

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – August 2019

Thursday August 1, 2019



Nigeria: on the Ihe-Agbudu road, Enugu state

Fr Paul Offu (**shot dead** by Fulani Muslim gunmen)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66462->

[AFRICA NIGERIA A liturgy to invoke peace and security in Enugu after the murder of Fr Paul Offu](#)

Friday August 2, 2019



Philippines: Antipas, Cotabato province, Mindanao

Pastor Ernesto Estrella (aged 51, **shot dead** while riding his motorcycle by men also on a motorcycle)

Several bishops signed a statement condemning the murder of Pastor Ernesto Estrella:

“Now is the gospel moment to speak out and stand together in the name of Christ in upholding the God-given value of human life, dignity and rights. In God’s righteousness, may we ourselves become the justice we desire and demand for the killing of Pastor Ernesto Javier Estrella, and for all Christians martyred for their witness to our faith”

Bishop Deogracias Iniguez

Bishop Rex Reyes

Bishop Joel Tendero

Bishop Dindo Ranojo

Bishop Ciriaco Francisco

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/church-leaders-in-the-philippines-lament-ideology-of-death-after-pastor-killed>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/08/christians-in-the-philippines-decry-growing-hostilities-after-killing-of-pastor/>

Saturday August 3, 2019



Philippines: Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon province, Mindanao

Kristin Lim (Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, 'invited' by eight soldiers to their camp for questioning, the 'invitation' was repeated the next day, later said "I respect the invitation, but I would also like to insist, as I repeatedly did, that I am not a criminal. I courteously declined their invitation due to current personal engagements as a private citizen")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/08/christians-in-the-philippines-decry-growing-hostilities-after-killing-of-pastor/>



Algeria: Lekhmis village, Boudjima, Kabylie region

Pastor Messaoud Takilt (ordered by police to remove all items from his church within 3 days)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/08/as-church-worships-police-in-algeria-arrive-to-seal-building/>



Mexico: Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas state

Fr Aaron Mendez Ruiz (immigrant shelter director, abducted after he tried to prevent the abduction of Cuban refugees from his shelter for ransom)

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2019/08/13/press/4430/article.htm>

Sunday August 4, 2019



Sri Lanka: Mahiyanganaya

Bishop Asiri Perera (reported on the beating of a Bible school student who was later hospitalized, wrote on Facebook “I assure all Buddhists of Sri Lanka that we Christians will remain calm and peaceful in the midst of the persecution we face today in Sri Lanka. I humbly appeal to you to be kind towards the Christians who live with you”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/After-Buddhist-monks-beat-Christian,-Methodist-bishop-insists-Christians-are-citizens-of-the-country-47734.html>

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/gang-of-buddhist-monks-viciously-beat-bible-college-student-in-sri-lanka>



Nigeria: on the Abuja-Kaduna highway

Pastor Jeremiah Omolara (**shot dead** while driving with his wife and son, son escaped, wife abducted, US\$137,000 ransom demanded)

Nigeria: Enugu, Enugu state

Bishop Callisto Onaga (presided over the funeral Mass of Fr Paul Offu, released a statement which read "an alarming number of our people - including Priests and government officials - have been killed by these murderers...For fear of being raped our women can no longer carry out their regular activities in the villages, particular their farming and other businesses...[the government must] flush out bad Fulanis from our state [and] effectively equip the vigilante groups to provide protection and security for their various localities")

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/gunmen-kill-nigerian-pastor-and-abduct-his-wife-church-leader-calls-for-govt-protection.html>

http://www.fides.org/en/news/66462-AFRICA_NIGERIA_A_liturgy_to_invoke_peace_and_security_in_Enugu_after_the_murder_of_Fr_Paul_Offu

Monday August 5, 2019



China: Zhengzhou, Henan province

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](#); as of [June 27, 2018](#) had 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; released from prison on [February 28, 2019](#), disappeared, father and sister disappeared; allowed to return home with his father and sister on [March 1, 2019](#), wife has begun a petition for him to travel to the U.S. for medical treatment; **UPDATE:** still suffering from effects of his prison medication, prevented by police from travelling for a medical exam)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/lawyer-jiang-tianyong-authorities.html>

Tuesday August 6, 2019



Turkey

Kuryakos Ergun (member of the Mor Gabriel Monastery; **UPDATE:** reported to have commented on a recent series of apparent arson attacks on Assyrian Christian properties: "We don't know if they were intentional or not, but these fires have shaken us to the core...For the fires to come right when the fruit was ready to pick has been devastating for us")

Ferit Kulen (reported to have had property seized by local Muslims who then built a mosque)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20190806125143.htm>



Algeria: Lekhmis village, Boudjima, Kabylie region

Pastor Messaoud Takilt (ordered by police on [August 3, 2019](#) to remove all items from his church within 3 days; **UPDATE:** church raided by police during a worship service, persuaded resistant congregants to leave, building sealed, later said "The assembly finally yielded and agreed to leave the premises, but with much pain. Some went out with eyes full of tears...I am deeply saddened by so much injustice – it breaks my heart. This is not surprising since other Christian places of worship have been closed and sealed as was the case today. But anyway, we will continue to celebrate our services outside while the Lord gives us grace for a final solution")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/08/as-church-worships-police-in-algeria-arrive-to-seal-building/>



