

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – October 2019

Tuesday October 1, 2019



Pakistan: Peshawar

Fr Emmanuel Yousuf Mani (director of the National Commission of Justice and Peace;

UPDATE: condemned the government order to seize Edwardes College, said it would weaken the ability of Christians to contribute to the nation's progress)

Bishop Joseph Arshad (**UPDATE:** said "Christian Churches are doing a great job for the development of the Country, we want to continue working to improve the community, especially in the education sector. We condemn the decision of the government of the province of Khyber PakhthunKhwa [KPK] and we appeal to revoke the order of nationalization of Edwardes College...these actions can influence the quality and level of education of the institution. Educational work must not stop because of political intervention")

Cecil Shane Chaudhry (**UPDATE:** said the government order was "the sabotage of the rights of religious minorities")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66774->

[ASIA_PAKISTAN_Churches_No_to_the_nationalization_of_an_ancient_Christian_college](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66774-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Churches_No_to_the_nationalization_of_an_ancient_Christian_college)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/NCJP-against-the-nationalisation-of-a-Christian-college-in-Peshawar-48247.html>

Wednesday October 2, 2019



China: Macao

Rev Cyril Jerome Law Jr (diocesan chancellor, issued a statement criticizing the government for projecting a Communist Party slide show onto an historical church ruin: "Although the

façade is no longer church property, it remains a symbol of the Catholic Faith in Macau...As the façade of St Paul's represents the profound and long-standing Catholic heritage in Macau, the Diocese wishes to propose that, should there be other 'mapping shows' to be held in the future, their contents would do well to be related to the religious context of the said monument")

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Diocese-of-Macao:-No-to-Party-slideshow-on-facade-of-St.-Pauls-church-of-\(Video\)-48171.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Diocese-of-Macao:-No-to-Party-slideshow-on-facade-of-St.-Pauls-church-of-(Video)-48171.html)



United Kingdom: London

Dr David Mackereth (aged 56, reported on [July 8, 2018](#) to have been fired from the National Health Service for claiming that gender has a biological basis; reported on [July 12, 2019](#) to have attended a court hearing, told that his Christian beliefs were not legitimate because other Christians did not hold them; **UPDATE:** the Employment Tribunal issued a ruling that upheld his dismissal and stated that his Christian beliefs regarding gender are not 'worthy of respect in a democratic society', said "I am not alone in being deeply concerned by this outcome. Staff in the NHS, even those who do not share my Christian convictions, are also disturbed as they see their own freedom of thought and speech being undermined by the judges' ruling. No doctor, or researcher, or philosopher, can demonstrate or prove that a person can change sex. Without intellectual and moral integrity, medicine cannot function and my 30 years as a doctor are now considered irrelevant compared to the risk that someone else might be offended. I believe that I have to appeal in order to fight for the freedom of Christians – and any other NHS member of staff – to speak the truth. If they cannot, then freedom of speech has died in this country, with serious ramifications for the practice of medicine in the UK")

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns; **UPDATE:** said "This is an astonishing judgment and one that if upheld will have seismic consequences not just for the NHS and for Christians, but anyone in the work place who is prepared to believe and say that we are created male and female. It is deeply disturbing that this is the first time in the history of English law that a judge has ruled that free citizens must engage in compelled speech. Here Judge Perry has ruled that Christianity is not protected by the Equality Act or the ECHR [European Convention on Human Rights], unless it is a version of Christianity which recognizes transgenderism and rejects a belief in Genesis 1:27. The teaching of Genesis 1:27 is repeated throughout the Bible, including by Jesus Christ himself. It is fundamental to establishing the dignity of every human person but is, in a bizarre ironic twist, being branded as incompatible with that dignity. No protection is given to beliefs 'incompatible with human dignity' and 'not worthy of respect in a democratic society'. In the past this definition has only applied to the most extreme beliefs, such as those of Holocaust deniers, neo-Nazis, and similar. It is quite shocking for the judge to put the belief in the Bible in the same category now. This is one of the most concerning rulings we have ever seen at the Christian Legal Centre and we are determined to continue to fight for justice in this case")

<https://christianconcern.com/news/doctors-biblical-belief-ruled-incompatible-with-human-dignity/>



Colombia: Comuneros district, Villavicencio, Cauca

Fr Jhony Ramos (aged 53, **killed** in his rectory in an apparent robbery)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/66727->

[AMERICA COLOMBIA A parish priest in Cauca killed a battleground between old and new armed gangs](http://www.fides.org/en/news/66727-AMERICA_COLOMBIA_A_parish_priest_in_Cauca_killed_a_battleground_between_ol_d_and_new_armed_gangs)



