

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – January 2020

Wednesday January 1, 2020



Nigeria: Gako village, Riyom county, Plateau state

Ngam Stephen Dachung (killed by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/christians-slain-wounded-kidnapped-in-plateau-state-nigeria/>

Friday January 3, 2020



Nigeria: Michika, Adamawa state

Rev Lawan Andimi (husband, father of eight, abducted by Boko Haram)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/boko-haram-kidnaps-pastor-releases-video-showing-his-plea-for-help.html>

Saturday January 4, 2020



Italy: Ivrea

Bishop Edoardo Cerrato (called for acts of reparation after two churches were damaged in arson attacks and paintings and frescos were destroyed)

<https://www.torinotoday.it/video/ivrea-incendio-presepi-presa-piromane.html> - with translation



United States – Louisiana: Abbeville

John T Landry (church trustee, church vandalized by satanic graffiti, said "Vandals came and defaced our statue of [St. Therese]. It's sad that it's not a random act of graffiti that some kids did. These are cult paintings, satanic cult, 666, an upside down cross. Churches are places of peace and solitude and prayer. To see someone that malicious to not only put graffiti, but to put the devil's work and signature on a Christian statue, is horrible")

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/louisiana-catholic-church-vandalized-with-graffiti-32445>

Sunday January 5, 2020



India: Bichpari village, Sonipat district

Pastor Jai Singh (husband, father of four, day laborer, abducted from a home worship service by Hindu radicals including RSS paramilitaries, later said "They pushed me to the floor, and I could not understand who was kicking me, who was slapping or beating on my back. As a huge crowd surrounded me, I could only see their hands and shoes kicking me. They picked me up from the floor and took me inside [Naresh] Singh's home and told me that I should go with them, if not they would kill me there on the spot", taken to a school and beaten: "They uttered disgusting, caste slurs against my faith and community that I cannot repeat with my mouth...My eyes got swollen. There was severe bleeding from my forehead. The remaining members who were following us by motorbikes and other vehicles also reached the school, and they took turns to beat me. A batch of six assailants would beat me up at once, after that they would sit back and relax while the next batch of five to six continued the beating. I was howling in severe pain, and I do not remember for how long that continued...From the school, they took me to a Hindu temple and forced me to sit before the idols. They told me that they 'are policemen, we can make you admit whatever we want.' They had beaten up my legs with wooden sticks and pulled my legs apart. They forcefully undressed me and threw my Kameez [tunic] away. It was evening by the time they dropped me at Gohana police station. I was severely bruised and was howling in pain", falsely admitted to fraudulent conversions due to the pain, briefly hospitalized, returned to the police station and charged with attempting fraudulent conversions)

Pastor Ram Kishan (father of Vinod Kumar, church in [Siwanka](#) threatened with attack by Hindu radicals on [December 25, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: charged with attempting fraudulent conversions)

Naresh Singh (home attacked, beaten, minor children injured, charged with attempting fraudulent conversions, later said “After the Jan. 5 attack on our home church, the owner of the shop called and told me to vacate [my business selling eggs from] the premises immediately. It has been two weeks, and we don’t have any earnings since then. It was the only source of livelihood for my family [US\$4 per day]. In the shops, the villagers refuse to sell us daily necessities. We have been socially ostracized. Even the neighbors and friends in the village, who had long been our regular visitors, do not even look at us now. We were beaten up, but police registered cases against our people”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/severe-attack-in-northern-india-devastates-families-church/>



Sweden: Norrkoping

Isa Gergin (church caretaker, church damaged in an arson attack on [August 5, 2018](#), later said "I think they have closed the investigation"; church damaged in an arson attack on [December 3, 2019](#), said "Someone had poured gasoline on the outside and lit it. But the emergency services were quickly in place"; **UPDATE**: reported on another arson attack on his church, said "We have not gone through all the damage yet, but the building has survived and internally it is only smoke damaged")

<http://www.aina.org/news/20200110174456.htm>



Nigeria: north central Kaduna state

Sadiya Amos (aged 17, daughter of Amos Chindo, abducted)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2020/03/nigerian-girl-17-escapes-month-in-locked-room-after-abduction-and-forcible-conversion-to-islam/>



United States – Texas: Liberty

Pastor Donald Scott (church threatened with a mass shooting during the live streaming of a worship service, suspect arrested)

<https://www.christianpost.com/us/texas-teen-arrested-for-sending-mass-shooting-threat-to-church-during-worship-service-livestream.html>

Monday January 6, 2020



India

Pastor Jai Singh (husband, father of four, day laborer, abducted from a home worship service in [Bichpari village, Sonipat district](#) on [January 5, 2020](#) by Hindu radicals including RSS paramilitaries, taken to a school and beaten, briefly hospitalized, returned to the police station and charged with attempting fraudulent conversions; **UPDATE**: arraigned in court, sent to jail, later said “Unknown persons in plainclothes were driving me to the court and then to the jail. At first I suspected that they must not be a police officer as the persons were not in uniform. The journey from court to jail was torturous, as this person in plainclothes abused in vulgar Haryanvi language. He abused my family members, including my wife and children. I kept quiet and said in my heart, ‘Oh Lord, if it is in Your will, then let it be, but give me strength to endure this. I am weak. I need you’ ...inside the jail, I was very afraid that I might have seizures – I was under medication, and the jail authorities did not allow me to take my medicines”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/severe-attack-in-northern-india-devastates-families-church/>



