

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – September 2019

Sunday September 1, 2019



Indonesia

Archbishop Ignatus Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo (aged 69, **UPDATE**: elevated to the College of Cardinals)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mgr-Suharyos-appointment-as-cardinal-causes-joy-and-pride-in-Indonesia-47894.html>



India: Worli Naka, Mumbai

Rev Allen Salins (invited speaker at a religious conference that was shut down by police after local Bajrang Dal Hindu radicals interrupted it, said "We were all shocked. We had organized the event to pray and sing. There was no threat to public order. The New Life Fellowship Association paid the school to hold the meeting")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mumbai,-Hindu-radicals-block-a-Pentecostal-gathering.-Pastor-denounced-for-forced-conversions-47909.html>



Ukraine: Kopytov village

Bishop Pimen (assaulted by members of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine while visiting his parents' home, said "This is already the fifth month that the church I went to as a child belongs to the supporters of the OCU. It is forbidden for me and other believers who are attached to the church in their souls to go inside. So I decided to approach their 'priest,' who now lives in the village, and ask to go inside. He kindly agreed and took me to the church, but the activists who live nearby saw it and came and started kicking me to get me to leave and insulting me. My subdeacon partially got it on camera. I had no intention

of creating a conflict; I simply went to the church. I believe I have the right. I tried to talk, to demonstrate it, but all in vain: I had to leave the church, no matter how it rent my soul. While leaving, I saw from the car some guys on bikes from the neighboring village who had probably come to kick out the 'Moscow priest.' I recalled the words of the Gospel: Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do")

<http://orthochristian.com/123551.html>



Lithuania

Archbishop Sigitas Tamkevicius SJ (aged 85, **UPDATE**: elevated to the College of Cardinals)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Tamkevicius,-the-Cardinal-of-Soviet-dissent-47888.html>

Monday September 2, 2019



Pakistan: Lahore

Amir Masih (aged 25, husband, father of two sons aged 7 years and 8 days, gardener, reported to a police station on [August 28, 2019](#) with fellow employees after his employer reported a theft, taken into custody, beaten, urinated upon, called a 'filthy Christian'; **UPDATE**: released, hospitalized in a semi-conscious state, **died, body showed signs of extensive torture**)

<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>



Sweden

Aideen Strandsson (convert, refugee from Iran, as of [July 28, 2017](#) has been scheduled for deportation back to Iran despite a high risk of imprisonment; still facing deportation to Iran as of [March 14, 2018](#), denied employment by the government, martial arts certificate seized by the government; no date set for the appeal of her deportation order as of [June 8,](#)

2018, denied a work permit and welfare benefits; married Pastor Cai Berger on July 10, 2018; **UPDATE:** reported to have been granted refugee status and residency)

<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=34700>



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; police tried to close the church on August 28, 2019 after forcing the building owner to sign a closure order, the attempt failed when Christians from other churches blocked the attempt, **UPDATE:** police attempted to close the church but relented when the owner could not be found)

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

Tuesday September 3, 2019



India: Himachal Pradesh state

Sajan K George (Global Council of Indian Christians president, **UPDATE:** criticized the state government for adding new provisions to its anti-conversion laws, including a provision that targets mixed marriages)

India: Mundli, Jharkhand state

Fr Thomas Kuzhively SJ (denounced government inaction that allowed a mob of 500 to destroy his college "Everything is destroyed. We can't reopen college. The attackers shattered the windows, bent the fan blades on the ceiling, damaged the exhaust pipes, the furniture, the electrical panels and the stereo system. After devastating the school, they went on to the hostel, destroying CCTVs, bulletin boards, chairs, benches, pictures hanging on the wall and everything they encountered on their way. Not satisfied they tried to harass the sisters and the girls. Finally they broke into the veranda where some motorcycles were parked, smashing them into pieces, then they stole three used phones from the hostel's kids and

the money stored in the principal's office. The estimated damage of the entire devastation amounts to 1.5 million rupees [US\$20,850]...Why was no one arrested after eight days? Is this not letting these antisocial elements take over, being passive [to their] cynical activities? It is obvious that someone from outside fomented them")