United Kingdom: Homerton, East London

Freddie O’Neil (aged 57, recent convert, convicted rapist, reported to have been denied Christian worship at his secure mental health facility for over a year while Muslim worship was accommodated every week, sued, granted access to Christian clergy)

<https://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/christian-patient-finally-allowed-sunday-services>



Canada

John-Henry Westen (LifeSiteNews web site Editor-in-Chief, reported on [July 31, 2019](#) that after a week of operation Apple News had deleted his news organization presumably for its positions favoring traditional Christian morality, said he would appeal; **UPDATE:** reinstated)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-apple-news-backtracks-re-enables-lifesites-channel>

Wednesday August 7, 2019



United Kingdom

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns; **UPDATE:** responded to a lawsuit by Humanists UK against Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust which alleged that the schools' observance of legally required worship for Christian students was a human rights violation: “Unfounded ideas like gender identity are routinely being taught to children from young ages. These ideas have no basis in reality, yet are often taught with a religious fervor far exceeding typical Christian school assemblies. It’s time for Humanists UK to realize that privileging the religion of LGBT ideology breaks its own declared secularist principles”)

Thursday August 8, 2019



United Kingdom: London

Christian Hacking (aged 29, arrested while praying in a park across the street from an abortion clinic, ordered to 'stand up' by police from his wheelchair, said "I'm going to continue praying. I'm in this place because they're killing human beings inside this clinic, it is against the law to ban anyone praying anywhere in this land. The PSPO [court order] has been built upon false grounds, false harassment, fake news, I don't respect it. I don't think you have a constitutional right to stop someone from praying, so I'm going to continue praying here until you remove me, forcibly or whatever, because what's more important is that God's law is upheld in this nation and not the law of those who govern this nation and not this ludicrous law that says people can't pray")

United Kingdom: Norwich and Rochester

Bishop Gavin Ashenden (**UPDATE**: commented on the recent installation of a carnival helter-skelter and a mini golf course in two cathedrals: "In every generation the Church faces a live or die challenge. Convert or be converted. Either act as an agency for people to encounter the Living God and be forgiven, turned and transformed, or fit into the unforgiving contours of a society that is driven by other forces, other appetites, and smear over their agenda a patina of spirituality that confers a thin covering of political and cultural legitimacy")

<https://ashenden.org/2019/08/08/convert-or-be-converted-the-challenge-for-anglican-cathedrals-today/>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/10/31/first-arrest-prosecution-praying-public-case-collapses-bungling/>



Cuba

Rev Alain Toledano Valiente (husband of Marilyn Alayo Correa; **UPDATE**: summoned to a police station and interrogated for three hours concerning a planned women's conference, threatened with arrest if the conference proceeded, said "It looks like the regime is planning to invent criminal charges to bring against me in order to imprison me, just as they have done in the past with other pastors...I have had to deal with the fury and the

hatred of the communist regime in many different ways and I think now I have to deal with dirty tricks on their part")

<https://www.csw.org.uk/2019/08/09/press/4428/article.htm>

Friday August 9, 2019



Iraq

Christian leaders opposed legislation to add four Muslim clerics to the Supreme Court

Professor Muna Yako (said "You need to have the court to interpret the constitution. Right now, I hope that if a case goes to the Federal Court they might prioritize human rights and democracy, in some instances. If, however, these Islamic jurists join the court, we will have no chance of ever prioritizing democracy or human rights")

Patriarch Louis Raphael I Sako (**UPDATE:** wrote to the Speaker of Parliament that the proposal would threaten the future of Christians in the country "after all the suffering we have endured from terrorism, displacement, pillaging, murder and property theft")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20190809175324.htm>



Ukraine: Pyatigory village, Rivne province

Fr Viktor Dovbenyuk (husband, father, cancer patient, ordered to leave his home of 27 years by nationalists)

<http://orthochristian.com/123060.html>

Saturday August 10, 2019



China

Li Ruizhen (wife of Pastor Zhou Dixian, mother of Zhou Jie and Zhou Mei, evicted from her home in [Laixi, Shandong province](#) by thugs hired by a land developer in [November 2012](#), buildings and orchards destroyed; arrested on a charge of 'inciting trouble' in [March 2017](#) for protecting her land rights; sentenced to prison in [October 2018](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been diagnosed with cancer of the gallbladder while in prison, denied treatment while in prison, released, travelled to Beijing for outpatient treatment, unable to afford the recommended hospitalization)

Zhou Mei (daughter of Pastor Zhou Dixian and Li Ruizhen, reported on her mother's cancer)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/prison-officials-denied-cancer.html>



Ivory Coast: Sainte-Cecile du Vallon parish

Faustine Brou N'Guessan (aged 60, church secretary, mother, **stabbed** in her parish office, hospitalized, **died**)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66495->

[AFRICA IVORY COAST Church calls for justice for Faustine Brou N Guessan parish secretary killed in her office](#)



Algeria: Ighzer Amokrane, Akbou district, Bejaia province

Pastor Brahim Bourouba (told by police that his church would be closed but that they would delay the order to give him time to appeal)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/after-christians-in-algeria-prevented-church-closure-authorities-seal-it-shut/>

