

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – March 2021

Monday March 1, 2021



Israel: Jerusalem

Fr Ibrahim Shomali (condemned the fourth arson attack on a monastery in a month by 'Price Tag' Orthodox Jews, said "...the target is always the church itself...We want to live in peace. The cameras captured the faces, and the authorities have a duty to act. Such hatred is increasing, and we as a Church are doing everything to live together, respecting others, praying that God will change the minds of fanatics...")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Fr-Shomali,-the-'hate-virus'-is-behind-church-attacks-in-Jerusalem-52484.html>

Tuesday March 2, 2021



India: Chhingur village, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh state

Pastor Dularam Kashyap (beaten after he tried to bury an animist in an animist cemetery, villagers had refused the burial because the animist had asked Christians to pray for him before he died, the next day all Christians in the village were beaten and told they had to revert to their ancestral faith)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/04/christians-forced-to-re-convert-to-tribal-religion-in-central-india/>

Wednesday March 3, 2021



Nigeria

Pastor Bulus Yikura (abducted on [December 24, 2021](#) in [Pemi village, near Chibok, Borno state](#), in an ISWAP attack that killed 11; spoke in a [January 31, 2021](#) video in which he called for his release but added "However, if this is the end of my life, then praise be to God"; spoke from captivity in a video on [February 24, 2021](#), stated he would be killed on March 3rd if his abductors' demands were not met; **UPDATE**: released after Christians paid a ransom, said "I thank God, I thank God")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/03/pastor-threatened-with-execution-in-nigeria-reportedly-freed/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/03/church-confirms-release-of-pastor-threatened-with-execution/>

Thursday March 4, 2021



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](#); ordered to close his church, received the order two months late on [January 11, 2020](#), appealed; **UPDATE**: reported to have been convicted *in absentia* of 'shaking the faith of Muslims' by operating his long-closed bookstore, sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment and fined US\$3,745, sentence document was slipped under the door of his church, has appealed)

Nouh Hamimi (bookstore salesman, same account)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/03/two-christians-sentenced-to-prison-and-heavy-fine-in-algeria/>

Friday March 5, 2021



China: Kunming Prison, Yunnan province

Rev John Cao San Qiang (husband of Jamie Powell, father of Amos and Ben, U.S. resident, minister to Myanmar Christians, arrested [at the Myanmar border with China on March 5, 2017](#) and charged with illegal border crossing; sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment [in Pu'er, Yunnan province on March 23, 2018](#), fined US\$3,168; sentence upheld on appeal on [July 25, 2019](#); prison officials on [February 23, 2021](#) refused to allow his attorney to give him a Bible; prison officials on [February 25, 2021](#) allowed his attorney to read Bible verses and pray with him over a prison video chat; **UPDATE**: eighty-four year old mother denied a visit by prison officials who used the pandemic as an excuse)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/prison-rejects-request-pastor-john-caos.html>

Sunday March 7, 2021



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Zha Changping (church elder, church raided and declared illegal by officials on [January 10, 2019](#), books seized, expressed fears the church will be shut down; **UPDATE**: church raided by police, seized and taken to a police station along with his wife and three other Christians, interrogated into the afternoon; all released)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/police-raid-chengdu-fountain-of-life.html>

Monday March 8, 2021



Columbia: Ibague, Tolima department

Archbishop Orlando Roa Barbosa (cathedral vandalized by feminists, stated the Church “will carry on with a prophetic voice, denouncing everything that, with the appearance of law, really goes against the integrity, nature and dignity of women”)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/colombian-bishop-responds-to-cathedral-vandalism>

Tuesday March 9, 2021



India: Madhya Pradesh state

Sajan K George (Global Council of Indian Christians president, **UPDATE**: condemned the passage of another state anti-conversion law which mandated a 2 to 5 year minimum sentence for 'forced conversion of a minor, a woman, or a member of a lower caste or tribal group', said "of the 23 cases [of alleged forced conversion since January 9, 2021], at least half of them concern Christians. "All of them are fabricated cases of conversion. Vigilante groups attack, intimidate, even disrupt family gatherings under the guise of conversion activities")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Madhya-Pradesh-also-passes-new-anti-conversion-law-52555.html>

