

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*



## Philippines

Adam Thomas Shaw (U.S. citizen, missionary, barred from leaving the country on or after [May 9, 2018](#))

Aileen Villarosa (Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, reported on [July 26, 2017](#) to have reacted to President Duterte's threat to bomb tribal schools by saying the schools were already under attack "because of these accusations...What aggravates the situation is [Duterte's] statement that he takes responsibility for all the actions of state forces")

Fr Albert Alejo SJ (on [October 1, 2014](#) described steps to be taken in [Davao, Mindanao](#) to counter Abu Sayyaf and other terrorist groups;

said in [Manila](#) on [September 11, 2017](#) "In the so-called crusade against drugs launched by President Duterte, extrajudicial killings continue at a pace of about a thousand per month. The poor are those most affected. To understand the seriousness of the phenomenon, one must bear in mind that under the dictatorship of Marcos, one of the darkest periods of national history, there were 250 a year. We have a serial killer president and the state is becoming a state-killer. As Christians we cannot remain indifferent")

Bishop Alberto Ramento ([stabbed to death](#) in his [Tarlac, Luzon](#) home on [October 3, 2006](#), murder still unsolved as of [October 6, 2014](#))

Aldeem Yanez (church employee, arrested in [General Santos City](#) on [July 4, 2018](#) for allegedly harboring fugitives)

Fr Alvin Platon (said on [November 22, 2017](#) "We hope and pray that Christians being persecuted through social media will stand in their faith and not give up their being Christian")

Fr Amado Picardal CSSR (alleged on [April 22, 2016](#) that a death squad operated by [Davao, Mindanao](#) Mayor and presidential candidate Rodrigo Duterte killed 1,424 people between 1998 and 20015, asked for prayers)

Fr Angel Calvo CMF (Spanish national, defended Sr Stella Matutina and Sr Julita Encarnacion from the army's charges;

on [April 26, 2016](#) condemned the beheading of a Canadian citizen "It is shameful. This is the work of evil people, people of no faith", said the national failure to stop terrorism was also to blame;

condemned the [April 22, 2017](#) beheading of a Muslim government soldier, Staff Sergeant Anni Siraji, who had been active in peace efforts)

Bishop Angelito Lampon OMI (celebrated the funeral of Conchita Francisco and said the [November 13, 2012](#) murder "deprived the community of an authentic witness of the

Gospel")

Bishop Antonio Ablon (condemned the [May 11, 2017](#) arrest of Bishop Carlo Morales, called for his release)

Archbishop Antonio Ledesma SJ (said in [Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao](#) on [September 8, 2015](#) that failure to pass a new basic law in Bangsamoro as required by the 2014 peace accord will fuel Islamic extremism)

Fr Antonio Magalso (aged 44, [stabbed to death](#) on [September 29, 2015](#) in [Tanjay, Negros Island](#), attacker was reportedly mentally ill)

Fr Antonio Moreno SJ (signed a statement issued on [October 2, 2017](#) by the Society of Jesus that read "We agree on the fact that the threat of illegal drugs is real and destructive. The imperative to overcome this evil does not belong only to the president, the Police, and the government. It belongs to all of us...the menace of drugs is not just a political or criminal issue. It is evil that attacks humanity, turns human beings into zombies, policemen into murderers, criminals into lords, and the poor into victims...This evil we must fight with insight, cooperation, cunning, the enlightened use of political and economic power, self-sacrifice, prayer and God's grace")

Senator Antonio Trillanes (presidential opponent, responded after President Duterte on [June 22, 2018](#) called God a "SOB" and "stupid", 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")

Bishop Arturo Bastes (reported from [Sorsogon](#) on [April 27, 2017](#) to have publicly supported a case filed at the International Criminal Court which accused President Duterte and 11 others of crimes against humanity, said "It is our hope that this move will inject fear into the hearts and minds of the accused officials so that they will eventually and sincerely put a stop to these merciless killings [of persons involved in the illegal drug trade]";

reported on [July 30, 2017](#) to have said "My God, Duterte is getting out of his mind!...his desire to abolish CHR [the Commission on Human Rights] is a sign that he has the dangerous tendency to be a dictator. Heavens forbid!";

responded after President Duterte on [June 22, 2018](#) called God a "SOB" and "stupid", 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";

said after the [June 18, 2018](#) visa ruling in favor of Sr Patricia Fox "the struggle is not yet over...What Duterte wants Duterte gets by hook or by crook")

Fr Benjamin Alforque SCJ (contrasted in [Manila](#) on [September 10, 2017](#) the extrajudicial killings with the government's acceptance of the wealth of the Marcos family "The Marcoses get the red carpet while the government deprives drug suspects of due process")

Auxiliary Bishop Bernardino Cortez (counseled the faithful during terror threats against a religious festival)

