

Today's Martyrs
2015-01-04 through 2015-01-10



Central African Republic

Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: has received death threats from the anti-balaka militia, replied "I am a Pastor who is ready to die for his flock")

Date reported: January 7, 2015

Location: Bangui

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/37053->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC Archbishop of Bangui threatened with death while bringing assistance to the displaced#.VK3z2MJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37053-AFRICA_CENTRAL_AFRICAN_REPUBLIC_Archbishop_of_Bangui_threatened_with_death_while_bringing_assistance_to_the_displaced#.VK3z2MJTEfg)



China

Pastor Lu (**UPDATE**: house church told to not celebrate Christmas or sing hymns, said "In the past few years, our church has been suppressed by the government on a continuous basis. Our former Party Secretary told the public security bureau leaders to harass us. Yet, all the harassment has not reduced the number of worshippers. Instead, the number of church members has increased")

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Mingguang, Bozhou, Anhui province

Liu Yongju (home raided by DSPS officers, USB drive seized)

Date: January 5, 2014

Location: Liuji, Bozhou, Anhui province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/anhui-officers-threaten-house-churchs.html>



Egypt

Talaat Israel (aged 60, has gone on a hunger strike in protest against a policeman who bought furniture from him and stopped paying installments, previous attempts to collect led to police threats of fabricated charges against him and his family)

Date: January 6, 2015

Location: Aswan

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58957>

Fr Girgis Zakaria (shot at by masked gunmen, escaped)

Date: January 6, 2015

Location: El-Bayadeya, Mallawi, Minya province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58955>



India

Fr Cyril Patrick (contradicted a police report that the destruction of his church's creche was an electrical fire, said "CCTV videos show something being poured [on the Nativity Scene] from the top")

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Delhi:-crèche-destroyed-by-fire-in-a-Catholic-church-33112.html>

Arvind D'Souza (placed in 'preventative' detention for 14 days after Hindu radicals accused him of 'spreading Christianity', police acknowledged that he committed no crime but decided 'public order' required his detention)

Date: January 2, 2015

Location: Maulvikhurd village, Amethi district, Uttar Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-man-detained-on-security-grounds-even-though-he-did-not-commit-any-crimes-33130.html>

Shamlal (hosted a Christmas celebration in his home with 13 Christians, chased from his home by a Hindu mob, all were rescued by police then arrested for forcible conversions, released 5 days later)

Geetanjali (young mother, chased from a Christmas celebration by a Hindu mob, rescued by police then arrested for forcible conversions, released 5 days later)

Abhilasha (aged 8 months, chased from a Christmas celebration by a Hindu mob, rescued by police then arrested for forcible conversions, released 5 days later)

Date: December 25, 2014

Location: Sukta Dam, Khandwa district, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2015/01/08/as-the-world-celebrated-thirteen-christians-in-india-spent-their-christmas-in-jail/>



Indonesia

Rosnida Sari (university lecturer, received death threats after posting a web article about bringing her students to a church to inquire about gender equality in Christianity, 17 Muslims were included and defended her, in hiding)

Date: January 5, 2014

Location: Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam province

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/lecturer-threatened-after-taking-muslim-students-to-church/72733>



Iran

Amin Khaki (church employee, beaten and arrested on March 5, 2014 during a picnic in Shush; transferred to Ahwaz Prison on May 7, 2014, beaten; **UPDATE**: released on bail)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Karoun Prison, Ahvaz

Source: <http://vocir.org/2015/01/03/iranian-christian-prisoner-amin-khaki-was-released/>



Iraq

Fr Daniel Alkhory (said "I just keep telling the kids [in the refugee camp that] you have to forgive. Forgiveness will lead us to so many paths. I don't want them to grow up and be after revenge and be angry. We want to make a party for them every day. We just want them to be happy and keep smiling. We just want the children to feel like they are at home", added that they have lost contact with 15 Christian families that were unable to escape ISIL)

Date reported: January 6, 2015

Location: Ankawa, Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150105195557.htm>

Zuhair Benyameen (**killed** by the Islamic State [ISIL], funeral held)

Date: January 5, 2015

Location: Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=58942>

Rachel (elderly woman, fed and protected in Mosul by her Muslim neighbors along with nine other elderly Christians, all were forced to flee after refusing ISIL demands to convert to Islam, spent two days in the cold no-man's land between ISIL and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters before being rescued)

Date: January 7, 2015

Location: Kirkuk

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/37068->

[ASIA IRAQ They refuse to convert to Islam 10 elderly Christians expelled from Mosul#.VLCbSsJTEfg](#)



Jordan

Taif Hanna (son of Maan George Hanna, engineer, Iraqi refugee, said "No, we will never go back. ISIL tried to kill us")

Maan George Hanna (aged 52, father of Taif Hanna, Iraqi refugee)

Maitham Najib (aged 36, husband, father of three, mechanic, Iraqi refugee, abducted in 2005 and stabbed multiple times, released after eight days)

