE** arrested, transferred to Evin Prison in Teheran)

Date: July 24, 2018

Location: Rasht

Yasser Mosayebzadeh (convert, home raided by VEVAK agents on [February 16, 2015](#); arrested on [May 13, 2016](#); sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [June 24, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: arrested, transferred to Evin Prison in Teheran)

Date: July 25, 2018

Location: Rasht

Source [with photo]: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/07/iranian-pastor-taken-to-evin-prison-after-violent-raid-on-home/>



Iraq

Fr Boulus Eskander Bahnam (father of Fadi Eskander, abducted in Mosul on [October 9, 2006](#); **body found** on [October 12, 2006](#), had been **beheaded**)

Fadi Eskander (son of Fr Boulus Eskander Bahnam; **UPDATE**: ordained to the priesthood)

Date reported: July 18, 2018

Location: Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/64547->

[ASIA IRAQ Fadi Iskander becomes a priest son of Syriac Orthodox priest martyr Boulos Iskander](#)



Nicaragua

Fr Augusto Gutierrez (said “We've gotten death threats because they say we're the ringleaders of this situation, but we have been out in public because what the government of Daniel Ortega is doing is unjust. This is a genocide because there's no other name for it. Don't let us die. Please, intervene, do something...for three months the government has lashed out against the population all over Nicaragua, including Monimbo, which has remained

steadfast with great courage. But now they're killing us...with heavy military weapons, they're desecrating churches and destroying lives”, in hiding)

Date reported: July 20, 2018

Location: Monimbo, Managua

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/nicaraguan-priest-appeals-for-intervention-to-prevent-massacre-of-protesters-19074>

Fr Raul Zamora (described how he opened his church as a refuge for demonstrating college students after they came under attack by government agents: "That university is actually under my pastoral care. It is right next to our parish. I am in charge of attending to those students spiritually. I knew the students personally. I told them, 'Come to the parish. Come to the parish. Don't stay there'...If the cross is not in our life, if we are not willing to suffer for love, then our religion just stays as something that is exterior. Just trying to do what is ritually appropriate. Our faith starts when we have that deep conviction in Jesus and his message. This is what we learned")

Date: July 13, 2018

Location: Managua

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/night-of-terror-inside-the-catholic-church-attacked-by-nicaraguas-paramilitary-10741>

Fr Noe Armando Flores (church desecrated, tabernacle stolen, found the next day in a field)

Date: July 22, 2018

Location: San Rafael del Norte

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/two-churches-desecrated-in-nicaraguan-diocese-36984>



Nigeria

Fr Patrick Tor Alumuku (**UPDATE**: responded to a UN report on religious warfare in the Middle Belt states: "It is a continuous massacre that takes place every day. It has never happened, in the life of this country, that there have been such frequent massacres of this kind")

Date reported: July 19, 2018

Location: Abuja

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/64553-AFRICA_NIGERIA_UN_Alarm_Violence_between_farmers_and_herders_risks_turning_into_forms_of_terrorism



Pakistan

Shan Jalal (aged 17, witnessed four armed men shooting at his church while he was hanging posters on the outside walls, ran inside to warn the youth group that was meeting at the time, two of the men followed him and shot over the heads of the youths damaging windows and the altar, ripped Bibles and shouted "God is greater", later said "We are under severe threat from the local Muslim community and they are threatening us to kill us and to destroy our houses. Many of us have not gone to work today for fear of a reprisal attack, we stay awake all night to watch over and protect our houses")

Saleem Masih (aged 36, tackled one of the shooters after the two shooters had run out of ammunition, other youth group members helped and restrained the other and called police, police arrived 30 minutes later, a female relative later doused the church and female parishioners with gasoline but was also restrained and arrested)

Date: July 13, 2018

Location: Harsan Kot Chak 165, Samundari district

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/shooters-shatter-altar-at-catholic-youth-meeting-threaten-arson-in-land-grab-attempt>

Shahaan (activist, said of the national elections "Christians are extremely disappointed at this time because none of the Parties have nominated a single Christian candidate for even one seat reserved for minorities in the National Assembly. It is quite possible that their will be no representation of Christians or their concerns in the National Assembly...Because of this hard line rhetoric surrounding the blasphemy legislation [295C] Tareek-e-Insaf has gained support in the country leaving Christians insecure and doubtful about the protection of their rights should party leader Imran Khan form the government. A surprising factor contributing to this anxiety is the participation of hardcore Muslim extremist groups in the elections who are involved in Tehreek e Labaik...This is the party of Moulana Khadim Hussain Rizwi who praised Mumtaz Qadri the murderer of former governor Salman Taseer and a who also is an ardent support of 295C")

Date: July 25, 2018

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christians-brace-for-further-marginalization-with-zero-representation-in-the-national-assembly-as-bl>



Philippines

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen, visa revoked on [April 23, 2018](#); the Department of Justice ruled on [June 18, 2018](#) that the revocation of her visa was invalid; **UPDATE:** the Immigration Bureau ruled she was an 'undesirable alien' whose actions were 'inimical to the interest of the state', ordered to be deported and placed on the government blacklist barring re-entry, said she will appeal)

Date: July 19, 2018

Location: Manila

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippines-orders-deportation-of-australian-nun/82875>