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Soncuaco Pabillo (in [Manila](#) on [October 24, 2012](#) denounced a United Nations report that called for the legalization of prostitution in the Philippines;

said of the [September 17, 2013](#) arrest of Sr Patricia Fox “Why are [the police] preventing people who only want to see whether the government is doing its job properly?”;

called for those who used force to disperse the farmers in [Kidapawan, Cotabato province](#) on [April 1, 2016](#) to be punished;

said in [Manila](#) on [March 23, 2017](#) "Let the police do their work while we continue to lead the people in their faith";

said in [Manila](#) on [September 12, 2017](#) "Any person who is said to be a drug suspect in the eyes of the government must have an opportunity to defend themselves in a right and lawful court with due process, accessing the judicial system. The government cannot apprehend people without proper investigation and facts... The Philippine government has no moral responsibility nor political right to kill people on the basis of mere suspicions. What about people's inalienable human right to defend their position with due process?...The government's relentless war against drug is nothing but extra-judicial killing, which is uncalled for. It is nothing but an 'abuse of power'";

spoke in [Manila](#) on [October 16, 2017](#) concerning government rumors of a 'destabilization plot': "I do not know if there is or there is none...If they [in government] do not do their work well. then they should fear the dissatisfaction of the people...Why don't they solve the killings when they have the police and the intelligence fund? Or are they conditioning the minds of the people for an eventual martial law?";

commented on or before [March 8, 2018](#) on the possibility of terror acts during the upcoming Holy Week "there are always groups out to make trouble";

said in [Manila](#) during a [June 18, 2018](#) 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":

said the [June 18, 2018](#) visa ruling for Sr Patricia Fox was a "positive development...threats against Sister Fox still exist")

Bishop Carlo Morales (husband of Maria Teofifina Morales, arrested with others at a police checkpoint in [Gango](#) on [May 11, 2017](#) while travelling with an alleged member of a rebel group;

still jailed as of [October 16, 2017](#), has been charged with illegal possession of explosives;

reported on [March 19, 2018](#) to have been released on bail after a judge in [Ozamiz City](#) ruled that the evidence presented by the prosecution would not prove a conviction)

Charito Zuniga (wife of Joe Frank Zuniga)

Cherben Masong (church literacy worker, abducted on [September 4, 2013](#) in [Lantawan, Basilan province](#) by gunmen believed to be from the al-Qaeda affiliate Abu Sayyaf; released on [October 18, 2013](#))

Fr Chito Lozada (reported on [April 20, 2017](#) to have described local reactions to an [April 11, 2017](#) terror attack in [Bohol Island](#) "It is natural for people to be afraid, especially because there are reports that [terrorists] are still here", added that Holy Week celebrations were not cancelled)

Chito Trillanes (Tandag diocese's social action center spokesman, as of [May 24, 2013](#) is being hunted by armed masked men, possibly over his opposition to illegal mining operations in [Surigao del Sur province, Mindanao](#))

Msgr Chris Manongas (described the abduction of Fr Michael Ufana)

Rev Christopher Ablon (spoke in [Mindanao](#) on [September 7, 2015](#) about military harassment of the investigation of the murder of tribal peoples "The military harassed the group that investigated [a] reported massacre last week...The military's allegation [of communist sympathies] is meant to malign the credibility of the mission")

Bishop Ciriaco Francisco (threatened with legal action including church closures for 'harboring' illegal demonstrators, the demonstrators were farmers who had blocked a highway in [Kidapawan, Cotabato province](#) on [April 1, 2016](#) to ask for government aid to survive a drought, also condemned the use of live ammunition on the farmers)

Colleen Jaquith (missionary, U.S. citizen, wife of Daniel Jaquith, saw her husband shot on [March 4, 2014](#))

Conchita Francisco (aged 62, pastoral worker, widow and mother of two children, **shot to death** on [November 13, 2012](#) in front of the Cathedral in [Bongao, Tawi-Tawi province](#) after Mass)

Daniel Jaquith (missionary, U.S. citizen, husband of Colleen Jaquith, shot in the arm during an attempted robbery on [March 4, 2014](#), a Filipino pastor was also shot in the foot, both recovered)

Darwin Lasawang (aged 24, son of Pastor Feliciano "Cris" Lasawang, **shot dead** by Maoist rebels on [November 27, 2015](#) in the [Culaman River, north of Jose Abad Santos, Davao del Sur province, Mindanao](#))

Datu (alias, convert, husband, father, **stabbed to death** on [Mindanao](#) on [January 2, 2016](#))

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis Villarojo (said after a gunman was shot dead on [July 10, 2018](#) by police in the [Cebu](#) residence of Archbishop Jose Palma "Let the [police] process take its course")

Rev Eddie Villanueva (criticized President Duterte in [Manila](#) on [October 27, 2017](#) for the police killing of drug addicts "No one has the right to take another person's life")

Pastor Edilberto Beira (testified to the strong Christian faith of Mario Acidre)

Fr Eduardo Apungan (reported on the [September 4, 2013](#) abduction of Frederick Banot and Cherden Masong in [Lantawan, Basilan province](#))