Nigeria: Chikun county, Kaduna state

More than 200 Muslims on motorcycles and armed with AK-47s attacked multiple Christian villages over a four day period

Pastor Habila Madama (stated “The herdsmen, or ‘bandits’ as they now call them, began their attacks on our communities on Monday, Jan. 6, [2020] killing, maiming and kidnapping members of our families without restraint by security agencies or the military. The herdsmen have destroyed our farmlands and left us with nothing. These Muslim Fulani herdsmen will usually come with their cattle, forcefully take over our farms, and destroy crops ready for harvests...As it is now, we don’t know where to go, what to feed on, or where do we get clothes to wear, especially for our children – and worst of all, where to lay our heads”)

Jonathan Asake (Southern Kaduna Peoples’ Union [SOKAPU] president, said at a press conference at a refugee camp in [Unguwani Buji](#): "About 35 people have been killed by the herdsmen, while about 58 persons have also been abducted. As you can see from the way

these people are, they are seriously traumatized and need immediate assistance to be able to hold on. We have been told that the bandits have destroyed all the farm products of the victims and also destroyed their houses, leaving them with nothing to call their own. Worst of all, most of the children are sick. This calls for concern on all people of good will to come to their aid in any kind in order to give them hope of survival before steps could be taken on the area of their education”)

Luka Binniyat (SOKAPU spokesman, estimated that Kaduna state Christians had paid US\$1.1 million to abductors by January 11, 2020, reported on the atrocities: “Information available to us has it that in Tawali village, six persons were kidnapped, and nothing has been heard of them ever since. The ECWA [Evangelical Church of West Africa] church in the village was not spared as it was burnt down completely...In a display of brazen impunity, they kidnapped 15 people [in Unguwan Buji] and vanished into the bushes with them. In nearby Maloma community, the invaders robbed and ransacked the village and burnt a large quantity of rice and other grains before disappearing into the unknown. All these happened in a span of four days without any response from any security agency...From available information, the armed men went from house to house [on December 16, 2019 in Chidunu village near Maraban Rido in Chikun County] killing and maiming these hapless victims with no help coming from anywhere. The spate of killings...and amounts paid in ransoms to these terrorists by our communities is traumatizing and impoverishing our people on a daily basis, making them susceptible to hunger and disease...We are shocked with the way that the federal government and the government of Kaduna state seem to be overwhelmed by these cruel crimes. These defenseless victims and the affected communities are left to their own fate, in the hands of these blood thirsty militiamen. It is sad that the same communities who are victims of these mass murders, kidnappings, arsons, lootings, rapings and other mindless evils are forced to pay their assailants huge sums to gain their freedom or that of their loved ones. We fear that with the unchecked boldness that these heinous crimes against humanity are spreading, there is a systematic plan to wipe out our communities and take over our lands”)

Nigeria: Kasso village, Chikun county, Kaduna state

Eli Sule (aged 35, father of five, **killed**)

Danjuma Bulus (aged 30, father of four, **killed**)

Istifanus Auta (aged 31, father of three, **killed**)

Ladi Yusuf (mother of a six month old, abducted along with her baby, baby reported to be 'critically' ill due to primitive conditions of captivity)

Bulus Sule (husband of Rebecca Sule, brother of Yusuf Sule, abducted)

Rebecca Sule (wife of Bulus Sule, abducted)

Irmiya Yusuf (son of Yusuf Sule, nephew of Bulus and Rebecca Sule, hospitalized with gunshot wounds)

Yusuf Sule (father of Irmiya Yusuf, brother of Bulus Sule, son hospitalized with gunshot wounds, brother and sister in law abducted, motorcycles stolen)

Nigeria: Tawali village, Chikun county, Kaduna state

Ezra Bala (aged 16, college student, **shot dead** on or within three days after January 6, 2020)

Nigeria: Tawali village, Chikun county, Kaduna state

Idi Halidu (**killed** on or within three days after January 6, 2020)

Nigeria: Badna, Guruku ward, Chikun county, Kaduna state

Rev Samaila Yusuf (abducted on or within three days after January 6, 2020)

Nigeria: Unguwan Buji, Chikun county, Kaduna state

Sani Buji (**killed** on or within three days after January 6, 2020)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/large-scale-killings-kidnappings-hit-christian-communities-in-kaduna-state-nigeria-sources-say/>



Mexico: on the Mexico-Puebla highway

Fr Roly Candelario Pina Camacho SP (found with four gunshot wounds, hospitalized in serious condition, had been abducted for ransom which his family paid)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/priest-in-mexico-hospitalized-after-kidnapping-shooting-25823>

Tuesday January 7, 2020
Christmas – Eastern Calendar



India

Pastor Jai Singh (husband, father, day laborer, abducted from a home worship service in **Bichpari village, Sonipat district** on **January 5, 2020** by Hindu radicals including RSS paramilitaries, taken to a school and beaten, briefly hospitalized, returned to the police station and charged with attempting fraudulent conversions; arraigned in court on **January 6, 2020**, sent to jail **UPDATE**: released on bail, later said “Now I’m in a very bad state. I can’t sit or stand or lie down straight on my back for five minutes. The marks of beatings are still all over my body. My legs feel very heavy and stiff, so that I can’t even stand on my feet”, unable to work)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/severe-attack-in-northern-india-devastates-families-church/>