Fr Nobor Bilung SJ (college principal, beaten by the mob)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Sajan-K-George,-Himachal-Pradeshs-new-anti-conversion-law-is-anti-Christian-47903.html>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Jharkhand,-Hindu-radicals-devastate-a-Jesuit-college.-'Completley-destroyed'-47981.html>

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66609->

[ASIA INDIA Acts of vandalism by militant Hindu extremists on a Jesuit College](http://www.ucanews.com/news/attacked-jesuit-mission-seeks-action-in-eastern-india/86088)
<http://www.ucanews.com/news/attacked-jesuit-mission-seeks-action-in-eastern-india/86088>

Wednesday September 4, 2019



Papua New Guinea: Alotau

Bishop Rolando Crisostomo Santos (aged 70, Filipino citizen, arrested after he reported on Facebook that drunken police had burned 19 homes, released)

Gregory Nimagale (acting diocesan education secretary, house burned by drunken police on September 1, 2019, arrested after Bishop Rolando Crisostomo Santos reported the police attack on Facebook, released)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Alotau-Bishop-investigated-for-defamation-after-posting-online-a-story-about-police-abuse-47989.html>



Cyprus: Morphou

Metropolitan Neophytos Masouras (aged 57, reported on [August 23, 2019](#) 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; **UPDATE**: case sent by police to prosecutors with a finding of no criminal offense)

Bishop Christophoros Tsiakas (aged 55, said “The Metropolitan of Morphou said some truths. He said that people who are enslaved to carnality will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

The enemies of the Church began to fight [Met. Neophytos], and many Christians joined them”)

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



United States - California

The state legislature passed a resolution, ACR99, that called on Christians to refuse to convert homosexuals

Pastor Dan Carroll (earlier said "It's not a law. That's really important to say. Nobody's being forced to do anything...The thing that we agreed with the LGBTQ caucus on was that we are not for any kind of coercive behavior on the part of leaders or counselors or pastors. And as we shared with the LGBTQ caucus, we don't know anybody in California, that's Christian that is actually doing what they're suggesting that we're doing")

Russell Willingham (New Creation Ministries executive director, earlier said "ACR discriminates against perfectly rational adults who seek an alternate viewpoint to the gay-affirming counseling many of them have already tried and found wanting. I believe ACR99 sets the stage for future laws that will criminalize pastor caregivers like me who provide such a resource - resources that offer an option for those who don't want what the state is telling them they must accept")

Dean Broyles (National Center for Law and Policy President, earlier said "This resolution will not foster or promote the classic liberal ideals of authentic tolerance, diversity, or inclusion. It will crush them and destroy them. ACR 99 represents a misguided authoritarian attempt to coercively mold the beliefs of California's citizens regarding controversial and sensitive issues on human sexuality, and thus will only serve to chill and suppress the freedom of thought, speech, conscience, and religion of our citizens—safeguarded by the First Amendment")

Jonathan Keller (California Family Council President, earlier said "California Christians love our neighbors who identify as LGBTQ. Sadly, it appears Assemblyman Low and other intolerant legislators will not stop until people of faith publicly celebrate the legislature's preferred concept of sexual orientation and gender identity")

https://www.theepochtimes.com/california-legislature-pass-resolution-attacking-religious-liberty_3079010.html

<https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2019/august/ca-christians-say-resolution-condemns-religious-leaders-who-oppose-lgbtq-lifestyles>

Friday September 6, 2019



China

Mr Huang (reported to have said that the government had begun to close Christian orphanages out of fear that the children would be taught religion)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/09/shanxi-authorities-remove-children-from.html>



India: Jharkhand state

Three Christians were arrested on forced conversion and illegal occupation of land charges

Fr Arun Vincent (later released)

Fr Benoy John

Munna Hansda (catechist)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Jharkhand,-two-Catholic-priests-and-a-catechist-arrested-for-forced-conversions-47950.html>



Azerbaijan: Baku

Safiya Ahmed Abdul Razzaq Wahed (aged 41, convert, wife of Wahed Abdul, mother of Warda and Saif, Pakistani citizen, fled the United Arab Emirates with her family after her conversion was discovered and her husband's business license was revoked when he refused to divorce her, applied for asylum in Canada, husband remained Muslim but came to support her conversion, said "I know that Christianity is not easy life but still my faith is much stronger than these problems. My parents are dead, and my brothers and sisters are not with me but still I trust In Jesus")