Sunday August 11, 2019



Nepal: Chitwan district

Pastor Sukdev Giri (aged 59, convert, husband, in hiding after receiving death threats for the unauthorized posting of a YouTube video of his conversion, which he said was in part due to Hindu accounts of rape, incest, bestiality, and adultery by the three main deities)

Ganesh Sreshta (attorney, said “It is the first time a Christian [in Nepal] has been targeted for sharing [on social and other media] about his past religion and introduction into Christianity. It is turning out to be a high-profile issue, with Hindu fundamentalist groups linked to prominent political leaders taking interest in this video...There is a lot of impact of Indian media channels on Nepal’s Hindu population. The Hindu extremism in Nepal is taking its shape from observing the Hindu fundamentalist RSS [the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh paramilitary] operations in India...Many Christians are restricting prayer services to closed doors of their homes, as they feel insecure to expose or disclose their faith in public. Article 18 proscribes discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, race etc., but it’s only on paper and can nowhere be seen implemented in case of Christians”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/social-media-backlash-reflects-new-era-of-hostility-in-nepal/>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Nepalese-pastor-faces-death-threats-against-for-YouTube-post-on-how-I-met-Christ-48083.html>



Pakistan

Nabeel Masih (aged 19, arrested on blasphemy charges in [Dina Nath village, Kasur district, Punjab province](#) on [September 18, 2016](#) after accused of posting a photo of the Kabaa in Mecca on his Facebook page near a photo of a pig, family fled their home; sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [May 17, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: has learned to read the Bible, said "When I am isolated in my cell all I think about is my family and I fear that someone may have been hurt because of the hate people have for me. It was good to hear that they are all surviving well and I am praying for a swift exit from this cell with God's help - so that I will be able to unite with them all again soon. It is a cause of great distress to me that my whole village especially all the people who I have interacted with for so many years, could turn on me and call for my death. What pains me more is that I am innocent and a known illiterate [4th grade level], but despite this I remain in a cell and the Muslims who actually committed the crime enjoy freedom. I know God does everything as per His plan and one day I will be free - till then I am reading my Urdu bible which I have learnt to read whilst in prison - it provides me with great solace")

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/illiterate-jailed-christian-teenage-blasphemer-finds-spiritual-help-in-urdu-bible>



Ukraine: Bobly village, Volyn province

Archpriest Vitaly Duda (reported on a nationalist seizure of a church: “Three ‘priests’ of the OCU [Orthodox Church of Ukraine] cut the lock on the first doors. They also brought

some unknown people with them, one of whom was in uniform, and began to open the second door, which, by the way, is about 200 years old. They tried to jimmy the lock open, but failing to do so, they simply broke the lock with a tire iron. Then they went inside and shut the doors. Our faithful prayed continuously until lunchtime on the threshold of their church... I talked with the police and local authorities to avoid a confrontation and conflict, and we agreed that the OCU representatives would leave the church. The chairman of the village council, which supports the newly-created structure, had to persuade them. They finally left, and the church was closed with two locks—ours and theirs”)

Ukraine: Galuzintsi village, Khmel'nitsi province

Fr Alexander Goncharuk (church attacked by nationalists during a worship service, church defended by police)

<http://orthochristian.com/123004.html>

<http://orthochristian.com/123030.html>

Wednesday August 14, 2019



China

Gao Zhisheng (aged 55, human rights attorney, husband of Geng He; released from prison on [August 7, 2014](#); has been described by his attorney on [August 15, 2014](#) as "utterly destroyed" by his captivity - he is unintelligible and speaks only in single words, shows no emotion, and lost almost all of his teeth due to malnutrition; detained on [September 24, 2015](#) after accounts of torture while in prison became public, released but under house arrest in [Yulin, Shaanxi province](#), denied medical access; has been denied access to a dentist due to fears evidence of torture will be documented, wrote on [November 3, 2015](#) "...there is no understanding [by the authorities], just repeating over and over that they are 'the world's second largest superpower', and adding that they have a 'responsible behavioral style'. When, just a short while ago, a common person's teeth are destroyed and lost, [the attempt to correct the damage] is deemed a matter of 'national security'...the outside world can speculate that because I cannot treat my teeth, I must always be in a mood of personal, bitter hardship and torture. This is not entirely true. The world I find inside books occupies me to the point that I forget to eat. I do not even have the leisure to negotiate [with the police] regarding my suffering. To me, it is incredibly precious that I now have books to read. Generally speaking, I know I will disappear immediately again after my book is published. So I am determined to try my best to read more books. This is something I need to do before this happens. This is very crucial to me"; reported on [November 15, 2016](#) to have disappeared after agents from Beijing arrived at his home and destroyed a copy of his new book, Year 2017, Stand Up China, which had been sent

him from friends overseas; disappeared on [August 13, 2017](#); confirmed on [September 7, 2017](#) to be in police custody in [Beijing](#); **UPDATE**: still missing)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/two-years-later-lawyer-gao-is-still.html>