Iran: Evin Prison, Tehran

Ram-eil Beth Tamraz (son of Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez and Shamiram Isavi, bodily searched during the [December 26, 2014](#) police raid on his home in [Tehran](#); arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in [Firuzkuh](#) on [August 26, 2016](#); charged with 'action against national security' on [June 18, 2018](#); convicted on [July 8, 2018](#) of 'acting against national security' and sentenced to 4 months' imprisonment [of which he has already served 2 months]; **UPDATE**: reported to prison to begin the remainder of his sentence)

<https://www.meconcern.org/2020/01/06/iran-assyrian-christian-to-start-prison-sentence/>



Nigeria: north central Kaduna state

Amos Chindo (father of Sadiya Amos, forced to attend a Sharia court, told he was preventing his abducted daughter's conversion to Islam, case adjourned for a week)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2020/03/nigerian-girl-17-escapes-month-in-locked-room-after-abduction-and-forcible-conversion-to-islam/>

Wednesday January 8, 2020



China

Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kium SDB (aged 87, **UPDATE**: released a letter he sent to Pope Francis on July 10, 2019 along with a cover letter addressed to all members of the College of Cardinals, the cover letter stated: "Pardon the inconvenience my letter will cause you. It is just that, in conscience, I believe that the problem I present here concerns not only the Church in China, but the whole Church, and we cardinals have the grave responsibility to help the Holy Father in guiding the Church...From my analysis of the document of the Holy See [June 28, 2019], '*Pastoral guidelines of the Holy See concerning the civil registration of clergy in China*', it is quite clear that it encourages the faithful in China to enter a schismatic church [independent of the pope and under the orders of the Communist Party]...On July 10 [2019], I presented my 'dubia' [questions] to the Pope. His Holiness, on July 3 [2019], had promised to take an interest in them, but to this day I have still not heard anything. [Vatican Secretary of State] Cardinal [Pietro] Parolin says

that today when we talk about the independent Church, this independence should no longer be understood as absolute, because the agreement recognizes the role of the pope in the Catholic Church...First of all, I cannot believe that there is such a statement in the agreement, and I do not see it there. [By the way, why must such an agreement be secret, and why is it not granted even to me, a Chinese cardinal, to see it?] But, even more clearly, the whole reality after the signing of the agreement shows that nothing has changed. Cardinal Parolin quotes a sentence from Pope Benedict's letter completely out of context — indeed, diametrically opposed to the whole paragraph. This manipulation of the pope emeritus's thought is gravely disrespectful, indeed, it is a deplorable insult to the person of such a meek pope, who is still alive...But it also disgusts me that they often declare that what they are doing is in continuity with the thought of the previous pope, while the opposite is true. I have reason to believe [and I hope one day to be able to prove with archival documents] that the agreement signed is the same one that Pope Benedict had, at the time, refused to sign...Your Eminence, can we passively witness the murder of the Church in China by those who should protect and defend her from her enemies? Begging on my knees, your brother, Cardinal Joseph Zen")

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'; tried in closed court without his own attorneys on [December 26, 2019](#); sentenced to 9 years' imprisonment on [December 30, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: announced through his attorney that he would not appeal his sentence)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2020/01/breaking-pastor-will-not-appeal-sentence.html>

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/cdl-zen-decries-vatican-china-deal-in-letter-to-cardinals-it-disgusts-me>



Nigeria: Kakau village, Plateau state

Michael Nnadi (aged 18, seminarian, abducted)

Peter Umenukor (aged 23, seminarian, abducted)

Pius Kanwai (aged 19, seminarian, abducted)

Stephen Amos (aged 23, seminarian, abducted)

Fr Joel Usman (seminary rector, reported that four seminarians were abducted by armed gunmen)

Nigeria: Kulben village, Mangu county, Plateau state

Fulani Muslim gunmen killed 13 Christians and wounded 3

Michael Mutding (aged 40, texted "They were shooting with guns in all directions, forcing the villagers to scamper into surrounding bushes. Corpses of those killed have been evacuated by soldiers and police to the mortuary of Mangu Cottage Hospital, and all the victims are members of COCIN [Church of Christ in Nations]")

Audu Tetmut (aged 60, church leader, said “Our community had lived peacefully with the herdsmen without any issues of dispute with them. So we are surprised that they attacked us”)

Bala Fwengje (state legislator, issued a statement: “This attack on my people by these herdsmen comes as a rude shock to us, as efforts have been made by security agencies to curtail such incessant attacks on our people. It is a sad thing that these attacks are still being carried out by the herdsmen on our people without provocation”)

<https://www.aidtochurch.org/acn-news/608-four-seminarians-abducted-nigeria-risks-becoming-a-failed-state>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/muslim-fulani-herdsmen-kill-13-christians-wound-three-in-central-nigeria/>

Thursday January 9, 2020



Turkey: Turabdin region

Authorities were reported to have arrested three Christians, reason unknown

Fr Aho Bilecen (Dayro d' Mor Yakoub d' Qarnao Monastery)

Josef Yar

Musa Tastekin

<http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/syriac-orthodox-priest-and-faithful-forcefully-arrested-by-the-turkish-authorities-in-tur-abdin-region/>