United States – Iowa: Fort Dodge

Rev Al Henderson (aged 64, **found unresponsive outside his church with injuries consistent with an assault**, hospitalized, **died**)

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/crime/iowa-pastor-who-helped-public-safety-agencies-dies-after-being-attacked-at-his-church/ar-AAIfqzx?ocid=spartanntp>

United States – Texas: Dallas

Judge Tammy Kemp (subject of a judicial complaint filed by the Freedom From Religion Foundation, the complaint was in retaliation for her gift of her personal Bible to a former policewoman she had just sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for the murder of youth pastor Bothan Shem Jean)

https://twitter.com/BlakeFox4News/status/1179835378666106882?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1179835378666106882&ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theamericanconservative.com%2Fdreher%2F

Thursday October 3, 2019



Nigeria: Kakau Daji village, Chikun county

Fulani Muslim gunmen attacked a parochial high school, abducted six students and two staff members, demanded an initial ransom of US\$82,327 per student

Joel Adamu (vice principal of academics, abducted)

Julde Juli (father of a 15 year old daughter, daughter abducted, said “I was shocked on receiving the news of the kidnapping of my daughter and other students. I just pray that nothing happens to them, and that they come out alive. I trust that our God is sovereign over all things. We are trusting that through divine intervention our children would be rescued”)

Shunom Giwa (vice principal, described the attack: “They asked me to lie down, and I did as instructed. They then attempted to enter my bedroom and, fully aware that my wife and children were inside, I stood up to distract them, but they asked me to lie down again, which I did...When I discovered that their attention was on my colleague [Joel Adamu], I just ran into the bush, and on realizing I was escaping, they shot at me, but fortunately they didn’t get me. They searched for me without success, and when they couldn’t get me, they started looking for where the students were”, attempted to feign a call to police by shouting “Police, JTF [Joint Task Force] security come, there are kidnappers here! On hearing me shouting, they began to shoot at to my direction again. I then ran and jumped over the fence and ran out of the school”)

Samuel Amamchukwu (school director, announced the suspension of classes: “We can’t continue with academic activities while the six students and two staff are in captivity”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/10/six-girls-two-staff-members-kidnapped-from-christian-run-high-school-in-nigeria/>

Saturday October 5, 2019



India: Bagdogra, West Bengal state

Rev Bryan Nerren (U.S. citizen, husband of Rhonda Nerren, detained after not possessing forms needed for the importation of money - customs officials had admitted him without giving him the forms, passport confiscated, doctor spat on the jail floor when he admitted he was a Christian)

Sajan K George (Global Council of Indian Christians; **UPDATE**: commented on the arrest of Rev Bryan Nerren: “whilst it is unclear why he was arrested, foreigners who take part in Church initiatives are routinely detained...[he] filled the forms he was requested to fill. He followed all protocols he was given. He was cleared and freed to go [in New Delhi], but was arrested as he stepped off the plane in Bagdogra...It is a common sight to see foreign tourists participate enthusiastically in the Kumbh Mela and other [Hindu] religious festivals in India. They are rightly treated as honored guests. Why this discrimination against Christians?”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/American-clergyman-held-for-three-weeks-in-West-Bengal-48424.html>



Palestine: Bet Jala

Terez Ta'amneh (aged 63, Jordanian citizen, mother of Marian al-Hajal and Yusef, **collapsed and died in a police raid on her home** when the police held a gun to her son's head and threatened to shoot him)

Yusef (son of Terez Ta'amneh, brother of Marian al-Hajal, beaten by police and threatened with death during a raid on his home, placed under arrest for a financial dispute)

Marian al-Hajal (daughter of of Terez Ta'amneh, brother of Yusef and another sister, later said of the police beating of her brother: "My mother told them that Yusef suffers from diabetes and high blood pressure. She begged them to stop beating him. In response, the commander of the force, Jamal Hmeid [nephew of Bethlehem's governor], pointed a pistol at my brother's head and threatened to open fire. He told my mother: We all have orders to open fire at him. I don't know what happened to her, but she fell to the ground and died...The next day, my sister and I went to the hospital to retrieve my mother's body and prepare her for burial. We were shocked to find that my mother's body was not in the morgue. We were told that the body was sent for autopsy. Who gave them the right to perform an autopsy on our mother's body without our knowledge? As a Palestinian citizen, I have no confidence in the Palestinian forensic institute. I also have no confidence in the Palestinian law. I'm sure the results of the autopsy will be in favor of the police, and not in favor of my mother...The Palestinian Authority has been offering us money to remain silent. They are trying to bribe us so we would remain silent about the crimes of the police", appealed to the King of Jordan for assistance)

<https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/15150/palestinian-christmas-show?anid=4>

Sunday October 6, 2019



India: Jewel area, Jammu

The August 2019 abrogation of the Indian Constitution provisions regarding Jammu and Kashmir and the imposition of direct rule from New Delhi resulted in a curtailment of organized Christian worship

Pastor Packiya Raj (husband of Rajakani, abducted from a worship service, beaten, released at a police station, charged by police with suspicion of committing a breach of peace, later said "A mob of 25 strongmen joined the two persons [who abducted him], and they forcefully boarded me in a vehicle and took me to a garage and then to a village nearby.