Fr Edwin A Gariguez (said after farmers who had blocked a highway in [Kidapawan, Cotabato province](#) on [April 1, 2016](#) to ask for government aid to survive a drought were fired upon by soldiers "If real justice should be served, those found guilty should be penalized"

said on [August 15, 2017](#) "The killings of suspected drug users and pushers in Bulacan is an epitome of the aggressive campaign of the present government against illegal drugs, under the leadership of President Duterte. The strategy is to exterminate the suspects before they are brought to a court of law. This case of killing of 32 suspects in separate operations in just one day is gruesome and utterly condemnable. The impunity of how the numerous killings can be committed or condoned by the police force is truly alarming";

reported on [December 20, 2017](#) to have condemned a Communist rebel attack on soldiers who were providing emergency relief following a typhoon in [Catubig, Northern Samar province](#), two were wounded;

reported on [August 3, 2018](#) to have condemned the issuance of arrest warrants for four former members of Congress for the murder of two farmers more than 10 years ago "This is a common strategy of the government and the military to harass and to silence opposition...[a] deplorable tactic")

Bishop Edwin de la Pena (spoke on [November 23, 2017](#) regarding the aftermath of the fighting in [Marawi, Mindanao](#) which included hundreds abducted and missing "As a pastor, it is incumbent on me to look for my own people, find them and their state of life")

Sr Elenita Belardo (said of the [December 4, 2017](#) shooting death of Fr Marcelito "Tito" Paez "The execution is a brutal act that aims to sow terror among those who oppose the militaristic and despotic nature of Duterte's government and to silence those who continue to denounce extrajudicial executions and violations of human rights";

said the [June 18, 2018](#) visa ruling in favor of Sr Patricia Fox "gives hope to the poor who [Sr Fox] vows to serve with her life")

Fr Eliseo Mercado Jr OMI (described the [November 13, 2012](#) murder of Conchita Francisco; condemned a [November 10, 2017](#) arson attack on a chapel in [Labo-Labo village, Shariff Aguak town, Mindanao](#), called it "the work of few extremists that need to be rooted out" and compared it to the 1970s rebellion when "Muslim rebels respected places of worship in the area")

Fr Elmer Cantular (narrowly missed an ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants on [July 15, 2012](#) in [Location: Tumahubong village, Basilan province](#))

Bishop Ephraim Fajutagana (called on clergy to "open cathedrals and churches to shelter farmers who suffer state persecution" after farmers who had blocked a highway in [Kidapawan, Cotabato province](#) on [April 1, 2016](#) to ask for government aid to survive a drought were fired upon by soldiers)

Sr Evangelina Labanda (detained on [January 16, 2015](#) in [Tanauan, Leyte province](#) while travelling to join the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis, accused of being a member of the communist New People's Army, released)

Pastor Feliciano "Cris" Lasawang (aged 50, husband, father of Darwin Lasawang and six others, **shot dead** by Maoist rebels on [November 27, 2015](#) in the [Culaman River, north of Jose Abad Santos, Davao del Sur province, Mindanao](#))

Bishop Felixberto Calang (present during the [July 4, 2018](#) police raid on the [General Santos City](#) spirituality center, said "Police claimed the people they were looking for were inside the building. They accused our staff and volunteers of aiding the people [the fugitives] named in the warrant. Those names are not known to the participants of the program. We are still helping them to secure all necessary documents and requirements and the money so that they can post bail")

Felomina Ferolin (aged 54, nurse, **died** en route to the hospital after the [October 8, 2014](#) grenade attack on her church in [Pikit, North Cotabato province, Mindanao](#))

Archbishop Fernando Capalla (reported on [October 12, 2016](#) to have been criticized by President Duterte in response for his criticism of the killing of 3,500 suspected drug dealers and users)

Fr Francis Lucas (stated that the killing of Nestor Libaton is "intend[ed] to intimidate and silence the voices that defend values like truth, justice, human rights. But the Church in the



Philippines will continue to proclaim the Gospel and will not be silenced.")

Frederick Banot (church literacy worker, abducted on [September 4, 2013](#) in [Lantawan, Basilan province](#) by gunmen believed to be from the al-Qaeda affiliate Abu Sayyaf; beaten, refused to convert to Islam, released on [October 18, 2013](#))

Bishop Gabriel Reyes (is to be a leader of a prayer gathering in [Manila](#) on [November 12, 2012](#) against the country's proposed Reproductive health bill; announced on [December 3, 2012](#) that the faithful will fast and pray for the defeat of the Reproductive Health bill)

Gerald Docallos (construction worker, reported on [June 13, 2017](#) to have escaped from Islamic militants in [Barangay village, near Marawi, Mindanao](#) ,said "We ran about two kilometers. We saw lots of bodies on the street. I didn't look at them because I was running")

Fr Giancarlo Bossi ([died of lung cancer](#) on [September 23, 2012](#), kidnapped and held for nearly 40 days by Muslim militants in 2007)

Gina Cabilona (aged 39, teacher, [died](#) in the hospital after the [October 8, 2014](#) grenade attack on her church in [Pikit, North Cotabato province, Mindanao](#))