Wednesday March 10, 2021



India: Chhingur village, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh state

Ten Christian families were threatened with death if they did not join in a Hindu reconversion ceremony, six families fled, four families with 10 individuals were forced to attend

Raidhar Nag (aged 21, fled his village, said "The village gathering threatened to beat us to death if we did not attend the ceremony. They stopped us from fetching water from the village well, obtaining the free government ration or even working in our own fields...We fled from the village on the day of the ceremony, everyone in their own direction. Four Christian families hid themselves in the village itself. The villagers frantically searched for all of us on the day of the ceremony and found the members of the four families. They took them along and forcibly sprinkled some water on them as per the tradition and made them worship the tribal deities")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/04/christians-forced-to-re-convert-to-tribal-religion-in-central-india/>



Uganda: Musasa village, Kasese district

Rev Nelson Walina (three female relatives aged 19, 17, and 16 were raped on [February 16, 2021](#) by men sent by the husband of Mariam Mbambu in revenge for her conversion, church also scouted for a future planned attack; **UPDATE**: received a threatening text message from the husband of Mariam Mbambu demanding her return within two weeks, said “I have been receiving messages alleging that my Christian activities of converting Muslims to Christ will be met with severe punishment...I do not know what they are planning to do. We need prayers. I have reported the threats to the police who recently arrested Masereka [the husband]. One thing that is clear to us as a church is that we are not going to reveal the whereabouts of our hiding sister, because we know that they are out to kill her and the children”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/03/pastors-relatives-raped-after-imams-wife-turns-to-christ/>

Friday March 12, 2021



Pakistan: Lahore

Shakaina Masih (aged 13, daughter of Samina and Johnson Masih, domestic worker, disappeared on [February 19, 2021](#), police refused to file a missing person report for two days; **UPDATE**: reported to have been forcibly married and forcibly converted to Islam, police claimed it was voluntary despite the legal prohibition of underage marriage)

Johnson Masih (husband of Samina Masih, father of Shakaina Masih, janitor, daughter disappeared on [February 19, 2021](#), police refused to file a missing person report for two days; **UPDATE**: reported to have said of the police visit to his home “He said that Shakaina was now a married Muslim woman and did not want to return to her family...It’s been over 20 days that our daughter is in the custody of unknown abductors, yet we haven’t been able to see her. We were just handed a photocopy of the Nikahnama [Islamic marriage certificate] and told to approach the court if we wanted to meet her. They also refused to act when we showed them her official birth record, according to which she’s just 13 and five months...Shakaina is just a kid. She was kidnapped and taken to Okara, where they forcibly converted her and conducted the fake marriage to give it a religious cover...All hell has broken loose on us. My family’s shattered, and each passing day adds to our misery. Is there no law or justice for poor Christians like us?”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/03/another-christian-girl-in-pakistan-kidnapped-forcibly-converted/>



United States - Florida: Lecanto

Very Rev George A M Conger (husband, father, reported that his Facebook ad for his feed of his morning and evening prayer services was cancelled, possibly for a quote from the Bible or the Book of Common Prayer)

https://youtu.be/b_BYC1E2Me4?t=1643

Saturday March 13, 2021



Nigeria: Dorowa Babuje village, Barkin Ladi county, Plateau state

David James (aged 18, son of Solomon James, student, **killed** by Fulani herdsmen)

Solomon James (aged 68, father of David James, texted news of his son's murder)

John Choji (confirmed the murder of David James)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2021/05/herdsmen-kill-christians-in-nigerias-nasarawa-plateau-states/>