They started badgering, ‘Tell us, how many more like you are in Jammu? How many believers did you get here? What are you doing in Hindus’ houses? Where are your believers and pastors, tell us their address?’...The police didn’t help me, and they told me that prayers should be done inside a church and not at home. The police officials told me that it is my mistake that I have gone to someone’s house, and the local people are angered. It is a very natural reaction, they said...They [Hindu extremists] told the police, ‘There were six to seven ladies in the house. We don’t know what this fellow was doing inside’. They tried falsely to book a stronger case against me, but by God’s grace my wife and son also reached there, and police didn’t pay heed to these allegations...The doctors told me that both my eardrums were damaged, and that I should undergo an operation. By God’s grace, both the operations were successful...I live in a rental house here, and it is not safe as the people connected to the assailants also live very close by, and I am constantly under watch. If I speak any louder, they can hear me”)

Rajakani (wife of Pastor Packiya Raj, along with their son saved her husband from police charges)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/11/police-extremists-use-clampdown-in-jammu-and-kashmir-india-to-thwart-christians/>

Monday October 7, 2019



Thailand

Humaira (Pakistani asylum applicant, detained along with her children in 2018 on visa violations; **UPDATE**: reported to have been released on bail, husband still detained)

Sumaira Adnan (aged 30, wife of Adhan Masih, mother of two sons aged 5 and 10, Pakistani asylum applicant, as of July 3, 2018 has worked as a teacher at an underground school for the children of asylum seekers; detained with her two sons on October 9, 2018; released on bail with her children on November 16, 2018; **UPDATE**: school reported 'reduced [in] value' due to detention and flight of students)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/humaira-one-of-many-asylum-seekers-we-have-helped-in-pakistan-thanks-bpca-for-our-support>



Pakistan

Nabeel Masih (aged 18, 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**: still imprisoned)

Zafar Bhatti (aged 50, husband of Nawab Bibi, unemployed due to health reasons, illiterate, arrested on blasphemy charges on [July 23, 2012](#) for allegedly sending 3 blasphemous text messages to extremist Islamic cleric Molvi Abrar Ahmed; convicted on [May 3, 2017](#), sentenced to life imprisonment; **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

James Nadeem (brother of Najma and Samreen, accused in [Lahore](#) on or before [July 10, 2016](#) of sending a blasphemous poem via social media; arrested on [July 14, 2016](#), case likely triggered by his marriage to a Muslim woman who converted to Christianity, the pastor who baptized his wife has fled into hiding; sentenced to death in [Lahore](#) on [September 14, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

Stephen Masih (aged 38 or 42, brother of Alia and Francis, mentally disabled, beaten by a mob on [March 11, 2019](#) after he was heard yelling at his family about Lent in their home in [Imranpura, Wadiala, Sialkot district, Punjab province](#), arrested on blasphemy charges; **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/blasphemy-victims-younever-knew-bpca-was-supporting>



Kenya: Thatha, Machakos county

Fr Michael Maingi Kyengo (aged 43, abducted)

<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001345663/catholic-priest-kidnapped-murdered-and-buried-in-shallow-grave>

http://www.fides.org/en/news/66800-AFRICA_KENYA_Priest_kidnapped_and_killed

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/10/catholic-priest-murdered-in-kenya-latest-in-string-of-killings/>

Tuesday October 8, 2019



China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (underground bishop; taken by police for indoctrination in [late September 2019](#); **UPDATE**: released)

<https://bitterwinter.org/bishop-shao-zhumin-once-again-taken-in-for-indoctrination/>



Russia: St Petersburg

Olga Glamozdinova (fined US\$155 in [September 2017](#) for hosting her church's services in her home in [Veselyi, Rostov oblast](#) as an 'unintended purpose'; **UPDATE**: appealed her case to the Constitutional Court)

<https://barnabasfund.org/en/news/christian-brings-landmark-case-in-russia-over-right-to-worship-in-private-homes>

Wednesday October 9, 2019



China

Pastor Michael Yu (dual U.S.-Taiwanese citizen, arrested in [Shanghai](#) on [April 4, 2019](#) along with more than 20 Christians, released, prevented from leaving the country; **UPDATE**: allowed to leave the country, flew to Los Angeles)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/american-pastor-allowed-home.html>