Harry Roque (lawyer for the family of Joe Frank Zuniga, stated "We are looking into the possible involvement of state agents because a lot of Church workers are either killed or kidnapped these days")

Jen-Jen (convert, student, reported on [June 21, 2017](#) to have been forced to pray in a mosque to graduate from school)

Jennifer Taborada (aged 27, widow of Ryan, mother of Prince Junior and Princess, [shot dead](#) in [Caloocan](#) on [July 18, 2018](#) apparently for leading a diocesan support group for the widows of men killed in the government's extrajudicial campaign against illegal drugs)

Jenniver Velazques (construction worker, reported on [June 13, 2017](#) to have escaped from Islamic militants in [Barangay village, near Marawi, Mindanao](#) ,thanked the local Muslim police: "If not for them, we would all be dead by now")

Fr Jerome Secillano (said on [November 29, 2016](#) in [Manila](#) "The church, for practical purposes, will be more than willing to suspend any liturgical activity if there are threats to the safety of churchgoers" following an attempted bomb attack;

said in [Manila](#) on [March 23, 2017](#) of upcoming Holy Week security threats "There are always threats, but Filipinos are not deterred from doing their spiritual activities. It has always been like that", added that during such times people are "more inclined to pray for security from God";

said in [Manila](#) on [October 16, 2017](#) "The Church is not one to take steps to destabilize the institution or to undermine the president. I hope the public will not think that the Church is doing this to undermine the president or the government";

criticized the government on [October 20, 2017](#) for not renewing the licenses of Catholic radio stations, said "It's the voice of the people and our search for truth that's being undermined by Congress";

commented on or before [March 8, 2018](#) on the possibility of terror acts during the upcoming Holy Week "the public should be vigilant lest we become victims of possible

terror acts. [The police] should improve and make intelligence gathering efficient and truly reliable")

Pastor Jerry Sanchez (described an [October 8, 2014](#) grenade attack on his church in [Pikit, North Cotabato province, Mindanao](#) that killed 2 and wounded 3)

Joe Frank Zuniga (lawyer and church leader, disappeared on [June 20, 2012](#) in [Balanga town, Bataan province](#))

Bishop Joel Porlares (said on or before [October 16, 2017](#) "We found the allegation against our good bishop [Carlo Morales] malicious and ridiculous")

Rev Joel Tendero (noted on [September 4, 2013](#) that other pastors from their church had been under military surveillance prior to their killing or abduction)

John Luis Guades (theology student, narrowly missed an ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants on [July 15, 2012](#) in [Location: Tumahubong village, Basilan province](#))

John Reynan Escanilan (injured in the [November 27, 2016](#) bombing of a church in [Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat province, Mindanao](#) after Mass, hospitalized)

Jojo Sibug (tribal chieftain in [Cotabato](#), reported on [June 26, 2015](#) to have said "Our ancestors were already here even before Islam came to Mindanao. This Philippine government should consider the welfare and plight of the indigenous tribes, and the Aquino administration should not only focus on one sector, but it should remember the indigenous people were also the first inhabitants of Mindanao")

Fr Jonash Joyohoy (spoke on or before [December 5, 2017](#) of his church involvement in tribal areas "We are not pulling out, we are never pulling out. But we need to tighten safeguards because of the upsurge in security risks")

Archbishop Jose Palma (condemned the killing of Nestor Libaton;

residence in [Cebu](#) forcibly entered by a gunman on [July 10, 2018](#), absent in Manila at the time, the gunman was shot dead by police)

Fr Jose Ramon Villarin SJ (president of Ateneo de Manila University in [Manila](#), issued a statement on [October 13, 2017](#) which read "We call on everyone in the community to defend our democratic institutions...Let us urge our leaders in government to allow full independence for these constitutional bodies to implement their crucial mandates by desisting from any form of intimidation in the guise of legal action...[this is] not even a matter of political partisanship or persuasion. It is a call that is borne out of our conviction about what is right and just and truly democratic")

Fr Joseph Tan (said after a gunman was shot dead on [July 10, 2018](#) by police in the [Cebu](#) residence of Archbishop Jose Palma "We enjoin everyone to pray for the soul of the deceased even as we ask the public to refrain from forming any speculations relating to this incident pending investigation by the police")

Juan Santander Morte (taken hostage by Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF] fighters on [September 9, 2013](#) in [Zamboanga City](#) because he admitted he was a Christian, escaped)

Sr Julita Encarnacion (accused on [May 14, 2012](#) by the army of being a supporter of the "New People's Army" guerrilla group in [Davao City, Mindanao](#))

Bishop Julito Cortes (consoled the parishioners of Fr Antonio Magalso after his [September 29, 2015](#) murder)

Fr Julius Boado (narrowly missed an ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants on [July 15, 2012](#) in [Location: Tumahubong village, Basilan province](#))

Pastor June Ver Mangao (as of [September 4, 2013](#) is under military surveillance and harassment in [Mabitac, Laguna](#) for alleged communist ties)

Sr Kathleen Melia SSC (aged 70, Irish citizen, beaten in [Midsalip, Mindanao](#) on [March 1, 2017](#), hospitalized)