Fr Rifat Bader (**UPDATE:** said of the refugees "They are suffering because they are Christians. Faith is the main treasure that we have. When you see that these people, these families, found a way to escape without money, without gold, without their passport even, this means that the faith is more important than money, than gold, than everything. Really they are teachers. They are normal people, very kind people, people full of pride because they kept their faith. They could become [Muslims], in one moment, but they refused...They wanted to stay firm in their faith. It is very important, and it is a great lesson for all of us")

Date: October 28, 2014

Location: Amman

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150107160938.htm>



Libya

Hanna Aziz (described the abduction of 13 Egyptian Christian workers from their apartments "They were 15 armed and masked men who came in four vehicles. They had a list of full names of Christians in the building. While checking IDs, Muslims were left aside while Christians were grabbed... I heard my friends screaming but they were quickly shushed at gunpoint. After that, we heard nothing. I am still in my room waiting for them to take me. I want to die with them", three relatives were among those taken)

Maged Solaiman Shehata (abducted)

Abanoub Ayyad Ateyya (abducted)

Yusuf Shukry Yunan (abducted)

Hany Abdel-Messeih Saleeb (abducted)

Kirollos Beshry Fawzy (abducted)

Milad Makeen Zaky (abducted)

Tawadros Yusuf Tawadros (abducted)

Samuel Estafanous Kamel (abducted, had told his family that 100 Copts had contacted the Egyptian embassy for help to escape the country but received no response)

Beshoy Estafanous Kamel (abducted, had told his family that 100 Copts had contacted the Egyptian embassy for help to escape the country but received no response)

Mina Fayez Aziz (abducted)

Malak Ibrahim Sinewt (abducted)

Girguis Milad Sinewt (abducted)

Bishoy Adel Khalaf (abducted)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Sirte

Sources: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/c59a93ddbe83476ab7551b2fb45d4326/least-20-egyptian-christians-kidnapped-libya>

and <http://en.sectarianattacks.com/attacks/194-thirteen-coptic-egyptians-kidnapped-in-libya>

and <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1284&A=17109>



Mexico

Bishop Alejo Zavala Castro (denounced the continuing threats and attempts at blackmail against priests, two priests have been murdered in the last two months)

Date: January 9, 2015

Location: Chilpancingo

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/37065-](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37065-AMERICA_MEXICO_The_priests_of_Guerrero_continue_to_preach_the_Gospel_as_always_despite_threats_and_blackmail#.VLCK_cJTEfg)

[AMERICA MEXICO The priests of Guerrero continue to preach the Gospel as always despite threats and blackmail#.VLCK_cJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37065-AMERICA_MEXICO_The_priests_of_Guerrero_continue_to_preach_the_Gospel_as_always_despite_threats_and_blackmail#.VLCK_cJTEfg)



Nigeria

Yohanna Adamu (described an attack by Muslim Fulanis that killed 15 Christians “Many of our people are missing, and more than 20 houses have been burned down”)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Ambe-Madaki village, Sanga Local Government Area, Kaduna state

Ulama Joseph (described an attack by Muslim Fulanis that killed 3 Christians, one by beheading)

Date: December 30, 2014

Location: Kantoma, Mangu Local Government Area, Plateau state

Mike Sanga (**UPDATE:** said “Muslim Fulani herdsmen carried out both attacks [June 23 and December 27 2014]”)

Thomas Adams (said “At about 10 p.m. the Fulani herdsmen, armed with sophisticated weapons, invaded our village. Ten Christians were killed on the spot, and five others sustained injuries from gunshots”)

Date: December 27, 2014

Location: Tattaura, Ancha district, Kaduna state

Joseph Kamida Cham (president of Urban Frontiers Mission, wrote in an email “The suicide bomber targeted one of the churches where I worship in Tudun Wada Gombe. There are three churches side-by-side, ECWA Gospel, ECWA 3 and COCIN. COCIN and ECWA 3 are on the opposite side of the road that the bomber took; it is also the only access road into the communities behind the Gombe State University. The road is usually barricaded on Christmas and the New Year’s Day, when the service is going on...The only casualty is the suicide bomber, as he was torn into pieces. He stopped and greeted the Boys Brigade [Boy Scouts] that were stationed at the point alongside the police - after the explosion, the particles affected eight Christians. Two had serious injuries, while others had minor injuries and shock from the blast”)

Date: January 1, 2015

Location: Gombe, Gombe state

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/attacks-by-islamic-extremists-in-nigeria-leave-at-least-28-christians-dead/>

Fr Patrick Tor Alumuku (**UPDATE:** reported on the latest Boko Haram attack in which as many as 2,000 people may have been killed "I received a message of the Christians Association of Nigeria, the association of Christian churches in Nigeria, which states that in that area Boko Haram has burned several churches and caused numerous victims. Though it is noted that in general the national media tend to reduce the number of victims not to further inflame the minds...One must bear in mind that the presidential election campaign for February has opened this week. The situation is particularly delicate...When those of Boko Haram arrive in a major city they make no distinction between Christians and Muslims, and the population flees, without distinction of religion. Boko Haram separates Muslims from Christians only in the smaller villages. Next to the combatants from Nigeria, Boko Haram has been strengthened by jihadist members from Libya and Mali. Their goal is to create a caliphate in northern Nigeria")

