

**Today's Martyrs**  
**2014-12-28 through 2015-01-03**



**Central African Republic**

Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: travelled to camps holding former Seleka rebels, distributed food, soap, and children's clothing, said "For two hours, I listened to their complaints, because they repeatedly stated that no one goes to visit them")

Date: December 24, 2014

Locations: near Bangui

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/37036->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA Archbishop of Bangui pays a visit to former Seleka rebels again#.VKdimeJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37036-)



**China**

Zhou Jinxia (detained after displaying a placard reading "God, who loves the world, is calling [President] Xi Jinping and [his wife] Peng Liyuan", taken to a psychiatric institute)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Beijing

Source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/gospel-12262014130035.html>

Pastor Li Mingxing (described a police raid on a home church meeting, three members detained, musical instruments seized)

Ma Yuying (given a five day administrative detention, released)

Chen Deying (detained, not released)

Li Chengxi (**UPDATE**: detained, not released, musical instruments seized)

He Shili (home raided by police, not detained)

Date: December 24, 2014

Location: Baoma Town, Langzhong, Sichuan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2014/12/three-sichuan-church-members-detained.html>



## Egypt

Rev Refaat Fekry (Chairman of the Committee on Information and Publishing in Evangelist Synod, criticized the government for banning the 'Zionist' film *Exodus: Gods and Kings*)

Date: December 29, 2014

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1278&A=17022>

Bishoy Armiya aka Mohammed Hegazy (aged 31 in 2014, Egypt's 'most famous' convert, arrested again as he was being released on July 21, 2014 on 2009 charges of "defaming Islam", charges were filed after he attempted to have his religious affiliation changed on his government ID card; **UPDATE**: all but one charge dismissed on appeal, sentence reduced to one year, may be released as he has been jailed since before December 5, 2013)

Date: December 28, 2014

Location: Minya

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58786>

and <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/media-news-events/news/3225-appeals-court-sentences-hegazy-to-one-year-jail-instead-of-five>



## India

Dr John Dayal (Christian activist and member of the National Integration Council; **UPDATE**: wrote "On December 18, India's National Minorities Day, Rajeshwar Singh, the head of the Dharm Jagran Manch [Faith Awakening Forum] declared on national television news channels that his organization had set a 2021 deadline to cleanse India of 'alien Islam and Christianity'. Another group said Christians would not be allowed in Himalayan regions that are sacred to Hindus...The Indian government has not indicated whether Singh is being prosecuted under India's strict laws against religious discord. So far the laws have been largely used to target Christian pastors, and in recent months, Muslim youths venting their anger against the government on Facebook...Meanwhile, members of the Council of Ministers and spokesmen for the Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP], which controls many Indian state governments, have been vocal in support of the Sangh Parivar. The Parivar is a large and almost omnipresent family of Hindu militant organizations created by the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh [RSS paramilitary organization] in the past two decades. The Dharma Jagran Manch, the Bajrang Dal [youth organization] and the powerful Vishwa Hindu Parishad are among the more prominent of its groups with aggressive cadres...RSS affiliated groups have launched a campaign to convert poor Christians and Muslims to Hinduism, a process they call Ghar Wapsi, or homecoming. They argue that every Indian is actually a Hindu, and Christians and Muslims are those who strayed, or were bought by missionaries...Protestant pastors are being beaten up, home churches raided almost as a matter of routine, with the police looking on, or actively participating. Santa Claus, of course, has been proscribed...The fact that the Sangh Parivar runs over 57,000 ideology-based schools for children in villages across

several states, especially in areas populated by tribal and Dalit groups, makes available a cadre of youth and their parents ready to do their bidding...The federal minister for education, former TV actress Smriti Boman Irani, has ordered a revision of text books, particularly of history, to incorporate more ancient Indian traditions including references to Hindu sacred texts. Various important councils in the ministry are now chaired by luminaries wedded to the thesis that India is the fountainhead of all knowledge in the world. The BJP and the minister hold that Hindu sacred texts are a 5,000-year-old source of knowledge on such diverse subjects as plastic surgery, aviation, nuclear weaponry and genetic engineering...Muslims and Christians feel they are being strangled by a tightening noose, in the villages and small towns by Sangh cadres who have the police on their side, and nationally by the federal and state governments who seem to endorse the hate campaigns and the violence...All too many people in office and heading Sangh groups have said that the constitution is an inheritance from Britain that has no place in Hindu Rashtra, the Land of the Hindus. This is something that must worry not just Indian religious minorities, but the world")