Thursday October 10, 2019



China: Korla, Xinjiang

Jiang Xijun (reported on [June 12, 2019](#) to have been indicted in the [Xinjiang region](#) on charges of using an 'evil religious organization'; **UPDATE**: reported to have been chained to weights, forced to walk on all fours, attempted suicide)

Xu Yanli (reported on [June 12, 2019](#) to have been indicted in the [Xinjiang region](#) on charges of using an 'evil religious organization'; **UPDATE**: reported to have been 'humiliated' in a women's prison, head shaved)

Huang Li (reported to have been 'humiliated' in a women's prison, head shaved)

Yang Hua (reported on [June 12, 2019](#) to have been indicted in the [Xinjiang region](#) on charges of using an 'evil religious organization'; **UPDATE**: reported to have been 'humiliated' in a women's prison)

Zhang Min (reported on [June 12, 2019](#) to have been indicted in the [Xinjiang region](#) on charges of using an 'evil religious organization'; **UPDATE**: reported to have been 'humiliated' in a women's prison)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/guards-mistreat-religious-prisoners.html>



Pakistan: Zia Colony [Ghetto], Karachi

Huma Younus (aged 14, daughter of Nagina and Younus Masih, abducted and forced into an Islamic marriage)

Younus Masih (husband of Nagina, father of Huma Younus, electrician)

Nagina (wife of Younus Masih, mother of Huma Younus, said that police refused to register a case against her daughter's abductors for 2 days)

Fr Saleh Diego (**UPDATE**: called on the government to "ensure those responsible are brought to justice as soon as possible")

Kashif Anthony (condemned the abduction of Huma Younus and "all other cases of forced conversion and marriage of minors from religious minorities")

Tabasum (attorney, said "These sacrilegious acts are against the concept of interfaith harmony and threaten society's multicultural fabric and sense of brotherhood")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-14-year-old-Christian-girl-is-kidnapped-and-converted-in-Karachi.-Her-parents-appeal-to-the-Court-of-Justice-48714.html>

Friday October 11, 2019



India: Siliguri, West Bengal state

Rev Bryan Nerren (U.S. citizen, husband of Rhonda Nerren, detained in [Bagdogra, West Bengal state](#) on [October 5, 2019](#) after not possessing forms needed for the importation of money - customs officials had admitted him without giving him the forms, passport confiscated, doctor spat on the jail floor when he admitted he was a Christian; **UPDATE**: released on bail, unable to leave the country)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/American-clergyman-held-for-three-weeks-in-West-Bengal-48424.html>

Sunday October 13, 2019



India: Kumarghat, Unakoti district, North Tripura

A priest and a school dormitory employee were ordered arrested after a chronically ill student died at home during a school holiday, the student said he had been beaten by the dormitory employee two weeks earlier

Fr Lancy D'Souza CSC (not arrested, out of town for a medical exam)

Fr Robert Mathias CSC (visited the family after the student's death, said "To our surprise, we were informed that an [police] FIR is filed by the mother of Happy Debbarma alleging that warden Bulchung Halam and principal had caused the death of her son")

Fr Sahaya Lourdu Raj (school principal, earlier relieved of responsibilities following the student's death)

Sr Amaly Gracy (appointed acting principal)

Fr Joe Paul (arrested when police could not find Fr Lancy D'Souza, had visited the student in the hospital before he died)

Fr Alfred D'Souza (arrested when police could not find Fr Lancy D'Souza)

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/10/tripura-boys-death-priest-layman-in-judicial-custody/>



Iran: Evin Prison, Teheran

Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani (aged 40, convert, 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; began a hunger strike on September 23, 2019 after his children were prohibited from school because they had refused to study Islam; **UPDATE**: ended his hunger strike)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/imprisoned-iranian-pastor-youcef-nadarkhani-ends-3-week-hunger-strike.html>



Egypt: Helwan district, Cairo

Fr Andrawes Azmy (121 year old church destroyed in a suspicious fire, said “I immediately rushed to the church and found it on fire with heavy smoke filling the place. The old wooden building burned down very fast and the fire destroyed everything inside, even before the firefighters arrived...Our loss is great. We have lost a great historical building and we can’t rebuild anything like it”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/11/egypt-series-of-fires-in-their-churches-not-a-coincidence-say-copts/>

Monday October 14, 2019



Philippines: Datu Piang, Maguindanao province

Fr Clifford Baira (described a grenade attack on a church, no injuries)

<https://www.licas.news/2019/10/15/grenade-explodes-outside-catholic-church-in-southern-philippines/>