Nigeria: on the Damaturu-Maiduguri highway

Lilian Gyang (university student, abducted by Boko Haram while returning to school)

Ropvil Daciya Dalep (aged 22, university student, abducted by Boko Haram while returning to school)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/two-young-christian-women-killed-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>
<https://www.christianpost.com/news/is-child-soldier-executes-nigerian-christian-student-declares-we-will-not-stop.html>

Saturday January 11, 2020



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'; accused by a judge on [October 22, 2019](#) of apostasy, bail increased to US\$9,000; appeared in court on [November 2, 2019](#), defense attorney approved; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment on the 'insulting the sacred Iranian establishment' charge, other charges still pending)

<https://articleeighteen.com/news/5407/>



Turkey: Meer, Ayairnak province

An elderly couple in poor health who were the last Christians in their village were abducted, whereabouts unknown

Houmouz Diril (aged 71, husband of Simoni Diril, father of Fr Remzi Diri, abducted)

Simoni Diril (aged 65, wife of Houmouz Diril, mother of Fr Remzi Diri, abducted)

Fr Remzi Diri (son of Simoni and Houmouz Diril, discovered his parents were missing during a visit)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Turkey,-arrested-priest-released.-Christian-couple-abducted-in-the-southeast-49033.html>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mystery-shrouds-fate-of-kidnapped-elderly-Christian-husband-and-wife-49084.html>



Italy: Arbus, Sardinia

Mayor Antonello Ecca (reported to have condemned the beheading of a statue of the infant Jesus as "hitting our Christianity in the heart")

<https://www.tg24-ore.com/2019/12/28/vandalizzato-il-presepe-decapitato-gesu-bambino/#> - with translation



Algeria: Oran

Pastor Rachid Seighir (bookstore ordered closed on [November 10, 2017](#), livelihood lost; notified on [December 27, 2017](#) that his church did not comply with the law on registration of non-Muslim places of worship; church closed on [February 19, 2018](#); church conditionally reopened on [July 6, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: ordered to close his church, received the order two months late, appealed)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/order-issued-to-close-church-building-in-oran-algeria-christian-leaders-say/>

Sunday January 12, 2020



Iran: Tehran

Fatemeh "Mary" Mohammadi (aged 21, convert, arrested in [November 2017](#) while attending an underground house church; sentenced in [April 2018](#) to 6 months' imprisonment, released with time served; assaulted on a bus on [July 9, 2019](#) by a woman who objected to way she wore her headscarf, arrested by police when she attempted to file a complaint against the woman and held until 3 AM; tweeted on [December 21, 2019](#) that she had been denied an application to Azad University without explanation; **UPDATE**: arrested near an anti-government demonstration concerning the January 8, 2020 downing of Ukrainian airlines flight 752, earlier in the day had sent several anti-government tweets concerning "soft repression", "false beliefs through selective coverage of the news", "lies that are bigger and more repetitive make them more believable")

<https://articleeighteen.com/news/5352/>



Egypt

Catherine Ramzi (housewife, throat slit in an attempted beheading while returning home with groceries)

<https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2020/05/22/coptic-solidarity-condemns-increased-persecution-of-coptic-christians-and-journalists-in-egypt/>



South Africa: Bodibe, North West province

Fr Jozef "Jef" Hollanders OMI (aged 82, Belgian citizen, missionary, likely **strangled to death** in a possible robbery attempt)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/67242-AFRICA_SOUTH_AFRICA_Belgian_missionary_killed_in_alleged_robbery_attempt

Monday January 13, 2020



Pakistan: Islamabad

Archbishop Joseph Arshad (**UPDATE**: initiated a class to help young Christians excel in civil service examinations, said “The government of Pakistan reserved a minimum of five percent job quota for minorities in 2009 but the latter generally goes unfulfilled. After more than 70 years, Pakistani Christians remain marginalized, oppressed and weak”)

Fr Sarfaraz Simon (project coordinator, said "We plan to expand such classes around the diocese but subject specialists and civil servants are not available in small cities. Still an example has been set. Other dioceses can take this inspiration...The Church runs many schools and technical centers but most of the beneficiaries are Muslims. Our youth remain disorientated and devoid of career counselling. The percentage of educated Christian girls is much higher than the boys”)

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pakistani-Church-offers-first-civil-service-recruitment-course-for-Catholics-\(video\)-49010.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pakistani-Church-offers-first-civil-service-recruitment-course-for-Catholics-(video)-49010.html)



Kenya: Kamuthe, Garissa county

Three Christian primary school teachers were killed and one wounded by al-Shabaab militants, a Muslim teacher was abducted

Caleb Muthangya Mutua (aged 29, teacher, son of Mutua Musya, **shot dead**)

Samuel Muthui Kyonzu (teacher, son of Bernard Kimanzi, **shot dead**)

Titus Ushindi Sasaka (teacher, husband of Judith Katima, father of a 7-year old son, son of Peter and Rose Sasaka, **shot dead**)

Joshua Mutua (shot in the legs, survived)

Judith Katima (aged 27, widow of Titus Sasaka, mother of a 7-year old son)

Peter Sasaka (father of Titus Sasaka, husband of Rose, said his son was killed because he was a Christian)