Senator Leila de Lima (aged 57, former human rights attorney, accused President Duterte of being a "sociopathic serial killer" on [February 21, 2017](#);

arrest warrant on drug trafficking charges issued on [February 23, 2017](#), took refuge in her Senate office in [Quezon City](#);

surrendered to police on [February 24, 2017](#), said "It is my honor to be imprisoned for the things I am fighting for. Please pray for me...As I have been saying all along, I am innocent. There is no truth to the charges I benefited from the drug trade, that I received money and that I coddled drug convicts. The truth will come out at the right time. They will not be able to silence me and stop me from fighting for the truth and justice and against the daily killings and repression by the Duterte regime")

Loren Erazo (injured in the [November 27, 2016](#) bombing of a church in [Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat province](#), [Mindanao](#) after Mass, hospitalized)

Pastor Lovelito Quinones (**killed** by police allegedly in a [December 3, 2017](#) gun battle with Communists in [Mansalay town, Mindoro Oriental, Luzon](#), critics say a gun was planted on his body, forensic tests showed no powder residue on his body)

Fr Luciano Ariel Felloni (Argentine citizen, spoke in [Manila](#) on [November 21, 2017](#) "By using social media to explain that our work has no political color, and that it is our contribution to the war against drugs, people change their opinion, they understand...Ignore the trolls, it's obvious that they are fake")

Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle (wrote from [Manila](#) in a [September 10, 2017](#) pastoral letter stating "the country cannot be governed by violence...With pain and horror we continue to receive news of murders every day, largely victims of suspected drug dealers or drug addicts. We cannot allow the destruction of life to become an ordinary fact. We cannot rule the nation with homicides, this is not human", ordered all churches to ring their bells every night at 8 PM to remember those killed;

spoke in [Manila](#) on [July 22, 2018](#) 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")

Fr Marcelito "Tito" Paez (aged 72, officially retired but still active in ministry, **shot** while driving in traffic in [San Leonardo town, Nueva Ecija province, Luzon](#) on [December 4, 2017](#) by four gunmen on motorcycles, **died** in the hospital)

Maria Isabella Climaco Salazar (aged 48, mayor of [Zamboanga City](#), reported on [June 26, 2015](#) to be opposed inclusion of her city in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)

Maria Teofifina Morales (wife of Bishop Carlo Morales, arrested in [Gango](#) on [May 11, 2017](#))

Maridel Fano (Rural Missionaries of the Philippines project coordinator, said on or before



[December 19, 2017](#) that "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")

Pastor Mario Acidre ([shot to death](#) after converting from Islam and preaching Christianity)

Fr Mark Anthony Yuaga Ventura (aged 37, [shot dead](#) while blessing children after Mass in [Gattaran, Cagayan province](#) on [April 29, 2018](#))

Bishop Martin Jumoad (reported on the [July 15, 2012](#) attempted ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf militants in [Tumahubong village, Basilan province](#);

said on [Basilan Island](#) on [February 26, 2015](#) "There have been demonstrations of Islamist rebel groups. Now we have heard via radio of this military offensive that is worrying. But with these terrorist groups, it was inevitable that, sooner or later, one would reach military confrontation";

said that the [February 27, 2015](#) bombing of the church in [Lamitan town, Basilan province](#) "makes me feel sad and caught me by surprise. This is the work of evil people and let us not be carried by our emotions";

said "My heart bleeds upon learning of the beheading of the 18-year old boy [in [Indanan, Sulu province](#) on [August 24, 2016](#)]. The government must stop and destroy this group. The Abu Sayyaf is a terrorist group and it is not for dialogue. They must be destroyed";

reported on [December 8, 2016](#) on an upsurge in the recruitment of child soldiers by [Mindanao](#) terror groups such as Abu Sayyaf)

Sr Mary John Mananzan OSB (said on or before [December 19, 2017](#) that 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?";

reported on [August 3, 2018](#) to have spoken regarding the issuance of arrest warrants for four former members of Congress for the murder of two farmers more than 10 years ago "I personally know these four people and they cannot possibly have done what they are accused of")

Sr Mary Pilar Verzosa (founder of Pro-Life Philippines, [died of an aneurysm](#) in [Cavite City](#) on [September 9, 2012](#))

Mayang (wife of Mario Acidre, took him to the hospital where he died)

Pastor Melencio Magdayao ([shot dead](#))

Fr Melvin Castro (in [Manila](#) on [November 21, 2012](#) stated opposition to the proposed Reproductive health bill)

Fr Michael Ufana (abducted on [September 9, 2013](#) from his parents' home in [Zamboanga](#) by Moro National Liberation Front gunmen;

parents and a sister also abducted, as was a Protestant pastor;

released on [September 13, 2013](#) to deliver the MNLF demands to the government, parents and sister still held hostage)

Miracle Osman (Malawian citizen, missionary, barred from leaving the country on or after [May 9, 2018](#))