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/world-must-act-against-hindu-plan-for-christian-muslim-free-india/72688>

Osmond Charles (attorney, **UPDATE:** said "People are nervous about the new government at the center as they feel such activities [as mass forced conversions to Hinduism] will be condoned")

Navneet Kedar (attended Christmas service despite Hindu activities)

Prem Taj Masih (pensioner, said "My forebears have been coming to this church since it was established in 1868. There is no sense of fear from the Hindu masses")

Sachin Sahay (network engineer, said "So far, I don't feel insecure, but we should be free to follow our own faith")

Ghanishka Kedar (aged 12, said "We never talk about such issues [as religious differences] in school")

Abraham Varghese (aged 25, said "What is the meaning of this 'homecoming'? We are already in our home")

Fr Sunil Luke (said there were no incidents this year)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Aligarh

Source: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2014/12/uneasy-christmas-india-christians-20141227114118694377.html>

**Event: Three pastors and six other Christians arrested on charges of forced conversions during their Christmas celebration**

Pastor R Mahanta (arrested)

Pastor J Das (arrested)

Pastor Kaila Badaika (arrested)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Balisuda, Sundergarh district, Orissa state

**Event: A Christmas celebration is attacked by 100 Hindu radicals**

Brother Jibaratna Bira (husband of Siporah Singh, Christmas celebration attacked, threatened with death, fled into the jungle with 25 parishioners, found the next day and beaten along with his daughters, charged with forcible conversions by the police and jailed)

Siporah Singh (wife of Brother Jibaratna Bira, Christmas celebration attacked, threatened with death, fled into the jungle with 25 parishioners, found the next day and beaten along with her daughters, charged with forcible conversions by the police and jailed)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Deogarh, Khandua district, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christmas-in-jail-for-Christians-in-Orissa-and-Madhya-Pradesh-33059.html>

Shyamlal (home raided by police after allegations of forced conversions made, police said no evidence of forced conversions was found but ten Christians were arrested including three children under the age of six for having insulted Hinduism)

Dhurubhai Bharatan (said that Hindu extremists pelted the Shyamlal's house and tried to bring down a wall "The police told the Christians that they will be provided protection but arrested them")

Date reported: December 29, 2014

Location: Borgaon-Bujurg village, Khandwa district, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/10-christians-arrested-for-insulting-hinduism-in-khandwa/>

Shiv Shankar Masih (convert, dalit [untouchable], said that a member of parliament offered him a government job if he would revert to Hinduism, the previous evening RSS paramilitaries attacked the hamlet of 45 Christian dalit families but were driven off)

Date: December 28, 2014

Location: Gaya district, Bihar state

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/patna/Dalit-Christian-converts-in-Bihar-seek-police-protection-accuse-Sangh-of-intimidation/articleshow/45677670.cms>

Cardinal Baselios Cleemis Thottunkal (Major Archbishop of the Syro-Malankara-rite Catholic Church, called on Prime Minister Modi to intervene against forcible conversions to Hinduism)

Date: December 30, 2014

Source [with photo]: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2014/12/30/cardinal-protests-against-forced-conversion-of-christians-to-hinduism/>

David Dayalan (Asian Access India Director, said of the anti-Christian and anti-Muslim campaign "I wasn't surprised at what's happening, but I'm really surprised at the speed at which the BJP is moving...This is our time. God uses persecution, where you get these determined Christians, focused Christians, unified Christians, and they get after it")

Date reported: December 31, 2014

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue25863.html>

Rev Madhu Chandra Singh (spoke against government discrimination against Christian Dalits [untouchables] "After their conversion, Dalit Christians begin to suffer religious persecution from religious fanatics but also a denial of Scheduled Caste benefits because of the Schedule Caste Order of 1950, which I term a double discrimination of Dalit Christians")