Sr Patricia Fox (aged 71, Australian citizen, the Immigration Bureau ruled on [July 19, 2018](#) she was an 'undesirable alien' whose actions were 'inimical to the interest of the state', ordered to be deported and placed on the government blacklist barring re-entry, said she will appeal; **UPDATE:** deportation suspended pending appeal)

Date: July 22, 2018

Location: Manila

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/australian-nun-wins-another-reprieve-in-philippines/82913>

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (aged 61; **UPDATE:** spoke against the continuing extrajudicial killing of persons suspected of involvement with the illegal drug trade "Do you rejoice at the deaths of the innocent? We want to believe that you do not rejoice in their death. But there are so many of them")

Date: July 22, 2018

Location: Manila

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/cardinal-tagle-laments-deaths-of-innocent-people/82899>



Turkey

Pastor Andrew Brunson (U.S. citizen, husband of Norine Brunson, detained as a 'national security risk' on [October 7, 2016](#); confirmed to be a hostage at a [September 28, 2017](#) press conference by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the President explicitly called for the U.S. government to exchange him for Sufi cleric and U.S. resident Fethullah Gulen; **UPDATE:** a court ruled that he is to be released from jail and placed under house arrest; banned him from leaving the country)

Norine Brunson (**UPDATE:** acted to ensure her husband's transfer to house arrest)

Kristina Arriaga de Bucholz (United States Commission on International Religious Freedom [USCIRF] Vice Chairman, attorney; **UPDATE:** attended the hearing, stated "It is good that Pastor Brunson will have some relief after being held in a Turkish prison for more than 600 days. But it is not enough. The Turkish government has deprived this innocent man of his due process rights and liberty for too long, and it must completely release him")

Date: July 25, 2018

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/07/us-pastor-andrew-brunson-moved-from-prison-to-house-arrest-but-cant-leave-turkey/>



Uganda

Event: Three Christian children were abducted from [Kabuna villiage, near Budaka, Kaderuna district](#) on [December 9, 2015](#) by Muslims, **UPDATE:** **escaped, reunited with their family**

Madengho Badir (aged 45, convert from Islam, father of Nabukwasi Shakira, Gessa Amuza and Wagti Musitafa, children abducted; **UPDATE:** recovered his children after their escape, said “It seems the person who took my children had an intention of Islamizing them as well as wanting them to join a terrorist group. Thank God for saving my children in a miraculous way. Though the children looked miserable, sickly and confused, now with counseling they will be restored back. The God who saved them is able to restore them back to good, sound mind”)

Nabukwasi Shakira (aged 7, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped)

Gessa Amuza (aged 10, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped)

Wagti Musitafa (aged 12, child of Madengho Badir, abducted; **UPDATE:** escaped, said “Daily we were taught the Quran, and on some occasions we lacked food to eat. After two years, the man who was caring for us told us that he was planning to take us outside Uganda, and this made us fearful, such that after lunch while being all alone we managed to escape from that house without knowing where we were heading to”)

Date: [May 5, 2018](#)

Location: [Kadoto village, Bulangira sub-county, Kibuku district](#)

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/children-kidnapped-by-islamists-in-uganda-in-2015-are-found/>



United Kingdom

Allan Coote (street preacher, arrested on the sidewalk outside St Paul's cathedral for reading the Bible aloud)

Date: [on or before June 24, 2018](#)

Location: [London](#)

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/492-years-after-burning-bibles-st-paul's-calls-police-when-man-reads-word-of-god-aloud-in-front>
and <https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/st-pauls-cathedral-forbid-public-reading-of-the-bible-police-disagree>

Anne Scanlan (Director of Education for the prolife group Life, protested the closure of the group's exhibit at a municipal fair, said: “Nothing on our stall was offensive. There were

life-like fetal models and pictures of the unborn baby at different gestational stages which can be seen on any pregnancy website including the NHS [National Health Service])”

Date reported: July 24, 2018

Location: Lambeth Borough, London

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2018/07/24/pro-life-charity-accuses-council-of-censorship-after-being-kicked-out-of-london-show/>

Steve Loha (convert, former convict, license to operate a booth selling watches and cell phone cases at an outdoor market suspended in [May 2017](#) after a customer complained about his evangelical activities, brought suit; **UPDATE**: court ruled that his license had been illegally suspended)

Date: July 20, 2018

Location: Chichester

Source: <https://www.christianconcern.com/media/market-trader-steve-loha-wins-case>



United States - Pennsylvania

Event: A couple has brought suit against their town after it ordered them to stop religious activities on their 35 acre farm and threatened to fine them \$500 per day, the obituary of the previous owner said the Bible studies and services had been attended for decades

Scott Fetterolf

Terri Fetterolf

Date reported: July 22, 2018

Location: Sewickley Heights Borough

Source: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-family-sues-over-order-stop-hosting-bible-studies-church-retreats-dundee-farm-property-226297/>



Vietnam

Pastor Dinh Diem (aged 53, arrested in [January 2018](#) for having links to a U.S. based pro-democracy group; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 16 years' imprisonment for 'attempts to overthrow the people's government')

Date: July 12, 2018

Location: Quang Ngai province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/vietnamese-rights-groups-condemn-inhumane-regime/82887>

Today's Martyrs

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

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