Bernard Kimanzi (father of Samuel Muthui Kyunzu, said of his murder and the subsequent church support: “The support we have received will go a long way in support of the school fees of my two children who were being supported by our son who was brutally murdered by the Al Shabaab”)

Mutua Musya (father of Caleb Muthangya Mutua, said of his murder and the subsequent church support: “We appreciate the support from our well-wishers that has helped our children, who had left school for lack of school fees, to go back to school again”)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/kenya-al-shabaab-extremists-execute-3-christian-teachers-in-raid-on-primary-school.html>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/03/families-of-three-christian-schoolteachers-killed-in-kenya-receive-aid/>

Tuesday January 14, 2020



Egypt: Al-Marj

Rafiq Karam (aged 56, stabbed in the neck in an attempted beheading, survived)

<https://www.raymondibrahim.com/2020/01/24/egypt-ushers-new-year-with-murderous-assaults-on-christian-copts/>



Nigeria: north central Kaduna state

Amos Chindo (father of Sadiya Amos, forced to attend a Sharia court on [January 7, 2020](#), told he was preventing his abducted daughter's conversion to Islam, case adjourned for a week; **UPDATE:** told by the Sharia court that his daughter had converted to Islam, refused permission to speak)

Bishop Yusuf Janfalan (sent priests to the Sharia court to protest the Sharia court jurisdiction over Sadiya Amos, the priests were refused permission to speak)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2020/03/nigerian-girl-17-escapes-month-in-locked-room-after-abduction-and-forcible-conversion-to-islam/>

Wednesday January 15, 2020



China: Luojiang, Fujian province

Auxiliary Bishop Vincent Guo Xijin (aged 61, **UPDATE**: evicted, has begun sleeping on the front doorstep of his former residence, authorities also evicted several priests from their residences and closed churches, a nursing home run by nuns was closed and the elderly residents were put out onto the streets, the official church bishop did nothing)

China: Fuan, Fujian province

Fr Liu Guangpin (aged 71, evicted)

China: Saiqi, Fujian province

Fr Huang Jintong (aged 50, evicted)

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mindongs-Msgr.-Guo-evicted-from-the-curia:-he-will-sleep-on-the-street.-Several-priests-and-elderly-also-made-homeless-\(Video\)-49047.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mindongs-Msgr.-Guo-evicted-from-the-curia:-he-will-sleep-on-the-street.-Several-priests-and-elderly-also-made-homeless-(Video)-49047.html)
<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/chinese-bishop-and-priests-evicted-over-fire-safety-47592>



Turkey: Turabdin region

Fr Aho Bilecen (Dayro d' Mor Yakoub d' Qarnao Monastery, arrested on [January 9, 2020](#), reason unknown; **UPDATE**: released, reason determined to be that he had given bread to a suspected Kurdish separatist)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Turkey,-arrested-priest-released.-Christian-couple-abducted-in-the-southeast-49033.html>



Nigeria

Five aid workers were captured on the [Monguno-Maiduguri highway in Borno state](#) by ISWAP on [December 22, 2019](#); **UPDATE: released**

Adamu Ozeshi

Arthur Ibojekwe Chima

Asabe Cletus Musa

George Danbaba Micheal

Jennifer Samuel Ukumbong

Jummai Markus (neighbor of Jennifer Samuel Ukumbong, said “Ever since Jennifer was kidnapped by Boko Haram [actually the ISWAP breakaway faction], her family has been holding prayer vigils and fasting for her release. In fact, her mother, who’s a widow, was in the church praying for her daughter’s freedom when the news about her rescued filtered in”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/two-young-christian-women-killed-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



Canada: King's University College, London, Ontario

Fr Michael Bechard (Campus Ministry director, attacked in a letter by 43 faculty members for showing the anti-abortion film *Unplanned*)

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/professors-demand-apology-after-catholic-college-screens-pro-life-film-unplanned.html>

Friday January 17, 2020



Pakistan

Huma Younus (aged 14, daughter of Nagina and Younus Masih, abducted in [Zia Colony \[Ghetto\], Karachi](#) and forced into an Islamic marriage on [October 10, 2019](#); **UPDATE:** still missing)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-chorus-of-voices-call-for-the-liberation-of-Huma-Younus,-abducted-three-months-ago-49060.html>



Nigeria: Gora-Gan village, Zango Kataf county, Kaduna state

Briget Philip (aged 18, secondary school student, **killed** by Muslim herdsmen)

Priscilla David (aged 19, secondary school student, **killed** by Muslim herdsmen)

Benjamin Peter (aged 19, wounded, hospitalized)

Goodluck Andawus (aged 12, wounded, hospitalized)

Henry Jonathan (aged 18, wounded, hospitalized)

Solomon John (texted: “As the people fled into nearby bushes to take cover, the attackers retreated and left. We are sad about these attacks on our people, which seem to be unending”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/two-young-christian-women-killed-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



United States - New York: Greenpoint, Brooklyn

Fr Jossy Vattothu (sprayed with red juice during Mass by an apparently mentally ill man)

<https://nypost.com/2020/01/15/video-shows-vandal-spraying-juice-at-catholic-priest-in-brooklyn/>