Nigeria: Makiri, Kaduna state

Rev Elisha Noma (aged 60, father of Emmanuel Noma, abducted from his home by Fulani Muslims along with his son)

Emmanuel Noma (son of Rev Elisha Noma, abducted from his home by Fulani Muslims along with his father, released)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/kidnapped-baptist-pastor-in-nigeria-freed-after-17-days-of-torture/>



Colombia: La Caucana village, Taraza, Bajo Cauca Antioquia, Antioquia department

Pastor Plinio Rafael Salcedo (husband, father of two young children, reported to have been **shot dead** in his home, had appealed for peace days earlier)

<https://www.charismanews.com/world/77601-evangelical-pastor-shot-dead-after-appealing-for-peace>

Thursday August 15, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong, son of Chen Yaxue, detained on [December 10, 2018](#), charged with 'inciting subversion of state power'; **UPDATE**: still jailed, has been denied access to his attorney)

Deacon Tan Defu (husband of Xiao Hongliu; **UPDATE**: still jailed, received an additional charge of 'illegal business operation', fired the attorneys hired by his family and 'hired' state supplied attorneys - a fellow parishioner stated that the attorney change might have happened as a result of torture)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/early-rain-covenant-church-pastor-and.html>



Cameroon: Kumbo, Bui department

Two priests were abducted by armed insurgents

Fr Franklin Banadzem Dindzee

Fr Patrick Atang

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66509->

[AFRICA CAMEROON The two priests of Kumbo whose Bishop had denounced t
he violence against civilians have been released](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66509-)

Friday August 16, 2019



Thailand: Bangkok

Adnan Masih (aged 36, husband of Sumaira, father of Yeshhuwa and Eric, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan in 2015; detained in Phuket on July 3, 2018 while on the way to work; **UPDATE:** still in detention)

Sumaira (aged 33, wife of Adnan Masih, mother of Yeshhuwa and Eric, Pakistani refugee)

Yeshhuwa (aged 10, son of Sumaira and Adnan Masih, Pakistani refugee)

Eric (aged 5, son of Sumaira and Adnan Masih, Pakistani refugee)

John Charles (aged 40, husband of Spana Charles, father of Ashir, Abiya, and Ethan, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan in 2014 after accused of blasphemy for having protested the blasphemy laws; detained in October 2018; **UPDATE:** still detained, has suffered from an untreated thyroid condition and back pain)

Spana Charles (aged 38, wife of John Charles, mother of Ashir, Abiya, and Ethan, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan in 2014 after her husband was accused of blasphemy for having protested the blasphemy laws)

Ashir (aged 10, child of Spana and John Charles, unable to attend school)

Abiya (aged 7, child of Spana and John Charles, unable to attend school)

Ethan (aged 4, child of Spana and John Charles, unable to attend school)

Barkat Masih (aged 60, husband of Parveen Barkat, diabetic, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan after being forced to sell his home under threat of a blasphemy accusation, detained in 2018; **UPDATE**: still detained, health condition unknown)

Parveen Barkat (aged 60, wife of Barkat Masih, Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan after being forced to sell her home under threat of a blasphemy accusation)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/baca-continue-to-support-families-of-pak-christian-asylum-detainees-in-bangkok>



India: Madras aka Chennai, Tamil Nadu state

Bishop Antony Pappusamy (objected to a judge's citing alleged cases of forced conversion during a hearing on a Christian school teacher accused of sexual harassment: "[the hearing] is not in any way connected with the question of religious conversion. Therefore, the said observation on religious conversion was unwarranted")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Bishop-rejects-as-false-and-gratuitous-warning-by-High-Court-of-harassment-risk-in-Christian-schools-47785.html>



Syria: Aleppo

Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh OFM (aged 47; **UPDATE**: said "The situation in Aleppo remains very difficult. Every day, we hear the sound of rockets falling on some parts of the city. And the attacks go up, deliberately, at Muslim holy days...we see the situation getting worse, but the problem is not only related to the fighting still taking place in many places. For those who have resisted and remained, the ongoing conflict and the instability strongly affect people already emotionally harmed, preventing us from truly beginning to live and think about the future...Syria is at its economic breaking point...Parish activities do not stop in summer. Although we try to slow down the pace a little, pastoral and humanitarian work take all our time and energy. We have just concluded the summer oratory, with the presence of over 300 children and about 50 educators, catechists, teachers, and collaborators at various levels. Now it's camp time. Many people with various needs knock at our door every day...A very positive and decidedly unexpected development is the fact that, despite fear and uncertainty, many young couples have decided to get married and build a new family together...We also see births increase. With great joy, in addition to accompanying young couples on their journey of preparation for the sacrament and later years, we accompany families who welcome a new life and prepare to celebrate baptism. We help them even in the more tangible needs of life...Caring for new families, who are the future of the whole community, makes us feel like Noah building a new ark in the desert to keep hope alive")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Aleppo-pastor-talks-about-building-hope-in-a-crescendo-of-violence-47757.html>



United Kingdom: London

Wilson Chowdhry (aged 44, British Pakistani Christian Association; **UPDATE:** resigned as director of the BPCA before he was implicated in an extramarital scandal)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/uk-watchdog-investigating-concerns-over-pakistani-christian-charity-director-resigns.html>