Syria: Aleppo

Bishop George Abu Khazen OFM (**UPDATE**: spoke on the Turkish invasion: "We are very worried about what is happening as a result of the Turkish invasion in the northeast. We already have tens of thousands of refugees, with many stories of people horribly killed on the ground, according to ISIL modus operandi: executed their hands tied, not only Kurds, but also Armenian Christians, Assyrians, Chaldeans who have already known persecution under the Ottoman Empire, which is now affecting their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. [In Qamishli] the first victims of the bombing were two Christians...Jihadis operate and fight under the auspices of the Turkish army. They [the Turks] claim they want to repatriate Syrian refugees to places where other peoples and communities already live. In fact, the goal is ethnic cleansing, to settle other refugees. They are doing the same in Afrin, causing a human tragedy. Meanwhile, political leaders are doing nothing. These wars do not solve problems; on the contrary, they lay the foundations for other, bigger ones...What will happen to those who helped Daesh [ISIL,

the Islamic State]? With Turkey's offensive, they'll end up with those Ankara trained and helped, encouraging their entry [into the country], and whose revival will now be favored by the [Turkish] occupation")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vicar-of-Aleppo-slams-US-and-Europe-for-betraying-the-Kurds-and-boosting-jihadis-48264.html>

Tuesday October 15, 2019



India: Kumarghat, Unakoti district, North Tripura

A priest and a school dormitory employee were arrested after a chronically ill student died at home during a school holiday, the student said he had been beaten by the dormitory employee two weeks earlier

Fr Lancy D'Souza CSC (**UPDATE:** arrested)

Fr Roy Paul CSC (issued a press release "[the] most painful part of the entire incident [was the] loss a promising student. We are in total solidarity with the bereaved family and share their anguish. We also pray for the soul of Happy Debbarma...")

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/10/tripura-boys-death-priest-layman-in-judicial-custody/>



Iran: Tehran

Nine Christians were sentenced to a total of 45 years' [i.e., an average for each of 5 years'] imprisonment

Abdolreza Ali Haghnejad

Babak Hosseinzadeh (**UPDATE**)

Behnam Akhlagh (**UPDATE**)

Hossein Kadivar

Kamal Naemanian

Khalil Dehghanpou

Mehdi Khatibi (**UPDATE**)

Mohammad Islam Doust

Mohammad Vafadar Kamal

<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=36608>



Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE**: wrote concerning the Turkish invasion of Syria: “minorities cannot go through another serious conflict. We call on everyone to pray for the innocents of Syria and Iraq at such a critical time...Let us pray that the government of Iraq, the Kurdish regional administration and the international community will not turn away their gaze”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Erbil-warns-that-Turkeys-anti-Kurdish-offensive-will-create-more-refugees-48277.html>

Wednesday October 16, 2019



Iraq: Bagdad

Auxiliary Bishop Basil Yaldo (expressed fears that the Turkish offensive in Syria could cause the return of ISIL: “[All] are afraid of a return of the Islamic State...Yesterday we spoke with the Chaldean bishop of Aleppo, Antoine Audo, he described a situation of great confusion to us...[Cardinal Louis Raphael Sako has] appealed to all the Chaldean churches in the world, asking them to pray for a week for peace in Syria and Iraq”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Auxiliary-of-Baghdad:-We-fear-the-return-of-Isis-48285.html>



Kenya: Embu county

Fr Michael Maingi Kyengo (aged 43, abducted in [Thatha, Machakos county](#) on [October 7, 2019](#);
UPDATE: body found in a shallow grave, throat had been slit)

<https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001345663/catholic-priest-kidnapped-murdered-and-buried-in-shallow-grave>

http://www.fides.org/en/news/66800-AFRICA_KENYA_Priest_kidnapped_and_killed

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/10/catholic-priest-murdered-in-kenya-latest-in-string-of-killings/>



Egypt: Mansoura

Fr Samul Mohsen (church heavily damaged in a suspicious fire, said “a huge fire erupting in the chapel on the upper floor of the church and the services hall attached to it. The fire started from the wooden ceiling of the adjacent hall”, CCTV showed an object thrown on the roof just before the fire)

Fr Armia Iskandar (electrical engineer, church heavily damaged in a suspicious fire, said “When we built the church, we designed the electrical circuits in the best possible way and we make sure to switch everything off when we are not around. Also, the electricity distribution panel is equipped with devices to protect against overcurrent and high voltage rise”)

Fr Ephraim Youssef (church heavily damaged in a suspicious fire, said “Terrorists change their operations, from bombings to burning. They target the wooden churches that burn quickly”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/11/egypt-series-of-fires-in-their-churches-not-a-coincidence-say-copts/>