Saturday January 18, 2020



Turkey: Istanbul

Patriarch Sahag II Mashalian (aged 58, elected patriarch of the Armenian Church in Constantinople on [December 11, 2019](#) after years of government interference; **UPDATE:** reported to have denied statements attributed to him by Turkish media which appeared to be critical of the Armenian diaspora, the statement only supported the current Armenian presence in Turkey)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/67257-ASIA_TURKEY_Patriarch_Sahak_II_denies_criticism_of_the_Armenian_diaspora_attri_buted_to_him_by_Turkish_media



Nigeria

Ropvil Daciya Dalep (aged 22, university student, abducted by Boko Haram on the Damaturu-Maiduguri highway on January 9, 2020 while returning to school; **UPDATE**: reported to have been **shot dead** by a child soldier)

<https://www.christianpost.com/news/is-child-soldier-executes-nigerian-christian-student-declares-we-will-not-stop.html>

https://twitter.com/Rita_Katz/status/1218618560576139265

Sunday January 19, 2020



India: Malasamudra village, Gadag district, Karnataka state

Mary Bellary (aged 32, wife of Hanumanthappa Bellary, mother of three, niece of Basavanappa Malingpur, home surrounded and then attacked by 20 Hindu nationalists, said “They flashed camera lights at children, and we requested them to please go and not disturb the prayers. But they continued taking pictures, videotaping us and passed comments, saying, ‘Look! Christians gathered here on the terrace to carry out conversions’, groped and clothing torn along with other women who demanded the children not be harassed, added “They punched my 15-year-old son in his stomach, and other kids also got hurt. They were kicked to the floor and were beaten up on their backs. My uncle and husband tried hard to protect the women and children, but those men were very aggressive and physically stronger than us. The children just kept looking at us crying for help”, threatened with death if she talked to police, later that night was called to the police station after the Hindus arranged to be hospitalized and filed false charges against her and the other Christians: “The police officer told us that we had attacked some people during Christian prayers that morning, and that they were injured and hospitalized. After attacking us on Jan. 19 morning, the Hindu extremists got themselves admitted in a hospital and filed a false complaint against us. Our people were injured, yet we didn’t step out of our homes fearing for our lives, and there at the police station our attackers were influencing the police to frame us in cases”)

Hanumanthappa Bellary (husband of Mary Bellary, father of three, beaten)

Basavanappa Malingpur (uncle of Mary Bellary, beaten)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/02/hindu-extremists-in-southern-india-beat-christian-children-accuse-worshippers/>



Nigeria: Mayo Belwa, Adamawa state

Rev Dennis Bagauri (**shot dead** in his residence)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/boko-haram-executes-brethren-pastor-in-northeast-nigeria/>

Monday January 20, 2020



India: Malasamudra village, Gadag district, Karnataka state

Basavanappa Malingpur (uncle of Mary Bellary, beaten on [January 19, 2020](#) by a Hindu mob;
UPDATE: hospitalized for 3 days with head and leg injuries)

Michael Rosario (attorney, defended Mary Bellary and the other Christians with the police, later said “We ensured that the injured received treatment at the nearest government hospital,” Rosario told Morning Star News. “Basavanappa Malingpur [Bellary’s uncle] had injuries on his head and leg and had to remain hospitalized for three days. The rest, the injured children and women, received first aid...The inspector was trying to find fault with Christians for using their home as a worship place. I have reminded the officers of the various judgments delivered by the High Courts that there should be no objection against using a dwelling place as private worship place...The Hindu extremists didn’t give up. They insisted that police file cases against a female member of the congregation who came to Christ from Islam”)

Johnson David (volunteer assistant to attorney Michael Rosario, said “This discussion with police officers and the Hindu extremist leaders went on till 11 PM. Finally, the leaders had themselves agreed that the Hindu extremist mob had attacked the Christians, and the police effected a compromise that cases will not be booked against either of the parties”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/02/hindu-extremists-in-southern-india-beat-christian-children-accuse-worshippers/>



Nigeria

Rev Lawan Andimi (husband, father of eight, abducted by Boko Haram in [Michika, Adamawa state](#) on [January 3, 2020](#); **UPDATE:** **beheaded** after refusing the invitation to Islam, said in his last video from captivity “If the opportunity [for freedom] has not been granted, maybe it is the will of God. I want all people close and far, colleagues, to be patient. Don’t cry, don’t worry, but thank God for everything. I have never been discouraged, because all conditions that one finds himself is in the hand of God”)

Rev Samson Ayokunle (Christian Association of Nigeria president; **UPDATE**: confirmed the murder of Rev Lawan Andimi, called it “gruesome, unfortunate and a shame on the federal government”)

Kwamkur Vondip (Christian Association of Nigeria legal and public affairs director, said “[the church did] everything within her reach to secure the safe release of this pastor gentleman [Rev Lawan Andimi] but it was not possible because they didn’t have the military power to do so...In the light of the current developments and the circumstantial facts surrounding the prevailing upsurge of attacks against the church, it will be difficult for us to believe that the federal government under President Muhammadu Buhari is not colluding with the insurgents to exterminate Christians in Nigeria, bearing in mind the very questionable leadership of the security sector that has been skewed towards a religion and region! Is that lopsidedness not a cover-up for the operation of the insurgency? If not, why couldn’t the well-equipped security agents of Nigeria get this man killed rescued? A government that cannot protect the governed is a failed government...Since the government and its apologists are claiming the killings have no religious undertones, why are the terrorists and herdsmen targeting the predominantly Christian communities and Christian leaders?”)