Sunday August 18, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Li Yingqiang (church elder, husband of Zhang Xinyue, detained on [December 11, 2018](#); reported on [December 21, 2018](#) to have been charged with 'stirring up trouble'; **UPDATE:** released on bail)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/early-rain-covenant-church-elder-freed.html>



India: on the road to Velankanni, Tamil Nadu state

Forty Christian pilgrims were attacked by Hindu radicals

Bishop Devadass Ambrose Mariadoss (condemned the attack: "This action carried out by Hindu radicals was completely senseless and gratuitous. Indian citizens are free to practice their religion according to the constitutional provisions of India. But this freedom has been reduced in recent times, as evidenced by the incident)

Fr L Sahayaraj (Tamil Nadu Bishops' Council deputy secretary, condemned the attack)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/66506-ASIA_INDIA_Violence_by_a_group_of_radical_Hindu_extremists_against_Catholic_pilgrims



Cameroon

Two priests were abducted in Kumbo, Bui department on August 15, 2019 by armed insurgents; UPDATE: released

Fr Franklin Banadzem Dindzee

Fr Patrick Atang

Cameroon: Wum

Angus Abraham Fung (aged over 60, Bible translator, **killed** by machete wielding Fulani Muslim herdsmen along with six others, wife survived the attack but lost an arm)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66509->

[AFRICA CAMEROON The two priests of Kumbo whose Bishop had denounced the violence against civilians have been released](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66509-)

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/bible-translator-butchered-to-death-in-cameroon-wifes-arm-chopped->

[off.html?uid=09e0ec8da6&utm_source=The+Christian+Post+List&utm_campaign=4eab6723b7-](https://www.christianpost.com/news/bible-translator-butchered-to-death-in-cameroon-wifes-arm-chopped-off.html?uid=09e0ec8da6&utm_source=The+Christian+Post+List&utm_campaign=4eab6723b7-)

[EMAIL CAMPAIGN 2019 08 29 04 11&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dce2601630-4eab6723b7-2984837](https://www.christianpost.com/news/bible-translator-butchered-to-death-in-cameroon-wifes-arm-chopped-off.html?uid=09e0ec8da6&utm_source=The+Christian+Post+List&utm_campaign=4eab6723b7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_08_29_04_11&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dce2601630-4eab6723b7-2984837)



United States - Puerto Rico: Ponce

Fr Stanislaw Szczepanik CM (missionary, Polish citizen, **killed in an apparent bicycle accident, police investigation opened after the body was found with suspicious wounds**)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66493->

[AMERICA PUERTO RICO Police are investigating the death of a Polish missionary](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66493-)

Monday August 19, 2019



China: Kunming, Yunnan province

Rev John Cao San Qiang (husband of Jamie Powell, father of Amos and Ben, U.S. resident, minister to Myanmar Christians, arrested at [the Myanmar border with China](#) on [March 5, 2017](#) and charged with illegal border crossing; sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment in [Pu'er, Yunnan province](#) on [March 23, 2018](#), fined US\$3,168; sentence upheld on appeal on [July 25, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: moved to Kunming Prison)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/08/north-carolina-pastor-moved-to-prison.html>

Wednesday August 21, 2019



Australia: Melbourne, Victoria state

Cardinal George Pell (aged 78, charged with multiple child sex abuse crimes in [June 2017](#), the police had opened a case against him a year before a complainant was found, most charges were then dismissed for "fundamental defects in evidence"; reported on [December 11, 2018](#) to have been convicted on five counts despite the trial having been held in secret, a previously unreported trial had ended in mistrial after 10 jurors voted to acquit, trial witnesses anonymously reported extensive prosecutorial misconduct; verdict announced on [February 27, 2019](#) after prosecutors decided to drop the remaining charges, taken into custody; sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment on [March 13, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied on a 2-1 vote, the dissenting judge wrote that his guilt had not been proved beyond a reasonable doubt)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/08/21/pell-loses-appeal/>



Pakistan: Butt Chowk area, Lahore

A Christian man and his brother were killed in his home after he stopped a Muslim child from removing stickers from his automobile

Javed Masih (son of Riaz Masih, brother of Suleman and Naveed Masih, father of Adeel, beaten by the father and uncle of the child he stopped from vandalizing his automobile, later **stabbed to death**)

Suleman Masih (son of Riaz Masih, brother of Javed and Naveed Masih, **stabbed** when he tried to save his brother Javed, hospitalized, **died**)

Adeel (son of Javed Masih, grandson of Riaz Masih, stabbed, survived)

Riaz Masih (father of Rehana, Naveed, Javed and Suleman Masih, said "I went to meet Amjad and Naveed's father, Abdul Majid, and requested him to solve this issue [regarding the

vandalism of the automobile stickers by Abdul's grandchild]. First of all, Majid accepted the apology, but later he came with his sons and stabbed both my boys repeatedly”)

Naveed Masih (filed a police report after the murder of his brothers)

Rehana (daughter of Riaz Masih, sister of Naveed, Javed and Suleman Masih, later said her family has been under pressure to drop the charges against her brothers' murderers)