United Kingdom: Brent, North London

Maureen Griffith (aged 74, Barbadian immigrant, retired nurse, suspended as a school governor on [May 21, 2019](#), sent a letter to the school appealing her suspension; **UPDATE**: has heard nothing regarding the suspension since it happened, said "...whether as a nurse where I am responsible for patient safety or as a governor where I am responsible for a child's education and shaping the school environment, it is my job to notice things that others do not. In meetings where someone may want to push something through, I scrutinize, and this leads to discussion, debate and finding consensus on the right way to move forward...When they told me I had been 'homophobic' for scrutinizing the introduction of LGBT Pride month, I had to go home and look up what it meant. I couldn't believe it. It never occurred to me that I could be 'homophobic' or scared of something. These things don't come into my head...But now with this LGBT agenda, not just in schools, but across society, there is no debate, no questioning and there is only a one-way democracy...I loved being part of education and planning what was happening at the school. I am, however, at peace over the whole situation. I am not annoyed; I am only saddened that this is happening in this country...My faith in Jesus is very important to me in good and bad times – it is my be all and end all. I can do nothing without His help, and he makes my burden lighter")

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns; **UPDATE:** stated on the suspension of school governor Maureen Griffith “What has taken place at this school is a microcosm of what is happening across our society and sends a clear message to teachers, governors and students: if you oppose the LGBT agenda you will be silenced and punished. No one is exempt, not even a kind, caring and compassionate woman in her 70s who has dedicated her whole life to caring for others and increasing the life chances of children and improving her community. Such censor for merely questioning whether books with LGBT themes are appropriate for school libraries, and asking whether parents had been properly consulted, cannot go unchallenged. We call on the school to reinstate Mrs Griffith and issue a full apology”)

<https://christianconcern.com/news/school-governor-suspended-for-questioning-lgbt-education/>

Thursday October 17, 2019



India: Kumarghat, Unakoti district, North Tripura

Fr Joe Paul (arrested on [October 13, 2019](#) when police could not find Fr Lancy D’Souza, had visited the student in the hospital before he died; **UPDATE:** released on bail)

Fr Alfred D’Souza (arrested on [October 13, 2019](#) when police could not find Fr Lancy D’Souza; **UPDATE:** released on bail)

<http://mattersindia.com/2019/10/tripura-boys-death-priest-layman-in-judicial-custody/>

Friday October 18, 2019



China: Funan county, Anhui province

An official church seating 3,000 was destroyed by police during worship service, the congregants attempted to stop the police

Pastor Geng Yimin

Pastor Sun Yongyao

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/megachurch-demolished-pastors-detained.html>

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/worshippers-on-their-knees-beg-chinese-riot-police-to-halt-demolition-of-church>

Saturday October 19, 2019



China: Funan county, Anhui province

An official church seating 3,000 was destroyed by police during an **October 18, 2019 worship service, the congregants attempted to stop the police; **UPDATE: Two pastors were arrested on “gathering a crowd to disturb social order” charges****

Pastor Geng Yimin

Pastor Sun Yongyao

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/megachurch-demolished-pastors-detained.html>

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/worshippers-on-their-knees-beg-chinese-riot-police-to-halt-demolition-of-church>

Sunday October 20, 2019



India: Srisailam, Andhra Pradesh state

Sajan K George (Global Council of Indian Christians president, **UPDATE:** reported that 500 Christians had been forcibly converted to Hinduism "The real intention is to terrorize dalits, adivasis [tribals] and other disadvantaged classes for political purposes. Groups that were once considered 'untouchables' and oppressed are now forced to participate in these programs. The tribals have never been Hindus, so it is a great injustice to force them into rituals of conversion. For Dalits then, it's a return to untouchability")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Andhra-Pradesh,-nationalists-push-Christians-to-mass-conversion-to-Hinduism-48367.html>



Cameroon: Wum region

Benjamin Tem (aged 48, Bible translator, **murdered** by suspected Fulani Muslims)

Efi Tembon (reported on the murder of Benjamin Tem: “They butchered him and cut his throat”)

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/cameroon-bible-translator-murdered-in-his-home-as-civil-war-rages-on.html>

Tuesday October 22, 2019



China: Xinxiang, Henan province

Pastor Li Juncai (arrested along with three other parishioners on **February 20, 2019** while protesting the government's removal of a cross from the roof of their church; **UPDATE:** still in custody)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/pastor-imprisoned-for-eight-months.html>