Monday March 15, 2021



Nigeria: Oria-Abraka, Ethiope Eastcounty

Fr Harrison Egwuenu (college principal, abducted)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-priest-in-nigeria-recovering-after-week-long-kidnapping-ordeal>

Tuesday March 16, 2021



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Elder Zhang Chunlei (husband of Yang Aiqin, detained, later told he would be detained for 14 days)

Brother Chen Jianguo (detained)

Sister Li Jinzhi (detained)

Sister Li Lin (detained)

Elder Li Yingqiang (**UPDATE**: wrote "At 5:00 p.m. today [March 18, 2021], I joined Pastor Huang Xiaoning from Guangzhou Bible Reformed Church to pray for Elder Zhang Chunlei, Brother Chen Jianguo, Sister Li Jinzhi, and Sister Li Lin from Guiyang Renai Reformed Church. They lost their freedom on Tuesday, more than 48 hours ago. We do not yet know in what name [charges], nor for how long these Brothers and Sisters will face the [Chinese Communist Party's] bondage...Recently, I agreed with Elder Chunlei, Pastor Xiaoning, and several other pastors as well as other believers in Christ that if any of us ever lost our freedom, we would find a way to pray with those outside our prisons at 5:00 pm. Then, Brothers and Sisters still free can have a "rain or shine" prayer meeting with those of us in bondage at that time")

Pastor Huang Xiaoning (**UPDATE**: later joined in prayer for the detained)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/elder-li-yingqiang-of-ercc-appeals-for.html>



India: Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh state

Sr Bhagya SD (school principal, charged with forced conversion by a former employee on [February 22, 2021](#); **UPDATE**: released on bail, filed a criminal complaint against her accuser)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Madhya-Pradesh-releases-nun-accused-of-violating-anti-conversion-law-52641.html>

Wednesday March 17, 2021



China: Xinxiang, Henan province

Pastor Li Juncai (arrested along with three other parishioners while protesting the government's [February 20, 2019](#) removal of a cross from the roof of their church; convicted on various charges of disrupting public service and financial crimes on [December 31, 2020](#),

sentenced to 5 and a half years' imprisonment and fined 50,000 yuan [US\$7,659];
UPDATE: appeal denied)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/in-closed-trial-xinxiang-court-rejects.html>

Thursday March 18, 2021



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Yang Aiqin (wife of Elder Zhang Chunlei, home searched by police, computer, cell phone, and other valuables seized)

Brother Chen Jianguo (detained on [March 16, 2021](#); **UPDATE:** home searched by police, computer and other electronics seized)

Huang Qingxi (home searched by police, computer and documents seized)

Zhou Xun (cancer sufferer, home searched by police, computer seized)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/police-detain-elder-zhang-chunlei-14.html>

Friday March 19, 2021



Papua New Guinea: Alotau

Bishop Rolando Crisostomo Santos CM (aged 72, Filipino citizen, **UPDATE:** described a criminal attack on a priests' residence: "After having broken the side door of the house they attacked 7 of our priests, they entered their rooms and stole their laptops, cell phones, cash and other valuables. They took away a new outboard motor, solar panels, projector and a TV. As a result of continuous blows to the head, a Filipino missionary lost a lot of blood. Taken to hospital, he is now in stable conditions. Another young local priest was stabbed, yet another was severely beaten up. The others were slightly injured")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/69849->

[OCEANIA PAPUA NEW GUINEA Call for dialogue by the Bishop of Alotau to restore peace and order after an attack on the house of diocesan priests](#)