Bishop Mylo Vergara (said in [Pasig](#) on or before [January 23, 2018](#) regarding an effort in Congress to amend the Constitution to protect only 'responsible' freedom of speech "[Have] courage not to compromise the freedom of telling the truth despite pressure from those in power", also complained that the media is being paid "to frame news and even distort truth")

Nardy Sabino (said of a church operated refugee center in [Davao, Mindanao](#) which had been attacked and burned on [February 24, 2016](#), five people including two children were injured "We condemn this violence against our tribal people and the attack on the church"; reported on [July 26, 2017](#) to have reacted to President Duterte's threat to bomb tribal schools by saying that the threat was "reckless and irresponsible...[he should] retract his statement")

Fr Nathaniel B Gomez (reported on the [September 29, 2015](#) murder of Fr Antonio Magalso)

Nestor Libaton (Catholic radio journalist and father of 4, **shot dead** on [May 8, 2012](#) in [Mati, Mindanao](#) after broadcasting in favor of a "culture of life")

Sr Noemi Degala SMSM (detained on [January 16, 2015](#) in [Tanauan, Leyte province](#) while travelling to join the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis, accused of being a member of the communist New People's Army, released;

said in [Mindanao](#) on [September 7, 2015](#) "We are legal associations with proper documents")

Br Nosi Balgado CSSR (said of a church operated refugee center in [Davao, Mindanao](#) which had been attacked and burned on [February 24, 2016](#), five people including two children were injured "We are urging the government to immediately respond to the incident and bring the perpetrators to justice")

Fr Oliver Castor CSSR (said on or before [December 4, 2017](#) that the government's extrajudicial killing of drug dealers and addicts has begun to expand to political dissidents: "It is systematic killing directed towards a specific section of the population. The year past, the targets were drug users, this time, leftists...[It] is chillingly reminiscent of the years of Marcos martial rule";

said on or before [December 5, 2017](#) that churches have begun to prepare for government repression "We laid down security measures, fallback positions. But we never thought it would hit us so close to home, so fast")

Cardinal Orlando Quevedo OMI (denounced the [November 27, 2016](#) bombing of a church in [Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat province, Mindanao](#) after Mass in which three were injured "at the end of our 5:30 a.m. 1st Sunday of Advent mass is pure terrorism, made worse because of the sacredness of the place, the sacredness of the day, and the sacredness of the event that had just taken place";

condemned the [June 21, 2017](#) desecration of a chapel in [Malagakit, Mindanao](#) by Islamic militants, said the act was "wicked")

Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (said in [Caloocan](#) on [August 23, 2017](#) that the government's anti-drug campaign had turned a north Manila suburb into "killing fields" where students and people begging to be spared are killed, also spoke of vigilante groups "They roam our streets, especially in the informal settler communities, every night. And I don't know why they are invisible";

threatened with arrest on [September 11, 2017](#) for obstruction of justice for hiding 2

children who witnessed the extrajudicial murder of a criminal by police;

spoke in [Manila](#) on [November 21, 2017](#) regarding his social media efforts "As a church leader, I would feel amiss in my leadership if I allow the consciences of people to die...If you don't react to these statements, soon they become like Gospel truth. Truth has become a more serious concern in the context of so much untruth in things that we hear or read...God works also through social media. That's also a forum for truth and empathy. That's what empathy is also about. It leads to compassion";

said after the murder of Jennifer Taborada: "I feel so, so, so, so sad that I am not able to protect my flock from the wolves. Today, in utter shame and frustration, I declare I have not been a good shepherd to my flock. The wolves, they have been prowling the streets and alleys of [the Manila suburbs of] Caloocan, Malabon, and Navotas for almost two years now. They have killed hundreds already, and I am unable to protect them with my life...I will bow in shame if the Good Shepherd will denounce me as a mere hireling who remains very safe and very secure, who can get a good night's sleep in his warm bed while his sheep are being slaughtered")

Senator Panfilo Lacson (presidential supporter, responded after President Duterte on [June 22, 2018](#) called God a "SOB" and "stupid", 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")

Fr Pascual Benitez (apparent target of an explosive device planted at his church in [Lamitan town, Basilan province](#) on [February 27, 2015](#), no injuries or damage in the explosion)

Sr Patricia Fox (arrested along with a Congressman and attorneys on [September 17, 2013](#) while investigating land redistribution on a [central Luzon](#) sugar cane estate owned by the Aquino family, slapped and punched by police;

arrested in [Quezon City](#) on [April 16, 2018](#) for 'illegal political activity';

released on [April 17, 2018](#) after a prosecutor found no probable cause for the arrest;

visa revoked on [April 23, 2018](#);

appeal to reinstate her visa denied, facing imminent deportation;

deportation delayed on [May 25, 2018](#);

the Department of Justice ruled on [June 18, 2018](#) that the revocation of her visa was invalid;

the Immigration Bureau in [Manila](#) 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;

deportation suspended on [July 22, 2018](#) pending appeal)

Pastor Perfecto Hoyle ([shot dead](#) by gunmen in [Jabonga, Agusan del Norte](#) on [November 16, 2017](#))