Several Christians remained in captivity

Leah Nathan Sharibu (aged 17, student, abducted by Boko Haram in [Dapchi, Yoba state](#) on [February 19, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: still in captivity)

Alice Ngaddah (mother of two, UNICEF worker; **UPDATE**: still in captivity)

Bitrus Z Bala

Patience Ishaku

Awagana Kwagwi

Saratu Kwagwi

Grace Taku (aid worker, captured in an attack on a convoy in [Damasak, Borno state](#) by ISWAP on [July 18, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: still in captivity)

Nigeria: Abebe, Keana local government area, Nasarawa state

Four people killed and at least one injured, possibly by Fulani Muslim gunmen

Augustine Avertse (son of Akaa'am Avertse, church leader, **shot dead**)

Akaa'am Avertse (father of Augustine Avertse, **shot dead**)

Nigeria: Kaduna

Archbishop Matthew Manoso Ndagoso (**UPDATE**: said "No other country will tolerate this type of insecurity without calling for mass protests. Definitely our country is under siege")

Nigeria: Torok village, Riyom county, Plateau state

Reuben Bulus (aged 25, **killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/67280->

[AFRICA NIGERIA The head of a Catholic community in central Nigeria has been killed](#)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/67263->

[AFRICA NIGERIA We are under siege says the Archbishop of Kaduna where 4 seminarians were kidnapped](http://www.fides.org/en/news/67263-)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/boko-haram-executes-brethren-pastor-in-northeast-nigeria/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/christians-slain-wounded-kidnapped-in-plateau-state-nigeria/>



United Kingdom: University of Nottingham

Julia Rynkiewicz (aged 24, university student in a midwife program, blocked from a hospital placement in [September 2019](#) after her involvement in an anti-abortion student group was discovered; **UPDATE:** reinstated after a “fitness to practice” hearing, demanded an apology and compensation for the one year delay of her graduation)

<http://catholicnewsagency.com/news/dont-call-a-pro-life-midwife-uk-university-said-47820>

Tuesday January 21, 2020



China

Hu Shigen (church elder, disappeared on [July 10, 2015](#); formally arrested in [Tianjin](#) on [January 8, 2016](#) on a charge of 'subversion of state power'; sentenced in [Beijing](#) to 7 years' imprisonment on [August 3, 2016](#); reported on [January 12, 2019](#) to have been held in a prison hospital, forced to take unknown medications, health apparently not in decline but release on medical parole delayed until another prisoner has been prosecuted; **UPDATE:** still imprisoned, has suffered from a heart attack, high blood pressure, and kidney failure)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2020/01/officials-begin-church-elders-parole.html>



India: Kengeri, Bangalore

Fr Satish OFM Cap (church desecrated, tabernacle destroyed, consecrated hosts thrown on the floor)

Archbishop Peter Machado (**UPDATE**: condemned the church desecration: “I am not only terribly shocked but also greatly grieved that desecration was done to the Eucharistic Lord in that church. We all know. that this sacrilege and serious dishonor done to Our Blessed Lord and Savior is a matter of great concern, not only to the parishioners of St Francis Assisi Parish but also to the religious feelings of everyone in the Archdiocese. In such cases, it is normal for the whole diocese to do penance and reparation in churches and religious houses for this sacrilegious and ignominious deed”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Bangalore-shocked-at-the-desecration-of-St-Francis-of-Assisi-Church-49082.html>



Iran: Tehran

Fatemeh "Mary" Mohammadi (aged 21, convert, arrested on [January 12, 2020](#) near an anti-government demonstration concerning the January 8, 2020 downing of Ukrainian airlines flight 752, earlier in the day had sent several anti-government tweets concerning “soft repression”, “false beliefs through selective coverage of the news”, “lies that are bigger and more repetitive make them more believable”; **UPDATE**: whereabouts still unknown)

<https://www.christianpost.com/world/iran-arrests-christian-convert-activist-after-criticizing-regimes-soft-repression.html>



Niger

Fr Mauro Armanino SMA (missionary, **UPDATE**: reported on continued instabilities: "The repeated threats to the Christian communities in the border area with Burkina Faso have achieved the aim they set: to decapitate the communities and then fall prey to the fear of professing faith in Sunday prayers in the chapels...On Tuesday, January 14, in a village not far from Bomoanga, which for over a year has helplessly witnessed the kidnapping of Father Pierluigi Maccalli, a group of criminals who went to settle the scores with the chief nurse who works in a dispensary in the area, took the nephew from his home and was beheaded. In Bomoanga people no longer go to church on Sunday. The 'basilica', as Fr Maccalli used to call it, conceived, built and inaugurated by him, is now deserted, as well as the school recently attacked")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/67283-AFRICA_NIGER_They_will_be_able_to_cut_trees_but_not_the_roots_of_the_cross_threats_to_Christians_in_the_country



Nigeria: Kwata village, Jos South county, Plateau state

Christie Peter Mwankon (aged 26, abducted by Muslim Fulani herdsmen, US\$13,735 ransom demanded)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/01/christians-slain-wounded-kidnapped-in-plateau-state-nigeria/>



United States - New Jersey: Freehold

Rev Wil Wilson (church organ destroyed in an act of attempted theft or vandalism)

<https://nypost.com/2020/01/23/new-jersey-churchs-decades-old-organ-destroyed-by-vandal/>