Date: January 7, 2015

Location: Baga, Borno state

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/37071-AFRICA_NIGERIA_New_violence_committed_by_Boko_Haram_maybe_2_000_dead_several_churches_burned#.VLCa_MJTEfg



Pakistan

Nusrat Bibi (sister of Rani Bibi, beaten with a cricket bat when she attempted to prevent the molestation and abduction of her daughter, left arm and two left fingers broken, clothing torn, police took no action)

Rani Bibi (sister of Nusrat Bibi, injured along with her sister while defending her niece from molestation and abduction, police took no action)

Date: December 6, 2014

Location: Toka Wala Chowk [ghetto], Satokitla village, Punjab state

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5129>

Noreen Bashir (aged 14, daughter of Bashir Masih and Ruqqiya Bibi, abducted on November 26, 2014, repeatedly raped, forcibly converted to Islam and married to her captor; **UPDATE:** released back to her family, under threat of death due to her renunciation of Islam)

Date: December 3, 2014

Location: Thatha Gondal, Hafizabad, Punjab state

Source: <http://barnabasfund.org/news/Pakistani-Christian-girl-14-kidnapped-and-forced-to-convert-to-Islam>



Syria

Father Miron Avedissian (spoke on how rebels from Ahrar al-Sham seized his town from Turkish territory, brought in foreign media to show how well they were treating Christians, and then attacked churches and cemeteries after the media left, said "They took photographs to show they were looking after the churches, and then set them alight. It all still happened in the first day")

Zavinar Sargdegian (aged 58, said "I was at home with my husband when they raided the house. They broke down the front door. They pushed us on to the street. We were on our knees and they put a gun to our heads. From the road I saw the Angelic Church burning. Fire was coming out of the doors and windows", added that the rebels were from Chechnya, Tunisia and Libya)

Date: March 21, 2014

Location: Kessab

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150103213217.htm>



Ukraine

Bishop Stanislav Szyrokoradiuk (**UPDATE:** said “The situation in the war zones is catastrophic. There is hunger. More than 80 people have already died of it in Luhansk and Donetsk...We are trying to help where we can. Just a few weeks ago, we were at least able to give 300 pairs of shoes to children...Twenty years ago, we didn’t have a single parish - today there are more than 50. The faithful have Ukrainian, Polish, Russian as well as Vietnamese roots”)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Kharkiv

Bishop Vitaliy Skomarovsky (said “The war may seem far away. But in reality, many young men from the western part of the country have joined the war. Just recently, a row of fir trees was felled in the cemetery of Lutsk to bury 13 young soldiers”)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Lutsk

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/for-catholics-in-ukraine-the-situation-in-the-war-zones-is-catastrophic-87393/>



United Kingdom

Mark Vening (missionary at Youth With A Mission, called on its supporters to write Members of Parliament concerning the Visa & Immigration offices suspension of its sponsored visas, 350 missionaries and their families may be deported by April, said that his organization is the third Christian missionary group to be targeted in the last year as apparent "soft targets" in an effort to reduce immigrant visas)

Date: December 23, 2014

Location: Wrexham

Source: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2015/january/350-ywam-missionaries-fear-forced-exit-from-united-kingdom.html>



United States - Arizona

Alex Stojic (parishioner, condemned pro-Ustashi vandalism on his church on Christmas Eve, called it "an outright threat")

Date: January 6, 2015

Location: Phoenix

Source [with video]: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/76394.htm>

United States - Missouri

Loyal Grandstaff (aged 12, told by his public middle school teacher that he could not read a Bible during free time, the principal said that Bibles are not prohibited from school and would investigate)

Date reported: January 7, 2014

Location: Marshall

Source: <http://christiannews.net/2015/01/07/missouri-middle-school-student-prohibited-from-reading-bible-during-free-time/>

United States - Utah

Kathy Taylor (aged 34, wife of Nathan, mother of six, **died of melanoma** after delaying the birth of her unborn child in an attempt to save his life)

Date reported: January 5, 2015

Luke Taylor (newborn, delivered premature, **died of an infection** days after birth)

Date of birth: September 22, 2014

Location: Salt Lake City

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/mom-of-6-dies-after-refusing-cancer-treatment-to-give-her-baby-a-chance-at>



Vatican City

Fr Frederico Lombardi (director of the Vatican Press Office; **UPDATE**: condemned an attack by a half-naked FEMEN member on the creche in St Peters Square following the Papal Christmas blessing: "[FEMEN has] intentionally, repeatedly and gravely violated the right of the faithful to see their legitimate religious convictions respected")

Date: December 25, 2014

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150105151709.htm>

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