Fr Quirico Pedregosa Jr OP (seminary rector at the [Pontifical University of Santo Tomas, Manila](#), said on [April 3, 2018](#) that church organizations need to help protect tribal peoples and their schools during military operations against Communist rebels)

Bishop Redeemer Yanez (said the arrest warrant used in the [July 4, 2018](#) police raid on the [General Santos City](#) spirituality center was likely invalid: "There was no signature of the issuing judge or court. The names of the accused are unknown to all the individuals who were arrested. This is clear harassment of the church and the people who are trying to amplify the voice of the poor ")

Remedios de Belen (church secretary, witnessed the [June 6, 2018](#) shooting of Fr Rey Urmeneta)

Fr Rene Bayang Regalado ([shot dead](#) in [Patpat village, Malaybalay, Bukidnon province, Mindanao](#) on [January 24, 2021](#))

Rene Bullecer (director of Human Life International, stated on [December 3, 2012](#) that opposition to the Reproductive Health bill will move ahead)

Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza (condemned the "dastardly" [October 8, 2014](#) grenade attack on the church in [Pikit, North Cotabato province, Mindanao](#);

said missionaries "should not be treated as criminals...We thanked God for the [[June 18, 2018](#) visa] ruling" in favor of Sr Patricia Fox)

Fr Rex Reyes Jr (said on [September 4, 2013](#) that attempts to defame church groups working with the poor are "deplorable, irresponsible, and lack moral decency")

Fr Rey Urmeneta (aged 64, shot while in his automobile in [Calamba City](#) on [June 6, 2018](#), hospitalized in stable condition)

Reynaldo Aloro ([killed](#) by Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters on [July 29 or July 31, 2013](#) during a looting raid on his village in [Midsayap, Cotabato](#))

Fr Richmond Nilo (aged 43, [shot dead](#) while preparing the church altar for Mass in [Zaragoza, Nueva Ecija](#) on [June 10, 2018](#))

Ritchie Masegman (decried increasing attacks on church institutions after the [July 4, 2018](#) police raid on the [General Santos City](#) spirituality center)

Bishop Roberto Mallari (called the [December 4, 2017](#) shooting death of Fr Marcelito "Tito" Paez an execution)

Roger Plana (church employee, arrested in [General Santos City](#) on [July 4, 2018](#) for allegedly harboring fugitives)

Rolando Del Torchio (aged 57, former priest and missionary, abducted on [October 6, 2015](#) in [Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte, Mindanao](#); released on [Sulu Island](#) on [April 8, 2016](#))

Archbishop Rolando Tria Tirona (said in [Caceres](#) on or before [January 23, 2018](#) regarding an effort in Congress to amend the Constitution to protect only 'responsible' freedom of speech that is from a "frightened and insecure government not worthy to lead the people to truth, justice, and to total good", added that the government's revocation of an online news site's license "smacks of a reign of terror, an arrogant, and high-handed warning to media practitioners that do not kowtow to the administration...Catholic media must always side with freedom, which is the sure way to human enrichment")

Rolly Pelinggon (reported on [June 26, 2015](#) to be opposed a government agreement with Islamic militants that will introduce sharia law to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)

Romeo Capalla (aged 65, brother of Archbishop Emeritus Antonio Capalla, human rights activist,

shot dead on March 15, 2014 in Oton, Iloilo province)

Rosemarie Cantano (church employee, arrested in General Santos City on July 4, 2018 for allegedly harboring fugitives)

Sr Rowena Pineda (massacre investigator, said in Mindanao on September 7, 2015 "Threats, harassment, and intimidation are not new")

Bishop Ruperto Santos (responded after President Duterte on June 22, 2018 called God a "SOB" and "stupid", said the president crossed a "red line...[he should] not tempt God as He said vengeance is mine")

Sam Mangumpit (student, taken hostage by Islamic militants in Marawi, Mindanao in May 2017, reported on October 25, 2017 to have been killed)

Sadome Dalid (driver, arrested in Gango on May 11, 2017)

Sam Mangumpit (student, taken hostage by Islamic militants in Marawi, Mindanao in May 2017, reported on October 25, 2017 to have been killed)

Fr Sebastiano D'Ambra PIME (organized a Christian-Muslim prayer gathering in Zamboanga City on September 12, 2013 for the end of fighting and the return of about 200 hostages including Fr Michael Ufana;

said in Zamboanga, Mindanao on October 15, 2014 that attempts to import ISIL are underway using foreign money, said "the wounds are still evident in the severe attack of the rebels of the Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF], which took place in September 2013: Many families are still displaced and inter-religious atmosphere has been affected...some violent groups and terrorists continue to oppose any suggestion of peace and to make violent propaganda: groups like the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters have proclaimed their support to ISIL that operates in Iraq";

said reportedly on February 19, 2015 that "someone wants to destabilize Mindanao" after the January 25, 2015 battle in Mamasapano killed 65;

described the December 24, 2015 attacks by the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters against villages in Sultan Kudarat and North Cotabato that left 2 dead in a Christian chapel and 9 dead on a rice plantation, 14 total were killed including some Muslims;

issued an appeal on July 29, 2016 "to stop killing Christians in Jolo [Sulu province]...A Christian was killed in Jolo a few days ago...a reliable source told me that 20 Christians have been targeted to be killed or kidnapped soon. In the midst of so many good Muslim leaders and friends of Jolo the Christian community is suffering a form of persecution from those who are guided by bad elements who claim to do it in the name of Islam";

said on January 20, 2017 that Islamic persecution against Christians on Mindanao "is becoming alarming")

