

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2019-03-17 through 2019-03-23



Burkina Faso

Fr Joel Yougbare (disappeared)

Fr Theodore Kpoda (unable to contact Fr Joel Yougbare by cell phone)

Bishop Laurent Dabire (said of the disappearance of Fr Joel Yougbare "We do not know what to think. Fr Joel may have been kidnapped or lost himself along the road or had an accident...we are very worried" due to jihadist activity in the area)

Date: March 17, 2019

Location: on the road between Bottogui and Djibo

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/65751->

[AFRICA_BURKINA_FASO_No_news_yet_of_the_missing_priest_says_the_Bishop_of_Dori_to_Fides](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65751-AFRICA_BURKINA_FASO_No_news_yet_of_the_missing_priest_says_the_Bishop_of_Dori_to_Fides)



Cameroon

Fr Toussaint Zoumalde OFM Cap (aged 48, Central African Republic citizen, radio journalist, hymn composer, **killed** while returning to Chad)

Date: March 20, 2019

Location: Ngaoundere

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/65755->

[AFRICA_CAMEROON_Central_African_Capuchin_father_assassinated_in_Chad](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65755-AFRICA_CAMEROON_Central_African_Capuchin_father_assassinated_in_Chad)



Canada

Fr Claude Grou (repeatedly stabbed while presiding at Mass, hospitalized with minor injuries in stable condition)

Date: March 22, 2019

Location: Montreal, Quebec

Source: <https://nationalpost.com/news/canada/montreal-priest-stabbed-during-mass>



China

Zhou Jie (husband, son of Pastor Zhou Dixian and Li Ruizhen, brother of Zhou Mei, fled his home to avoid police surveillance, home raided by police)

Date reported: March 18, 2019

Location: Laixi, Shangdong province

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/03/son-of-persecuted-minister-leaves-home.html>

Rev Dou Shaowen (arrested along with his wife in July 2009, both sentenced to one year's imprisonment; **UPDATE**: church closed and sealed by the authorities)

Date: March 6, 2019

Location: Zhengzhou, Henan province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Protestant-house-church-closed-down-46534.html>

Gou Zhongcan (disappeared from his home the day after police attempted to inspect it)

Date: March 15, 2019

Location: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/03/early-rain-covenant-church-members.html>



India

Pastor Anand Hari (severely beaten after 20 radical Hindus attacked a prayer meeting in a private home, hospitalized in serious condition)

Date: March 20, 2019

Location: Panch Gachia village, Paschim Bardhaman district, West Bengal

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-radicals-attack-Christians-in-West-Bengal,-badly-beating-pastor-46564.html>



New Zealand

Fr Douglas al-Bazi (aged 47, abducted in Bagdad, Iraq, in November 2006, shot in the leg, teeth knocked out, released after 9 days; said in Ankawa, Kurdistan, Iraq on December 29, 2014 "I care about my people. I don't care about the 'Middle East.' The Middle East for

almost 2,000 years has been the same. It's the same war, the same conflict. So, why do I have to put my people inside that war? Why?...I am angry because I know Islam very well. In Baghdad they blew up my church. I drove by three bombings, and twice my car was destroyed. I got shot in my leg by an AK-47 – by Islam, and they kidnapped me for nine days...You know who represents Islam very well? ISIL. They are the true Islam. So if someone says, 'No, they do not represent Islam, Hamas does not represent Islam, Hezbollah does not represent Islam.' Who's left then? Come on guys. Come on. Wake up. You know, stop saying those stupid things – it's just stupid. What for? If I lose the last drop of our blood [by encouraging Christians to stay], what is the point of that?"; **UPDATE:** counselled his parishioners who feared a retaliatory attack following the mass murder of Muslims at two mosques in Christchurch, said "I am still shocked, me and my people, how this could happen here in New Zealand...we fully understand as Iraqi people, especially Christian, we really understand, because we are survivors of genocide, systematic genocide...There is a lady in my community -- they beheaded her son in front of her. Another man, they killed his parents in front of him...I told them, no, this is not the time to be scared. It is the time to be united...I don't know what we can do for those survivors [of the mosque attacks], for those relatives, the only thing we can do is pray for them and say, 'This is not New Zealand'", sent a floral tribute with a message of support in Arabic to a nearby mosque)

Date: March 15, 2019

Location: Auckland

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20190318182138.htm>



Nigeria

Fr Clement Rapuluchukwu Ugwu (abducted in [Obinofia Ndiuno, Ezeagu local government area, Enugu state](#) on March 13, 2019; **UPDATE:** [found dead, had been shot](#))

Bishop Callistus V Onaga (**UPDATE:** said of the abduction and murder of Fr Clement Rapuluchukwu Ugwu "We reported it to the police and since then I have visited police station three times, yet they kept telling me 'we are closing in on the kidnappers'. I doubt they were doing anything because where the deceased body of Father Ugwu was found is not up to 20 kilometers from his house", called on Christians to pray for their country)

Date: March 20, 2019

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/65756->

[AFRICA NIGERIA Found dead body of a priest kidnapped a week ago the bishop denounces the lack of interest on behalf of the police](#)



Pakistan

Stephen Masih (aged 38 or 42, brother of Alia and Francis, mentally disabled, beaten by a mob after he was heard yelling at his family about Lent, arrested on blasphemy charges)

Francis Masih (brother of Stephen Masih, said that after Stephen began to yell about Lent: “This is when Mudassir barged into our house and started beating Stephen without any reason. We told Mudassir that it was not right for him to intervene in our family issue, but he took offense and raised hue and cry in the street, alleging that Stephen had committed blasphemy. Mudassir and Mohammad Rafiq, another neighbor, provoked them to attack Stephen. They not only beat him up mercilessly but also attacked other family members who tried to save him...The police took my brother away, and it was after some time that we learned that he had been charged with blasphemy. We have been running from pillar to post, as we are very worried about his condition, especially since he was ruthlessly beaten up by the mob, but the police are not arranging our meeting. They keep telling us that he is safe and being taken care of”)

Date: March 11, 2019

Location: Imranpura, Wadiala, Sialkot district, Punjab province

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/node/21784>
and <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/muslim-in-pakistan-bursts-into-christians-home-alleging-he-overheard-blasphemous-comment/>



United Kingdom

Caroline Farrow (aged 44, Catholic journalist, questioned by police for having referred to a boy who had undergone sex reassignment surgery as a boy, complaint withdrawn after the boy's mother [who is also the surgical clinic director] thought that she was getting publicity)

Date reported: March 22, 2019

Location: Surrey

Source: <https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/03/22/catholic-journalist-questioned-by-police-after-transgender-activist-complains/>

Sarah Teather (Jesuit Refugee Service UK director, former Member of Parliament, responded to the government rejection of an Iranian convert's asylum application on the grounds that his description of Christianity as a religion of peace was inaccurate: "I've seen a lot over the years, but even I was genuinely shocked to read this unbelievably offensive diatribe")

Date: March 19, 2019

Source: <https://twitter.com/SLCT2015/status/1108116751789764609>
and <https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/03/21/asylum-seeker-rejected-after-saying-christianity-was-a-peaceful-religion/>

Today's Martyrs

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

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