<https://acnuk.org/news/pakistan-two-brothers-stabbed-to-death/>

Thursday August 22, 2019



Mexico: Matamoros

Fr Jose Martin Guzman Vega (aged 55. **stabbed** at his parish, hospitalized, **died**)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66518->

[AMERICA MEXICO Violent death of a priest the Church demands justice](#)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/mexican-bishops-call-for-justice-following-murder-of-priest-90245>

Friday August 23, 2019



Philippines: Cagayan De Oro City

Genifer Buckley (aged 24, Jesuit Volunteer, **stabbed to death** in her home)

Anne Kathleen Gatdula (aged 30, Jesuit Volunteer, attorney, stabbed in her home, escaped, hospitalized)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66529->

[ASIA PHILIPPINES Filipino female Jesuit volunteer killed the Church thanks her for the testimony of love and service](#)



India

Saree (aged 12, alias, convert, reported to have been healed of a hearing impediment at a church prayer meeting at age 11 before her conversion, repeatedly beaten by her father and brother when she continued to attend church, disowned by her family in part out of fear of persecution, said “I want to leave Him. But I can’t. There’s something there...”)

India: Kodaila area, Jamalpur village, Siwan district, Bihar state

A showing of the film *He Will Come Again* at the home of a Christian was interrupted by 250 upper caste Hindu radicals

Anandi (homeowner, sheltered the 5 film event organizers in her home from the mob, refused to turn them over in exchange for her own life)

Immanuel Tirkey (former attorney, film event organizer, said “The batch of Hindu villagers abused them [the village Christians] in filthy language, scattered the congregation and besieged the [Anandi] house. It was midnight, and soon a mob of 250 angry, upper-caste Hindus showed up with lathis [heavy sticks bound with iron] and steel rods...They were shouting at the family that they are supporting in converting Hindus to a foreign faith, and that we must be killed – ‘Release them to us. We will see their end,’ they kept shouting...We told them [the police, after they arrived] that we came here only to spend some time in prayer and fellowship and not to get anybody [i.e., the Hindu attackers] arrested and not to put anybody in trouble. When the police threatened the mob that they will be taken into custody for issuing death threats and vandalizing the vehicles, they fled away...Police told us to leave the vehicles there, as the Rajputs [upper-caste Hindus] had already clicked photographs and circulated them to the neighboring Hindu villagers, and we can be easily identified anywhere on our way back to Patna. The Christian villagers rode their bicycles for nearly five miles to drop us at Aandar”)

Arjun Das (aged 45, father of three, film event organizer, said “Several times [in 2004] I was slapped and pushed off for distributing gospel tracts in Siwan villages. This time, over 250 people were shouting, pelting stones and striking our vehicles. I felt very weak. We were locked inside and there was no other way to escape. I could sense that terror, and my daughters were worried and kept on ringing my phone. But at that moment I felt stronger when I remembered the Cross. Can’t I face this little thing for the Lord?...We did not go door-to-door inviting people – word passed on, and 100 gathered. They were touched watching this movie. We will go there again to meet the believers. This opposition is nothing before His power”)

Date: August 23, 2019

Location:

<https://www.opendoorsusa.org/christian-persecution/stories/i-was-only-11-beaten-and-left-on-the-streets-indian-girl-refuses-to-leave-jesus/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/hindu-extremists-demand-death-of-one-of-organizers-of-christian-film-in-india/>



Cyprus: Morphou

Metropolitan Neophytos Masouras (aged 57, reported to have had a police investigation opened after criticizing homosexuality, said “I expressed the position of the Church and the position of the saints” - it was his quoting the saints that were the core of the complaint)

<http://orthochristian.com/123591.html>

Saturday August 24, 2019



Iran: Evin Prison, Teheran

Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani (aged 40, husband of Fatema Pasindedih Nadarkhani, father of Daniel and Yoel, attacked by police during an early morning raid on his home in [Rasht](#) on [July 22, 2018](#), incapacitated with an electroshock weapon and then beaten, arrested; **UPDATE:** still in prison)

<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=34498>



Finland

Dr Paivi Maria Rasanen (aged 59, Member of Parliament, **UPDATE:** reported to be the subject of a police investigation after she criticized her church in a June 17, 2019 tweet for supporting Pride events, prosecution is unlikely due to the legal requirements necessary to strip her of her parliamentary immunity)

<https://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/anti-christian-persecution-in-finland/>

Sunday August 25, 2019



United States - South Carolina: Columbus

Esvin Perez (aged 23, shot in the stomach while praying in church, hospitalized in critical condition)

Pastor Henry Alfaro (witnessed the shooting)

<https://www.wltx.com/article/news/local/1-person-shot-at-columbia-church-by-robber-sunday-morning/101-20e773ee-9fca-4bb3-ab2d-026d5dcadd66>

Monday August 26, 2019



Myanmar

Rev Dr Hkalam Samson (secretary of the Kachin Baptist Convention; **UPDATE**: criminally charged with defamation for having told U.S. President Donald Trump in a July 17, 2019 Oval Office meeting “I’m...from Baptist Convention from Northern Burma. And then, as Christians in Myanmar, we are very been oppressed and tortured by the Myanmar military government”)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/myanmar-military-drops-criminal-case-against-pastor-who-told-trump-about-abuses.html>