Franklin Caesar (**UPDATE:** said "This system is against the fundamental rights provided to all India's citizens in the Constitution. The Presidential Order of 1950 has destroyed fundamental and constitutional rights of Dalits from Christian and Muslim backgrounds; the benefits must be delink from religion")

Date: December 29, 2014

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/millions-of-indian-christians-forced-to-choose-between-faith-and-government-benefits-for-untouchables-131782/>



## Indonesia

Park Seong-beom (aged 37, missionary, South Korean citizen, husband of Lee Kyung-hwa, father of Park Yuna, apparently **died** in the crash of AirAsia QZ8501)

Lee Kyung-hwa (missionary, South Korean citizen, wife of Park Seong-beom, mother of Park Yuna, apparently **died** in the crash of AirAsia QZ8501)

Park Yuna (aged 11 months, South Korean citizen, daughter of Park Seong-beom and Lee Kyung-hwa, apparently **died** in the crash of AirAsia QZ8501)

Date: December 28, 2014

Location: Surabaya

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/airasia-flight-qz8501-found-young-family-of-christian-missionaries-among-162-people-onboard-131857/>



## Iran

Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez (husband of Shamiram Isavi, father of Ram-eil, bodily searched during a police raid on his home, arrested)

Shamiram Isavi (wife of Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez, mother of Ram-eil, bodily searched during the police raid on her home)

Ram-eil (son of Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez and Shamiram Isavi, bodily searched during the police raid on his home)

Amin (convert, detained by police after the raid on the home of Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez)

Date: December 26, 2014

Location: Tehran

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20141229144417.htm>

and

[http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=9635:several-christians-arrested-at-christmas-in-tehran-their-celebration-interrupted&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279](http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9635:several-christians-arrested-at-christmas-in-tehran-their-celebration-interrupted&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279)

### **Event: House church raided, nine Christians arrested**

Mehdi Kian (arrested)

Ali Sadraddin (arrested)

Mohammad Kazemi (arrested)

Azin Faroudi (arrested)

Mohammad Hossein Moridian (arrested)

Maryam Narimani (arrested)

Alireza Nasiri (arrested)

Brother Matin (arrested)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Roudehen, Tehran province

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20141229144417.htm>

Pastor Farshid Malayeri Fathi (aged 35 in 2014, in jail since December 2010; sentenced to six years imprisonment for "being the chief agent of foreign organizations in Iran and of administrating funds for foreign organizations"; **UPDATE**: sentenced to an additional year in prison, sentence appears related to a Revolutionary Guard raid on his prison in which alcohol was found in an adjacent ward)

Date: December 29, 2014

Location: Tehran

Source:

[http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=9637:christian-prisoner-farshid-fathi-receives-an-additional-year-in-prison&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279](http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9637:christian-prisoner-farshid-fathi-receives-an-additional-year-in-prison&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279)



### **Iraq**

Dr Kamal Yusef (refugee, is planning to leave the country, said "You have to change your religion to stay there")

Tedy (refugee, said "I am not an Iraqi, I am a Christian, and I don't have anyone to support me. We like Iraq, but Iraq doesn't like us")

Date: December 27, 2014

Location: Dohuk

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20141227130357.htm>

Yonatan Betkolia (member of parliament, said that the Iranian government is working to send aid to Christian refugees)

Date: December 29, 2014

Location: Bagdad

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/37031-ASIA\\_IRAN\\_Iranian\\_aid\\_convoy\\_for\\_Iraqi\\_Christians\\_ready\\_to\\_leave#.VKIq8qsjI](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37031-ASIA_IRAN_Iranian_aid_convoy_for_Iraqi_Christians_ready_to_leave#.VKIq8qsjI)

Mukhlis Yusef Yacoub (aged 37, father of Mark, beaten by ISIL fighters when he refused to convert to Islam, blinded in one eye, escaped)

Mark (aged 9, son of Mukhlis Yusef Yacoub, tied and dragged behind a car by ISIL fighters when his father refused to convert to Islam, survived, escaped)