Warda (aged 16, convert, daughter of Safiya Ahmed Abdul Razzaq Wahed and Wahed Abdul, tweeted "Now we also have problems in our life but we will not leave our faith because we never felt what we feel now and whenever we pray calling his name 'Jesus Christ' we feel that he will do for us because he knows what's better for us because he saved us till now together")

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/wife-converts-to-christianity-family-face-death-threats-deportation>



United States - Colorado

Mark Haas (archdiocesan spokesman, responded to a lawsuit that sought to compel a Christian hospital to administer euthanasia: “asking a Christian hospital to play any role in violating the dignity of human life is asking the Christian hospital to compromise its values and core mission. This is not the hospital forcing its beliefs upon others, but rather having outside views forced upon it”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/suit-challenges-religious-liberty-of-catholic-hospitals-over-assisted-suicide-95442>

Saturday September 7, 2019



Guatemala: Suchitepequez

Diana Isabel Hernandez Juarez (aged 35, teacher, pastoral worker, **shot dead**)

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/66594-AMERICA GUATEMALA Pastoral worker committed to defending creation killed](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66594-AMERICA_GUATEMALA_Pastoral_worker_committed_to_defending_creation_killed)

Sunday September 8, 2019



United States – California: Chula Vista

Pastor Amado Huizar (church vandalized with satanic graffiti after he and his parishioners joined public opposition to a public library Drag Queen Story Hour)

United States – Massachusetts: Lynn

Fr George Tsoukalas (church including icons vandalized with satanic and anarchic graffiti)

Arthur Argeros (parish council president, said “Somebody has got a sick mind to think this is okay”)

United States - New York: Hollis section, Queens borough, New York City

Rev Joseph Jude Gannon (church vandalized)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/brooklyn-diocese-teaming-with-nypd-to-search-for-church-vandal-27459>

<https://www.christianpost.com/us/church-vandalized-satanic-graffiti-pastor-protests-drag-queen-story-hour.html>

<https://www.boston25news.com/news/-somebody-s-got-a-sick-mind-lynn-church-taking-vandalism-personally/984199179>

<http://orthochristian.com/123742.html>

Monday September 9, 2019



Myanmar

Rev Dr Hkalam Samson (secretary of the Kachin Baptist Convention; criminally charged with defamation on [August 26, 2016](#) 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”; **UPDATE**: acquitted after the complainant withdrew the charge)

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

Tuesday September 10, 2019



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](#); reported on [August 30, 2019](#) to have disappeared, may have been arrested; **UPDATE**: reported to have been released after 10 days' detention, escorted back to his home)

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

Wednesday September 11, 2019



United States - Washington state

Barronelle Stutzman (aged 74, sued by the state attorney general in [April 2013](#) for declining to provide floral arrangements for a [Richland](#) same-sex wedding; found guilty on [February 18, 2015](#); the Washington state Supreme Court upheld the ruling on appeal on [February 16, 2017](#); the U.S. Supreme Court vacated the lower court ruling on [June 25, 2018](#) and returned the case to the Washington Supreme Court for re-evaluation in the light of the similar *Masterpiece Cakeshop* decision; the Washington state Supreme Court upheld the ruling again on [June 6, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: appealed her case again to the U.S. Supreme Court)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/florist-appeals-to-supreme-court-for-second-time-over-same-sex-wedding-case-17017>

Sunday September 15, 2019



United States - New York: Hollis section, Queens borough, New York City

Rev Joseph Jude Gannon (church vandalized on [September 8, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: commented on the second vandalism of his church by a woman with a hacksaw “It’s a kick in the stomach. It hurts...Such acts of religious intolerance have no place within our society, and every house of worship, regardless of their beliefs, should be respected”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/brooklyn-diocese-teaming-with-nypd-to-search-for-church-vandal-27459>

Monday September 16, 2019



India: Rajatha, Godda district, Jharkhand state

Fr Benoy John (aged 42, arrested on [September 6, 2019](#) on forced conversion and illegal occupation of land charges; **UPDATE**: released on bail, hospitalized for a heart condition)