India: Siliguri, West Bengal state

Rev Bryan Nerren (U.S. citizen, husband of Rhonda Nerren, detained in **Bagdogra, West Bengal state** on **October 5, 2019** after not possessing forms needed for the importation of money - customs officials had admitted him without giving him the forms, passport confiscated, doctor spat on the jail floor when he admitted he was a Christian; released on bail on **October 11, 2019**; **UPDATE:** hearing postponed until December 12, 2019)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/American-clergyman-held-for-three-weeks-in-West-Bengal-48424.html>



Iran: Shiraz

Ismail Maghrebi-Nejad (aged 65, convert of 40 years, widower of Mahvash Mahmoudian, arrested on **January 23, 2019**, charged with propaganda against the state and insulting the sacred Iranian establishment'; **UPDATE:** accused by a judge of apostasy, bail increased to US\$9,000)

<https://www.meconcern.org/2019/11/11/iran-hearing-for-ismaeil-maghrebinejad/>
<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=35840>



Ukraine: Vihvostov village, Chernigov province

Archpriest John Galai (reported the theft of sacred items and altar desecration)

<https://orthochristian.com/125092.html>

Thursday October 24, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Gou Zhongcan (disappeared from his home on [March 15, 2019](#), the day after police attempted to inspect it; still in detention in a police basement as of [July 7, 2019](#) because he refused to give police his computer and cell phone passwords, has been singing hymns; **UPDATE:** released, banished to his hometown)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/10/christian-released-after-seven-months.html>

Friday October 25, 2019



Commonwealth of Independent States [former Soviet Union]: unreported Central Asian republic

Marina (alias, wife, son's new shoes reported to have been stolen by Muslim students, attended school in slippers despite colder weather)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/appeals/help-brave-new-believers-in-central-asia-survive-another-harsh-winter>



Spain: Abbey of the Holy Cross, Valley of the Fallen

Fr Santiago Cantera (wrote a complaint following the government's removal of dictator Francisco Franco's body from his abbey: “the Civil Guard, without judicial authorization to allow it, accessed and wandered about the premises of the abbey and, what is more serious, accessed and wandered about the basilica...chains and padlocks were placed on the access door between the abbey and the basilica”)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/10/25/monks-at-valley-of-the-fallen-denounce-irregularities-around-franco-exhumation/>

Saturday October 26, 2019



Iran

Ebrahim Firouzi (aged 35, convert, welder, disappeared on the way to work on [March 7, 2013](#) in [Robat-Karim](#), apparently arrested by plain-clothes police; sentenced on [July 15, 2013](#) in [Robat-Karim](#) for "evangelism activities" to one year imprisonment and two years internal exile to Sarbaz; beaten in [Evin prison, Tehran](#) on [April 17, 2014](#) by Revolutionary Guards who then prohibited prison doctors from treating the inmates until 'trusted' doctors from the intelligence services arrived; illegally transferred on [October 8, 2014](#) from [Evin prison in Tehran](#) to [Rajaei-Shahr prison in Alborz province](#), will likely be denied access to each other or to other Christians; removed from a scheduled [December 30, 2014](#) Christian celebration in prison before it began; prison term completed, still not released a week later on [January 20, 2015](#); reported on [May 1, 2015](#) to have been sentenced to five additional years' imprisonment for "action against national security through collusion and gathering", the gathering in question was a meeting where he met with friends to say goodbye before the beginning of his original prison term; beaten by prison guards on [July 12, 2016](#) when he refused to be transferred to the courthouse for a hearing without legal preparation; as of [October 16, 2018](#) has suffered from a toothache that has 'spread throughout his jaw and face', denied medical treatment, unable to eat, request for a furlough refused; **UPDATE**: released from prison, has begun preparation for internal exile in Sarbaz)

<http://mohabatnews.com/?p=35685>

Sunday October 27, 2019



China: Xinyu, Jiangxi province

Wei Zhongping (aged 56, arrested on [April 28, 2013](#) after publicly demonstrating for the release of prisoners; detained on a charge of 'subversion of state power' on [May 7, 2013](#); sentenced to six and a half years' imprisonment on [June 18, 2014](#); **UPDATE**: released)

Liu Ping (same history)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2020/05/activist-summoned-to-police-station.html>



India: Ulnar village, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh state

Suman Nag (teenaged daughter of Mohan Nag, **died of a severe illness**, denied burial)

Mohan Nag (father of Suman Nag, said “I lost my son five years ago to snakebite, and now a teenage daughter. On October 27, the villagers and scores of Bajrang Dal activists protested that I cannot bury my daughter in the common graveyard in the village limits, and that I should go to a neighboring village and buy a piece of land to perform the last rites. Police force was deployed in the village to control the mob, and the village council was under pressure to grant us access to the graveyard. Only then were we able to perform the service in Christian way”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/12/animists-opposing-christianity-in-india-find-allies-in-maoists-police-hindu-extremists/>