Namrud Elyas Hanna (aged 52, said "I want to go back home today. But we can't. We're so frustrated here, so hopeless. Our villages are destroyed, our homes are burnt. Living here is too hard")

Date: August 6, 2014

Location: Qaraqosh

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/media-news-events/opinion/3222-it-s-a-black-christmas-for-the-christians-of-the-middle-east>

Fr Douglas Bazi (**UPDATE:** said "I care about my people. I don't care about the 'Middle East.' The Middle East for almost 2,000 years has been the same. It's the same war, the same conflict. So, why do I have to put my people inside that war? Why?...I am angry because I know Islam very well. In Baghdad they blew up my church. I drove by three bombings, and twice my car was destroyed. I got shot in my leg by an AK-47 – by Islam, and they kidnapped me for nine days... You know who represents Islam very well? ISIL. They are the true Islam. So if someone says, 'No, they do not represent Islam, Hamas does not represent Islam, Hezbollah does not represent Islam.' Who's left then? Come on guys. Come on. Wake up. You know, stop saying those stupid things – it's just stupid. What for? If I lose the last drop of our blood [by encouraging Christians to stay], what is the point of that?")

Baidaa Alias (mother of Marvin Bashar, was likely the first woman to give birth in the refugee camp after fleeing ISIL, said "Yesterday I passed one of the tents, and I saw a lady, she's a grandma, preparing clothes for a new baby to be born. I hate myself in this situation. When the new baby comes, what should I write where they put date and place of birth? 'Tents'?" )

Rabia Soran (aged 37, veterinarian, refugee, manages refugee housing in an uncompleted mall)

Ayad Neha (cement worker, refugee, lives with his family of five and 21 other persons in a three room office, said of ISIL "We still want to know why they kicked us out. We are

peaceful people. We have not hurt anyone. Christians are peaceful people. We did not make problems. We do not know why they came there”)

Date: December 29, 2014

Location: Ankawa, Kurdistan

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2014/12/displaced-iraqi-christians-ponder-an-iraq-without-christians/>



## Jordan

Dr Imad Ibraheem Daood (aged 47, husband of Sajida, father of four, surgeon, Iraqi refugee, said “We are living in a very bad situation. We are afraid of diseases, getting sick. There is some difficulty in our food supply: every day becomes less and less, especially the dinners. Most of the time we don’t have one...We are nearly every day going to the church here. We are praying. Still we have the faith. We lost many things, but still we have the faith. Still there is hope”)

Sajida (wife of Dr Imad Ibraheem Daood, mother of four, Iraqi refugee)

Ibad (aged 20, son of Dr Imad Ibraheem Daood and Sajida, Iraqi refugee)

Yusif (aged 13, son of Dr Imad Ibraheem Daood and Sajida, Iraqi refugee, said “We trust in God”)

Valentin (daughter of Dr Imad Ibraheem Daood and Sajida, Iraqi refugee)

Mareo (Iraqi refugee, father killed in a church bombing in 2006, said “We pray to make the situation more calm”)

Date: December 28, 2014

Location: Annam

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/in-refugee-limbo-iraqi-christians-keep-the-faith-78905/>



## Libya

**Event: Seven Egyptian Coptic Christians were abducted while trying to leave the country**

Samuel Wilson

Ezzat Bushra Nassif

Luqa Nagati

Essam Baddar Samir



Malak Farag Ibrahim

Sameh Salah Farouq

Gaber Mounir Adly

Badar Samir (father of Essam Baddar Samir)

Date: December 30, 2014

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58847>

and <http://en.wataninet.com/coptic-affairs-coptic-affairs/sectarian/seven-copts-kidnapped-in-libya/12839/>



### **Mexico**

Fr Gregorio Lopez Gorostieta (seminary professor, abducted, **murdered**)

Date: December 22, 2014

Location: Ciudad Altamirano, Guerrero state

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2014/12/27/third-priest-in-a-year-murdered-in-mexican-state-of-guerrero/>



### **Niger**

Mounira (convert, mother of Maoule, beaten unconscious by her husband for her conversion, divorced, threatened with death)

Maoule (convert, son of Mounira)

Date reported: December 31, 2014

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2014/12/31/threatened-with-death-because-of-christ/>