Munna Hansda (catechist, arrested on [September 6, 2019](#) on forced conversion and illegal occupation of land charges; **UPDATE**: still in jail)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Priest-accused-of-forced-conversion-in-Jharkhand-released-on-bail-48033.html>

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/09/catholic-priest-let-off-on-bail-after-7-day-detention/>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/priest-bailed-amid-anti-christian-campaign-in-eastern-india/86124>



Niger

Fr Pierluigi Maccalli SMA (Italian national, abducted from [Bomoanga](#) by jihadists on [September 18, 2018](#), probably taken over the border into Burkina Faso; **UPDATE**: still missing)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66634->

[AFRICA_NIGER_The_whole_community_awaits_Fr_Maccalli_in_prayer](#)



United States - Arizona

Two Christian artists filed suit in [May 2016](#) to block a [Phoenix](#) municipal ordinance that would require them to cater to same sex weddings; the court ruled against them in [September 2016](#); the court ruled again against them in [October 2017](#); an appellate court ruled against them in [June 2018](#); filed an appeal to the state supreme court on [July 9, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: **the state supreme court ruled 4-3 that the artists could not be compelled to create custom wedding invitations in violation of their religious beliefs**

Breanna Koski

Joanna Duka

<https://www.christianpost.com/us/christian-artists-cant-be-forced-to-make-same-sex-wedding-invitations-ariz-supreme-court-rules.html>

Tuesday September 17, 2019



India: Jharkhand state

Charlis Hansda (tribal leader, reported to have been accused of forced conversion and illegal occupation of land, has fled to avoid arrest)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/priest-bailed-amid-anti-christian-campaign-in-eastern-india/86124>

Wednesday September 18, 2019



United States – California: Newport Beach

Pastor Jim Domen (husband of Amanda, father of three, former homosexual, church's Vimeo account including 89 videos deleted on [November 24, 2018](#) for 5 videos Vimeo incorrectly claimed advocated conversion therapy, later said "The only thing the videos did was tell stories of transformation, of how Jesus transformed my life. I didn't call [homosexuality] out as sin. I didn't call out any LGBT people. It was exclusively just speaking of my own personal story and others like mine"; **UPDATE**: reported to have filed suit against Vimeo claiming US\$75,000 in damages)

<https://www.charismanews.com/us/78043-formerly-gay-pastor-sues-vimeo-for-censoring-his-videos-deleting-his-account>

Thursday September 19, 2019



India

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE**: Published a commentary entitled *Christians, wake up now*: "...The situation in India today, on all fronts, would be much worse than that of El Salvador during the time of Romero...The recent happenings against the Christians and other vulnerable communities are not mere aberrations or one-off incidents by 'passing mobs'. They are systematic and calculated attempts by the Hindutva forces in connivance with the ruling regime, to denigrate the Christians and other minorities and to put them on

the backfoot: these forces, who are against a secular, pluralistic India and the values enshrined in the Constitutions, unleash on the country their insidious agenda, towards the establishment of a Hindu nation-State...Given, what is happening in the country today there seems to a pathetic lack of response from the Christian community in general and from Church leadership in particular. There has been no outrage from the community to what is happening in Kashmir or Assam; no protests when freedom of speech and expression is being throttled or when human rights defenders are being harassed and even killed...Christians, Wake Up NOW! Tomorrow will be too late! We are called to play a prophetic role in India today! We need to become Romeros for our country!")

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/09/christian-wake-up-now/>



Russia

Over 80 Russian clergy both inside and outside the country signed an appeal to the government asking for police and legal restraint against peaceful protestors, including for a man sentenced to 4 years in a prison camp for holding a banner quoting the late Soviet era martyr Fr Alexander Men "Mercy is everything we aspire to"

Protoiereus Oleg Batov (theologian)

Fr Alexander Borisov

Fr Ioann Guaita (**UPDATE**)

Fr Vladimir Zelinsky (Italian resident)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Russian-priests-defend-rights-of-arrested-protesters-48042.html>

September 2019, date unknown

Today's Martyrs

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<http://todaysmartyrs.org/events/>

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