Monday October 28, 2019



Nigeria: Enugu

Fr Arinze Madu (seminary vice-rector, abducted as he left the seminary)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/nigerian-priest-abducted-and-released-officials-increase-security-measures-97026>

Wednesday October 30, 2019



India: Tamil Nadu state

Rev Vijaya Kumar (stated “We are going through a tough time – there is immense pressure from the police administration in Tiruppur District that Christians are not allowed to gather for prayers even within the four walls of their homes. The pastors of these small churches have been harassed to seek permission from district officials to conduct prayer services”)

P S Nehemiah Christie (**UPDATE:** stated “This level of opposition from government officials is undermining the secularistic values inscribed in the Indian constitution and could lead to deprivation of Christians’ right and freedom to practice their faith, which was upheld time and again in several judgments delivered by the Madras and Madurai benches of the high court...[Persecution's] impact is visibly seen now. Today Hindus do not want to let out their houses on rent for Christians and Christian prayers particularly. If after great efforts and search a Christian manages to find a place to reside, the Hindu extremist groups in that area would alert the police officials to search their homes and stop prayers. It has been a difficult year”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/10/police-put-christian-houses-under-surveillance-in-tamil-nadu-state-india/>



Nigeria: Enugu

Fr Arinze Madu (seminary vice-rector, abducted on [October 28, 2019](#) as he left the seminary; **UPDATE:** released)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/nigerian-priest-abducted-and-released-officials-increase-security-measures-97026>

Thursday October 31, 2019



Syria: Hassake

Fr Nidal Thomas (reported on the Turkish incursion: "At least 300 Christians have been forced to leave the towns of Ras al-Ain, Derbasiyah, Tall Tamr and one area of al-Malikiyah. We are afraid that if the fighting continues, there could be a still greater exodus which might even include the town of Qamishli, where there are 2,300 Christians families living at

present...We don't know what is actually happening. Every hour we hear reports from the Kurds, the Turks, the Americans, and the Russians, of victims and people fleeing. But we don't know the real truth. The only thing we know for certain is that the bombings and, above all, the massacres committed by Turks against our community are forcing more and more Christians to flee...And meanwhile, the Western countries are fighting among themselves to divide up Syria, which has been brought to its knees also by the international sanctions. There were thousands of Christian families in our country. No one attempted to defend us", added that many freed Islamic State [ISIL] fighters have joined the Turkey-backed Syrian National Armies: "Unfortunately this [jihadist revival is] an eventuality we have to take into account")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20191030175614.htm>

<http://www.aina.org/news/20191101202339.htm>



Cameroon: Kotserehe

Militants killed six in a village attack

Rebecca (described one of the victims “He was a 15-year-old adolescent. He was so deeply asleep in his bed that he didn’t hear any of the noise around him. They thrust the blade of the axe so deeply into his skull, to the point we had to use a hammer to get it out of his head”)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/pioneer-pastor-among-eight-murdered-in-cameroon-in-wave-of-brutal-attacks-by-boko-haram>



United Kingdom: London

Christian Hacking (aged 29, arrested on [August 8, 2019](#) 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”;

UPDATE: charges dropped by Crown Prosecutors due to "not enough evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction" and because the required legal warning of arrest was not given by police)

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



United States – Kentucky: Frankfort

Blaine Adamson (print shop owner in [Lexington](#), declined to print T-shirts which promoted a gay pride event in [2012](#), ordered to attend diversity training by a county human rights commission; **UPDATE**: the state Supreme Court held that he could not be forced under anti-discrimination law to print shirts against his beliefs)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/kentucky-shirtmaker-wins-discrimination-case-over-lgbt-festival-46831>

October 2019, date unknown



Vietnam: Nghe An province

Nguyen Nang Tinh (husband of Nguyen Thi Tinh, father of one, music teacher, active in church charity groups and Christian media, arrested in [Nghe An](#) on [May 29, 2019](#), had for years visited and materially supported many families of Catholic and Protestant prisoners, held in isolation; indicted on [September 17, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: trial postponed after prosecutors refused before [October 17, 2019](#) to allow his defense attorneys access to evidence)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Catholic-music-teacher-sentenced-to-11-years-for-anti-state-propaganda-48562.html>



Ethiopia: Alemgena

Pastor Isaias (stoned, **beheaded**)

Pastor Assefa (slashed in the stomach, **beheaded**)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/martyred-pastors-beheaded-in-ethiopia-named-as-more-details-of-atrocity-emerge>

Today's Martyrs

2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455

Fairfield CT 06825-2400

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

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