Wednesday January 22, 2020



Ukraine

Archimandrite Gideon Kharon (dual U.S. citizen, detained upon re-entry to the country at [Boryspil Airport, Kiev](#) on [February 13, 2019](#) after returning from the United States where he had testified to Members of Congress on the situation in the country, passport seized and then declared lost, denied access to attorneys, Members of Parliament, and medication, stripped of his Ukrainian citizenship and deported under armed escort; a district court ruled on [September 19, 2019](#) that his citizenship had been illegally revoked; **UPDATE:** an appellate court upheld the district court ruling, ordered reinstatement of his citizenship)

<https://orthochristian.com/127307.html>

Thursday January 23, 2020



Indonesia: Tanjung Balai, Karimun, Riau Island

Ramesko Purba (parish spokesman, reported that a small group of Muslim extremists had prevented a needed expansion of an overcrowded church despite it having met all legal requirements, wrote “As we explained to Karimun officials, there will be no symbol or ornament outside the church; no cross, no statue, no image of Mary will be displayed visible outside the church...we accept this to minimize protest. For the Church, this is truly a test of humility”)

[http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Catholics-on-Riau-Island-in-legal-battle-against-Islamic-extremists-over-church-project-\(photos\)-49119.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Catholics-on-Riau-Island-in-legal-battle-against-Islamic-extremists-over-church-project-(photos)-49119.html)



Cameroon

Bishop Bruno Ateba Edo (**UPDATE:** reported to have said “In the villages of Borno State in Nigeria, and throughout the frontier regions of Cameroon, not a day passes without news of attacks and incursions by the terrorists. The abductions and executions of the country people have become a veritable reign of terror and a source of deep psychosis among the population...Just at the moment when people thought that the beast of Boko Haram had been completely decapitated, the horror has resurfaced in northern Cameroon. Within my own diocese there have been 13 attacks in the last weeks. One church was burnt down on the feast of the Epiphany. Boko Haram is like the beast of the Apocalypse, or a many-headed Hydra: whenever you cut off one of its heads, it seems simply to grow another”)

Bishop Barthelemy Yaouda Hourgo (reported to have written: “My birthplace, the village of Blablim, no longer exists! The terrorists have murdered a young man of my family and totally devastated the entire village, including the house I was born in. Everybody, with the exception of the sick and elderly, was forced to flee to Mora, 10 miles away. It will be impossible now to gather in the cotton harvest. Right now the weather is very cold in this area. Please pray for all those who are having to sleep outside in the inclement weather at this time the year”)

<https://acninternational.org/boko-haram-like-the-beast-of-the-apocalypse/>

Friday January 24, 2020

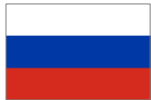


China: Hebei province

Bishop Augustine Cui Tai (aged 69, disappeared in [mid-April 2018](#); allowed to return home on [January 24, 2019](#), banned from religious activities, weighted only 115 pounds due to ill health; arrested on [March 29, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: paroled temporarily to spend the Lunar New Year with his elderly sister)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Underground-bishop-Msgr.-Cuitai-freed.-He-will-be-re-arrested-after-the-Chinese-New-Year-49074.html>

Sunday January 26, 2020



Russia: Moscow

Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin (aged 51; **UPDATE**: **died of natural causes** while sitting on a bench in church)

<https://rferl.org/a/outspoken-senior-russian-clergyman-dies-at-51/30398763.html>

Monday January 27, 2020



Bangladesh: Kutupalong refugee camp, Cox's Bazaar district

Pastor Taher (aged 53, Myanmar citizen, refugee, badly beaten and abducted by Muslim Rohingya refugees along with his 14 year old daughter)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/03/christian-rohingya-refugees-attacked-kidnapped-in-bangladesh/>

Wednesday January 29, 2020



Pakistan: Lahore

Fr Emmanuel Yousuf Mani (director of the National Commission of Justice and Peace;
UPDATE: reported on the acquittal of over 80 Christian men for the lynching of two Muslims following the March 15, 2015 twin attempted suicide bombings of two Youhanabad churches, 40 were released from jail to join the others previously released on bail, said “Throughout Pakistan, people had been praying, every day praying that the court would rule in their favor. It is a big day for us all. The accused have been through a big, big trauma and now, thank God, come out the other side”)

<https://www.aidtochurch.org/acn-news/613-justice-and-freedom-at-last>

Friday January 31, 2020



United Kingdom

Rev Franklin Graham (son of the Rev Billy Graham, U.S. citizen, **UPDATE:** three upcoming speaking events were reported to have been cancelled under pressure from LGBTQ activists, remaining events on his tour also under pressure to cancel)

<https://christianconcern.com/comment/lgbt-mob-hounding-franklin-graham/>

January 2020, date unknown



Congo, Democratic Republic

Pastor Ngulongo Year Batsemire (aged 60, **killed** after refusing the invitation to Islam)

<https://news.barnabasfund.org/Militant-extremists-kill-57-villagers-in-attacks-on-mainly-Christian-north-east-DRC/index.html>



Nigeria: Payasatan-Bilaburdar village, Chibok county, Borno state

Habakkuk Aboki (texted a report on the murder of two Christians)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2020/02/six-years-after-girls-kidnapped-in-chibok-nigeria-attacks-persist-in-area/>

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