India: Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh state

Fr Alex Onampally (condemned the harassment and arrest of two nuns and two postulants on false accusations of forced conversions while travelling by train, called it a “planned attempt to harass and mistreat the nuns...During the journey, the two postulants were dressed in plain clothes and the other two in nuns' habits. When they returned from Delhi earlier in the afternoon and reached Jhansi around 7.30 pm, some Bajrang Dal activists [a sister of the RSS paramilitary organization], who were returning from a pilgrimage, abused and harassed them. Their main allegation was that the two postulants had been taken by the Sisters to convert them to Christianity. They did not accept the postulants' words that they were born Christian...[The nuns were taken into police custody] when Bajrang Dal activists misinformed the police that the nuns were taking them to convert. Hundreds of Bajrang Dal activists created an atmosphere of terror by shouting slogans outside as the nuns entered the police station...The nuns were released around 11.30 pm after a high-ranking police officer verified the matter...It is suspected that there was a conspiracy behind the arrival of about 150 people at the station in a short period of time to attack the nuns. The experience of the four nuns in Jhansi is just the latest example of how social conditions in India are becoming intolerant for other religions...Tens of thousands of priests and nuns are engaged in selfless service in the northern states. The Syro-Malabar Church strongly condemns these violent acts against Christians who are citizens of the country and demands that the State government and the central government punish the culprits by taking severe punitive measures”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-extremists-surround-and-force-two-nuns-and-two-novices-off-a-train-52682.html>



Canada: Vancouver, British Columbia

Robert Hoogland (arrested and jailed on a charge of family violence after he refused to refer to his 14 year old daughter with male pronouns and for defying a court ban on publicly describing her gender transition, including the identity of her doctors [which were publicly acknowledged in earlier court documents] and the fact that one doctor had advised his patients to claim suicidal feelings to secure medical and legal institutional support for their transitions, had earlier said “I had a perfectly healthy child a year ago, and that perfectly healthy child has been altered and destroyed for absolutely no good reason...What kind of father would I be if, let’s say in 5, 10 years my daughter is detransitioning, and she turns to me and says...‘Why did none of you do anything to stop this? I was a child. None of you stuck your neck out for me back then. You just let me do it because I was a...immature kid, thinking this was something great.’ When my daughter asks me that question, I’ll say...‘I did everything that I possibly could.’...Whatever happens to me pales in comparison to what’s already happened to my daughter”, said just

prior to his arrest "pray - anybody can pray...Educate people. Tell people what's going on...talk to your neighbor and say, 'Hey, this is what's going on in the world'...To even do a simple thing like that...that's commendable, that's courage to me. To even do a simple thing like that")

<https://thefederalist.com/2021/03/26/canadian-father-jailed-for-talking-about-court-ordered-transgendering-of-his-teenage-daughter/>

<https://thefederalist.com/2020/02/21/heartbroken-dad-of-trans-teen-breaks-gag-to-beg-for-end-of-state-sponsored-child-abuse/>

Saturday March 20, 2021



China: Guiyang, Guizhou province

Brother Chen Jianguo (detained on [March 16, 2021](#); **UPDATE**: released, wrote "I wish that we as Christians could have a place like prison for retreat or used as school. My three-day retreat held in a city became a more authentic 'retreat,' isolating from the world")

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2021/03/chen-jianguo-regarding-his.html>

Sunday March 21, 2021



Nigeria

Fr Harrison Egwuenu (college principal, abducted in [Oria-Abraka, Ethiope Eastcounty](#) on [March 15, 2021](#); **UPDATE**: released)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-priest-in-nigeria-recovering-after-week-long-kidnapping-ordeal>

Monday March 22, 2021



India: Mumbai

Fr Stan Lourduwamy SJ (aged 83, home raided by anti-terrorism police from [Maharashtra state](#) without a court order on [August 28, 2018](#), electronics and books seized, questioned and released; home raided again by [Maharashtra state](#) police on [June 12, 2019](#), hard drive and wi-fi router seized, forced to give the passwords to his email and Facebook accounts which were then changed and blocked by the police; arrested on [October 8, 2020](#) on sedition charges; **UPDATE**: denied bail by the National Investigation Agency [NIA] Special Court, suffers from Parkinson's)

<https://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mumbai-court-rejects-bail-request-for-Fr.-Stan-Swamy--52669.html>