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (spoke out in Manila on July 9, 2013 against the Reproductive Health law that is currently under review by the Supreme Court;

criticized the government on August 7, 2016 for the large number of killings of drug dealers by police, wrote "From a generation of drug addicts, shall we become a generation of street murderers? Can the do-it-yourself justice system assure us of a safer and better future?";

said on November 14, 2016 "Persecution is not limited to violence. Bashing in social



media where truth is made to appear as a lie and a lie appears to be true is another form of persecution. Whenever we talk to call for respect of human life and dignity, we are tagged as an enemy and become targets of trolls";

the pastoral letter ***For I Find No Pleasure in the Death of Anyone Who Dies***, which protested the 7,000 extrajudicial killings of persons involved in the illegal drug trade since mid-2016, was read in all Catholic churches in the country on [February 5, 2017](#), had signed the letter on [January 30, 2017](#) on behalf of the bishop's conference "We in the Church will continue to speak against evil even as we acknowledge and repent of our own shortcomings. We will do this even if it will bring persecution upon us because we are all brothers and sisters responsible for each other. We will help drug addicts so that they may be healed and start a new life...Let us not allow fear to reign and keep us silent. Let us put into practice not only our native inner strength but the strength that comes from our Christian faith";

reported on [April 6, 2017](#) to have said that although Christians are not persecuted in the country "we have begun to persecute Christian beliefs";

said on [September 2, 2017](#) at an archdiocesan synod "We must teach even if our voices get hoarse. We must teach even if they threaten us. We must teach even if they kill us and if they kill us, our message will echo even more because the best way to teach is through martyrdom!...In the lights and shadows of life, in the stormy and sunny days, in the persecutions we endure and the triumphs we bask in – the Lord speaks...We dream not of status quo Church but an ever vibrant Church that is excited, not afraid to plunge into the deep";

issued an [October 2, 2017](#) statement regarding police officers who have requested church sanctuary "...their consciences are troubling them. They have expressed their desire to come out in the open about their participation in extrajudicial killings and summary executions...If their preference is to stay with us in the church, will not be turned over to the state. Let us be guardian angels for one another";

spoke on [November 22, 2017](#) regarding social media "Whenever we [in the church] call for respect of human life and dignity, we are tagged as an enemy and become targets of trolls";

issued a [June 10, 2018](#) statement from [Lingayen-Dagupan](#): "They are killing our flock. They are killing us the shepherds. They are killing our faith. They are cursing our Church. They are killing God again as they did in Calvary...Let us implore the grace of God to touch the heart of the President of the Philippines to stop the verbal persecution of the Catholic Church because such attacks can unwittingly embolden more crimes against priests")

Sr Stella Matutina OSB (accused on [May 14, 2012](#) by the army of being a supporter of the "New People's Army" guerrilla group in [Davao City, Mindanao](#))

Sr Susan Bolanio (Hesed Foundation executive director, said she did not agree with the farmers who had blocked a highway in [Kidapawan, Cotabato province](#) on [April 1, 2016](#) to ask for government aid to survive a drought – and who were fired upon by soldiers – but said "the violence that erupted must be thoroughly investigated";

identified the dead in a government attack on a village that occurred on or before [December 19, 2017](#) as local leaders)

Tawanda Chandiwana (Zimbabwean citizen, missionary, arrested in [Davao, Mindanao](#) on [May 9,](#)

2018 for investigating human rights abuses)

Bishop Teodoro Bacani (reported on [July 30, 2017](#) to have said that the Commission on Human Rights was "created and protected" by the constitution and can be abolished only by a constitutional amendment, called for prayer that Duterte would recover his "good sense" after the president said he would abolish it)

Fr Teresito 'Chito' Suganob (abducted by Islamic militants along with 13 parishioners in [Marawi, Mindanao](#) on [May 23, 2017](#), cathedral burned, 9 other Christians shot dead;

as of [June 25, 2017](#) has been seen alive by rescued hostages;

still in captivity as of [August 1, 2017](#);

rescued from captivity in [Bato](#) on [September 16, 2017](#) by the Philippine military)

Sr Theodora Bilocura OSB (demonstrated with tribal people after a massacre in [Mindanao](#) which occurred days prior to on [September 7, 2015](#))

Wilhelm Geertman (Dutch NGO worker and missionary, **shot dead** in front of his office in [Sto Domingo village, Angeles City, Pampanga province, Luzon](#) on [July 3, 2012](#))