### **Nigeria**

Pastor Mike Maikarfi (described an attack by gunmen on a Christmas celebration that killed 10 and severely injured 4)

Joel Ambo (**killed**)

Yakubu Ambi (**killed**)

Yamu Idzi (killed)

Anche Ishaku (killed)

Misalai Ngbo (killed)

Ishaya Anche (killed)

Monday Samson (killed)

Joel Anzah (killed)

Jonathan Anche (killed)

P-Square (nickname, young man, killed)

Date: December 27, 2014

Location: Tattaura, Ancha district, Kaduna state

Source: <http://thenationonlineng.net/new/10-killed-kaduna-post-christmas-celebration/>



## Pakistan

Fr James Channan, OP (director of the Dominican Peace Center; **UPDATE**: has been working to support the orphaned children of Shahzad Masih and Shama Bibi)

Poonam (aged 1, youngest daughter of Shama Bibi, pulled from her mother's arms and thrown on the floor when he mother was seized by the mob, orphaned after her parents were burned alive; **UPDATE**: has been provided with a new home)

Salman (aged 5, son of Shahzad Masih and Shama Bibi, orphaned after his parents were burned alive; **UPDATE**: has been provided with a new home)

Sonia (aged 3, daughter of Shahzad Masih and Shama Bibi, orphaned after her parents were burned alive; **UPDATE**: has been provided with a new home)

Date: December 28, 2014

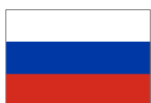
Source: <http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/pakistan-blasphemy-victims-children-get-christmas-reprieve-law-unchallenged-27675>

Pastor Qamar Ul Zaman (described the burning of his church)

Date: December 29, 2014

Location: Rawalpindi

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5127>



## Russia

Fr Gleb Yakunin (aged 80, married, father of Maria, Alexander, and Anna, arrested by the KGB on [August 28, 1980](#) for anti-Soviet agitation; released in [March 1987](#); **UPDATE: died after a long illness**)

Date: December 25, 2014

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue25850.html>



## **Sudan**

Rev Yat Michael (arrested by NISS secret police without charge after delivering a homily)

Date: December 21, 2014

Location: Khartoum

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2014/12/south-sudanese-pastor-jailed-after-preaching-at-north-khartoum-church/>



## **Uganda**

Pastor Sarah Kalaja (church attacked by shamans and sorcerers with clubs and sticks, 30 Christians hospitalized, Bibles destroyed along with furniture, doors, and other property)

Date: December 22, 2014

Location: Kisaba, Bukasa Island, Lake Victoria

Bishop Godfrey Muyanja (condemned the church attack, said “The action of the rowdy group of witchdoctors attacking, raiding and demolishing the house of God is evil and uncalled for. Most of the church faithful sustained injuries in the attack and are receiving treatment in different clinics, while others have fled the landing site for fear of another attack”)

Date: December 22, 2014

Location: Kalangala

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2014/12/african-shamans-in-uganda-injure-christians-damage-church-building/>



## **United States**

Dr Albert Mohler (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, denounced an upcoming front page Newsweek article that calls evangelicals and fundamentalists frauds, said "Newsweek's cover story is exactly what happens when a writer fueled by open antipathy to evangelical

Christianity tries to throw every argument he can think of against the Bible and its authority. To put the matter plainly, no honest historian would recognize the portrait of Christian history presented in this essay as accurate and no credible journalist would recognize this screed as balanced")

Bill Donohue (Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, denounced an upcoming front page Newsweek article that calls evangelicals and fundamentalists frauds)

Date: December 31, 2014

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/southern-baptist-leader-albert-mohler-denounces-newsweek-piece-calling-evangelicals-gods-frauds-131921/>

### **United States - Massachusetts**

Brenda Burns (donated an infant Jesus figurine to replace the one stolen from a manger and replaced with the head of a pig)

Fr Allen Rash (asked for the return of the original infant Jesus figurine)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Haverhill

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/vandals-replace-baby-jesus-in-mass-churchs-nativity-display-with-pigs-head-police-investigate-possible-hate-crime-131717/>

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