United States – Colorado: Boulder

Ten people were shot dead by a suspected Islamic State sympathizer

Eric Talley (aged 51, husband, father of seven, brother of Kirstin, son of Homer Talley, police officer, **shot dead**)

Neven Stanasic (aged 23, coffee machine repairman, 'a deeply religious young man', **shot dead**)

United States – Colorado: Denver

Jack Phillips (bakery owner, cited in [2013](#) for refusing to make a cake for a same gender wedding; the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the state Civil Rights Commission ruling against him and upheld his right to exercise his religious beliefs on [June 4, 2018](#); the state Civil Rights Commission ruled against him in another separate but factually identical case on [June 28, 2018](#); reported on [August 15, 2018](#) to have brought suit against the state Civil Rights Commission which alleged “unconstitutional bullying” against him; the state Civil Rights Commission dropped its case in [March 2019](#) but allowed it to proceed in civil court; **UPDATE**: civil trial begun)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/after-supreme-court-victory-colorado-baker-in-court-for-declining-gender-transition-cake-42944>

<https://abcnews.go.com/US/boulder-mass-shooting-victims-remembered-including-police-officer/story?id=76628529>

<https://www.denverpost.com/2021/03/23/boulder-shooting-officer-dead-eric-talley/>

<https://catholicismpure.wordpress.com/2021/03/23/officer-eric-talley-rip/>

Thursday March 25, 2021



United States

Dr Albert Mohler (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; **UPDATE**: said in response to USA Today sports columnist Hemal Jhaveri's call for Oral Roberts University to be banned from the NCAA because Christianity is "archaic" and "wildly out of line with modern society and the basic values of human decency": "This is language beyond anything we've yet seen, although the logic has been there all the time...the most dangerous letters when it comes to the continuation of Christian higher education are the letters NCAA, because the NCAA is indeed adopting policies and pointing in directions that will make it impossible for Christian institutions that hold to a biblical standard of morality, or even a biblical definition of male and female, to continue in participation...We're about to find out just how many Christian schools are going to be willing to stand on biblical standards...we're about to find out just how many schools are actually serving the cause of sports, and how many are going to serve the cause of Christ...recognize if it's said about Oral Roberts University today, it will be said about you, your school, your church, your organization, your Christian congregation, tomorrow. Count on it")

https://albertmohler.com/2021/03/25/briefing-3-25-21?utm_source=Albert+Mohler&utm_campaign=d9d8271df3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_04_08_09_12_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_b041ba0d12-d9d8271df3-310339501&mc_cid=d9d8271df3&mc_eid=0b70cb06fc

Friday March 26, 2021



United Kingdom

Lord David Alton (aged 70, **UPDATE**: sanctioned by the government of China for his opposition to the persecution of Christians, Muslims, Falun Gong, and democracy activists, banned from entering China and all Chinese citizens are banned from meeting with him)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/china-imposes-sanctions-on-british-catholic-human-rights-campaigner>

Sunday March 28, 2021



Indonesia: Makassar, Sulawesi island

Cathedral attacked during Mass by two newlywed suicide bombers

Fr Wilhelmus Tulak (reported that the explosion happened at the cathedral side entrance, over 20 were wounded)

Fr Alfius Tandirassing (said "Priests, religious and faithful who were in church are safe. So far there have been no [fatal] victims except for the perpetrators of the attack. Some people were slightly injured")

Pastor Gomar Gultom (Indonesian Council of Churches, **UPDATE**: said "It was a cruel attack. Now we need to remain calm and trust the authorities")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/69866-ASIA_INDONESIA_Suicide_attack_on_a_Catholic_church_in_Sulawesi_security_measures_strengthened_for_Holy_Week

Tuesday March 30, 2021



Nigeria: Aye-Twar village, Benue state

Fr Ferdinand Fanen Ngugban (**shot dead** along with six others after Mass)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-priest-and-six-others-killed-in-attack-on-church-in-nigeria>

March 2021, date unknown

Today's Martyrs

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

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