Algeria: Ighzer Amokrane, Akbou district, Bejaia province

Pastor Brahim Bourouba (told by police on [August 10, 2019](#) that his church would be closed but that they would delay the order to give him time to appeal; **UPDATE**: attorney told police when they came to close the church that the order was not valid, police left)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/after-christians-in-algeria-prevented-church-closure-authorities-seal-it-shut/>

Tuesday August 27, 2019



India: Lukujhariya, Jharkhand state

Parvati Devi (aged 23, wife of Rohit Oraon, mother of Roshini, **killed with an axe** by her brother-in-law in revenge for the conversion of her husband, her Sarna [not Hindu] father-in-law was also an attacker but was accidentally killed)

Rohit Oraon (aged 25, convert, chef, witnessed his wife's murder at the hands of his brother “But I still cannot fathom how can his jealousy lead him to murder. After they killed my wife, they called for all the Christians to come out, saying, ‘We will get rid of all of you, once and for all’...I am very sure that my brother, my father and my uncles [father’s brothers] and their families had planned to kill all three of us, including my daughter”)

Roshini (aged 3, daughter of Parvati Devi and Rohit Oraon, witnessed her mother's murder, was manhandled in an apparent murder attempt but then released)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/young-father-in-india-shocked-at-why-relatives-attacked-him-daughter-and-killed-his-wife/>



Pakistan: Pakki Mar, Faisalabad

Maqbool Masih (slum resident, reported on the attempts of two Muslim brothers who have attempted to force Christians from their land which have included turning off water and causing sewage overflows: "The two brothers threaten to take our lands through their land grabbing henchmen. Christians have lived in this area for 125 years. The area is owned by the federal government who assigned them this area, declaring it a shanty [Katchi Abadi] town for the poor”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Thirty-Christian-families-threatened-with-expropriation-by-influential-Muslim-politicians-in-Faisalabad-47838.html>

Wednesday August 28, 2019



Pakistan: Lahore

Amir Masih (aged 25, husband, father of two sons aged 7 years and 4 days, gardener, reported to a police station with fellow employees after his employer reported a theft, taken into custody, beaten, urinated upon, called a 'filthy Christian')

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Lahore,-a-Christian-dies-of-torture-in-police-custody-47971.html>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pakistani-christian-accused-of-petty-crime-beaten-to-death-while-in-police-custody>



Ethiopia

Patriarch Mathias (aged 77, **UPDATE**: met with government officials to discuss the recent burnings of 18 churches and assaults and murders of clergy)

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/ethiopian-orthodox-patriarchate-slams-relentless-attack-on-churches-and-the-faithful/>



Algeria: Ighzer Amokrane, Akbou district, Bejaia province

Pastor Brahim Bourouba (told by police on [August 10, 2019](#) that his church would be closed but that they would delay the order to give him time to appeal; attorney told police when they came to close the church on [August 26, 2019](#) that the order was not valid, police left; **UPDATE**: police tried to close the church after forcing the building owner to sign a closure order, the attempt failed when Christians from other churches blocked the attempt)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/after-christians-in-algeria-prevented-church-closure-authorities-seal-it-shut/>



Nicaragua: Masaya

Fr Edwin Roman (**UPDATE**: church surrounded by paramilitaries and national riot police during a Mass for political prisoners)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/66535-AMERICA_NICARAGUA_Community_calls_for_the_release_of_political_prisoners_a_church_besieged_by_police



Mexico: Tlalixtac de Cabrera, Oaxaca state

Pastor Alfrery LÍctor Cruz Canseco (husband of Rosita, **shot** in his automobile after leaving a worship service, **died** en route to the hospital)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/08/killings-kidnapping-target-christian-leaders-in-mexico/>

Thursday August 29, 2019



Nigeria: on the way to the village of Takum

Fr David Tanko (‘young’ priest, **killed** by a Tiv militia while traveling to a peace meeting between Tiv and Jukun ethnic groups)

Nigeria: Kiri, Kaura county, Kaduna state

Jude Bako (reported on a Fulani Muslim attack “Five of our people have been killed, and two others are still missing as we do not know where the herdsmen took them to. The Fulani herdsmen attacked our village while we were still working on our farms. Our people who were in the village at the time were forced to flee for their lives, too”)

Musa Gabriel (later said “I escaped being killed by the herdsmen when they attacked us at about 4 p.m. Four of our people were killed during the attack, and the fifth person died from gunshot wounds yesterday morning, Friday”)

Daniel (aged 35, injured during the attack, later **died**)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/08/30/nigerian-priest-killed-as-car-set-ablaze/>
<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/nigeria-says-leah-sharibu-is-alive-herdsmen-attacks-continue/>



United States

Christian authors and former homosexuals criticized Amazon for refusing to sell books about their conversion stories

Anne Paulk (said “It is appalling that Amazon has banned books detailing how one struggling with unwanted same-sex attraction can overcome those feelings and steward his or her sexuality in a biblical fashion, while thinking nothing of selling books that celebrate the kind of deviancy Jeffrey Epstein was accused of”)

Joe Dallas (said "None of us will stop communicating the grace of God evidenced in our lives, and in the lives of those we serve")

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-authors-blast-amazon-banning-their-books-selling-pedophilia-titles.html>

Friday August 30, 2019



Philippines

Abduction charges were brought against Christian leaders, a former Senator, and an attorney

Fr Albert Alejo SJ (**UPDATE**: charged)

Sr Ling FDCC (charged)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Priest-and-nun-accused-of-kidnapping-47872.html>



China

Tang Jingling (civil rights attorney, husband of Wang Yanfang, law license revoked in 2006; detained in 2012, held for 5 days; arrested in 2014; sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on January 29, 2016; released on April 29, 2019; **UPDATE**: reported to have disappeared, may have been arrested)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/09/human-rights-lawyer-tang-jingling.html>



India: Mulki, Karnataka state

Fr Abraham D'Souza SVD (retreat center director, accused of a forced conversion by a prominent Hindu nationalist, said the Hindu in question had come to the center voluntarily and had not converted: "There is absolutely no conversion. No baptism. He wants to come again too. This is false, baseless and motivated allegations")

Archbishop Peter Machado (**UPDATE**: defended Fr Abraham D'Souza)

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/08/hindu-nationalists-accuse-catholic-retreat-center-of-forced-conversions/>



Turkey

Ismail Falahati aka Esmaeel Falahati (convert, husband, father of two, Iranian citizen, asylum request deportation order issued, may be deported back to Iran)

<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=34616>



United Kingdom: Trent College

Rev Dr Bernard Randall (aged 46, school chaplain, discovered on [July 1, 2019](#) that his school had reported him to the police as a possible terrorism risk after he gave a homily telling students that they were free to respectfully disagree on Christian principles with the school's new LGBT curricula, later stated: “I was terrified. I did not sleep. What was I supposed to tell my family? Being reported as a potential terrorist, extremist and a danger to children are arguably the worst crimes you could be accused of...When I found out that they had reported me without telling me, my mind was blown trying to comprehend it. I had gone to such lengths in the sermon to stress that we must respect one another no matter what, even people we disagree with”; **UPDATE**: told that he would be dismissed, but the dismissal was later overruled by the school governors, later stated “During the disciplinary hearing, I was never asked what I thought, they just assumed that I had extreme religious views. I don’t think the Church of England is an extremist organization”)

<https://christianconcern.com/news/school-chaplain-reported-to-terrorist-watchdog-for-sermon-on-identity-politics/>



United States – Texas: Austin

Andy Schoonover (Austin LifeCare CEO, reported that his pro-life women's center had been damaged with 'Liars' and 'Fake clinic' graffiti, said “We are not surprised. After all, we had a rock thrown through the window just a couple of months back...We are fighting for women and their babies. This just comes with the territory...These folks think that we are trying to lure women into our clinic by convincing them that we provide abortions, then trying to strongarm them into keeping their babies. This is the farthest from the truth. We make it abundantly clear [we neither perform nor refer for abortions] to ensure that we do not mislead our clients. As for the ‘Fake Clinic,’ I invite anyone to come down and see us, meet our R.N., Nurse Practitioner, and RDMS licensed sonographers to see for themselves whether or not we are a fake clinic”)

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/vandals-attack-newly-finished-texas-pro-life-pregnancy-center>

Saturday August 31, 2019



Iran: Evin Prison, Tehran

Fatimeh Bakherti (aged 37, convert, home raided by police during a [May 25, 2017](#) worship service, several Christians arrested; sentenced in [Tehran](#) on [September 22, 2018](#) to 12 months' imprisonment for 'spreading propaganda against the regime'; ordered by a [Tehran](#) court on [January 15, 2019](#) to renounce her faith to avoid prison, refused; **UPDATE:** began her prison sentence)

<https://www.meconcern.org/2019/09/03/iran-christian-convert-starts-one-year-prison-sentence/>



Nigeria

Leah Nathan Sharibu (aged 16, student, abducted by Boko Haram on [February 19, 2018](#); subject of a [October 16, 2018](#) Boko Haram announcement that she would be a "slave for life" due to her refusal to convert to Islam; **UPDATE:** reported by the government to still be alive)

Nigeria: Kaduna state

Rev Elisha Noma (aged 60, abducted by Fulani Muslims along with his son Emmanuel from their home in [Makiri, Kaduna state](#) on [August 14, 2019](#), son released; **UPDATE:** released after payment of a ransom of US\$8,181, had been tortured so that his family could hear his cries over his cell phone)

Deacon James Kantiyok (said of the release of Rev Elisha Noma “We can’t hold back our joy for his freedom, despite all he went through. Let’s all pray for his total recovery as he is currently receiving medical treatment. We thank you all for praying with the family and the church”)

Rev Joseph Hayab (said "he [Rev Elisha Noma] was released after a ransom was paid following a series of negotiations with the bandits on the ransom. We thank God for his mercies. We pray for God’s intervention in the calamity that seems to have befallen us as a nation”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/nigeria-says-leah-sharibu-is-alive-herdsmen-attacks-continue/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/09/kidnapped-baptist-pastor-in-nigeria-freed-after-17-days-of-torture/>

August 2019, date unknown

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