

Today's Martyrs
2015-01-11 through 2015-01-17



Canada

Mary Wagner (released from jail in Toronto, Ontario on [June 12, 2014](#), had been held for almost two years on a probation violation because she refused to agree to not demonstrate in front of abortion clinics; **UPDATE**: arrested for demonstrating at an abortion clinic)

Date: [December 24, 2014](#)

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/150-poles-protest-outside-canadian-embassy-to-support-mary-wagner>



China

Zan Aizong (freelance journalist; **UPDATE**: said officials “use the legal system [as a pretext]. They go after crosses and building codes because it will not cause an uproar abroad. They want to turn Christianity into Chinese Christianity, controlled by the party”)

Date: [January 11, 2015](#)

Location: [Zhejiang](#)

Ling Cangzhou (blogger, said “Many Christians are scared of the government. In China you rely on the government for jobs, position, for money. Families and relatives are affected. Dissidents don’t get promotion or advancement”)

Date: [January 11, 2015](#)

Location: [Beijing](#)

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Asia-Pacific/2015/0111/In-China-a-church-state-showdown-of-biblical-proportions>



Egypt

Sabrine Mushir (young girl, abducted)

Date reported: [January 10, 2015](#)

Location: [Dalga](#)

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/cs-releases/3259-continued-kidnapping-of-and-indifference-to-coptic-christians>

Sabrin Saad (aged 17, abducted)

Semsem Fahmy (aged 23, abducted at gunpoint, ransom demanded)

Date reported: January 12, 2015

Location: Minya

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1289&A=17192>

Shahid Nesimis Saroufim (aged 38, **killed**)

Date: January 13, 2015

Location: Nag Hassan village, Dabiya, Luxor province

Source: <http://www.mcdirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59066>

Makari Zakaria (forced to worship in the open air, said "Copts suffer because the state does not want to issue a build permit for a church although villagers donated a piece of land in 1971")

Date: January 15, 2015

Location: Nag Rizk Shenouda village, Tahta, Sohag province

Source: <http://www.mcdirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59081>



Greece

Fr Ilia Kartoza (Georgian citizen, monastery Abbot, **drowned** during the evacuation of the burning MS Norman Atlantic ferry, consoled other passengers and refused to take a lifeboat seat until others had been saved)

Date: December 28, 2014

Location: Greek territorial waters, Strait of Otranto, Adriatic Sea

Source [with photo and video]: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/76559.htm>



India

Rev Kamlesh (prayer service attended by 50 people disrupted by Bajrang Dal [the RSS paramilitary youth wing] militants, accused of forced conversions, pushed around, others beaten, furniture and musical instruments damaged)

Date: January 11, 2015

Location: Madhav Nagar, Bihar state

Rev K J Mathai (taken by police after services along with some of the 30 attendees and questioned on charges of forcible conversions while Hindus demonstrated outside the police station, released, warned to 'be careful')

Date: January 11, 2015

Location: Kushulanagar, Karnataka state

Sajan K George (President of the Global Council of Indian Christians; **UPDATE**: said "In secular India, freedom of worship is deteriorating for Christians. Two attacks on the same day, in two different states of the country, are proof that extremist groups feel encouraged to attack Christians because they are not restrained by the law")

Date: January 11, 2015

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Religious-violence-increases-in-India-with-two-Christian-communities-affected-33165.html>

Fr Balraj Lourduswamy (described the desecration of a grotto of the Virgin Mary by three men "While one person broke the grotto glass another pulled down Our Lady's statue")

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Delhi, said "We see a clear pattern in these attacks", the grotto attack being the fourth in seven weeks)

Mini John (secretary of the All India Catholic Union' women's commission, condemned the attack)

Date: December 14, 2014

Location: Vikaspury district, New Delhi

Source: <http://mattersindia.com/delhi-reports-fourth-church-attack-in-45-days/>

Event: Christian leaders criticized the continuing silence of Prime Minister Modi regarding the recent increase in church attacks

John Dayal (National Integration Council, **UPDATE**: said "I still feel the prime minister must openly denounce such attacks on religious minorities and denounce those involved...even if they belong to his own Sangh Parivar [the Hindu nationalist umbrella organization]")

Samuel Jaykumar (National Council of Churches in India, said "The silence of the prime minister encourages those forces which want to create tension in society. Attacks even on places of worship are not taken seriously")

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Delhi; **UPDATE**: said that an ecumenical group of Christian leaders met with the Prime Minister around Christmastime 2014 and he "refused to make a statement about attacks on Christians", claimed the attacks were "media hype")

Date: January 15, 2015

Location: Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-slam-indias-modi-for-not-condemning-church-attacks/72790>



Iran

Event: Prison officials scheduled a Christmas celebration in prison, then removed several Christians from the celebration before it began

Pastor Farshid Malayeri Fathi

Ebrahim Firouzi

Rasoul Abdollahi

Sergik (Armenian citizen)

Date: December 30, 2014

Source: <http://vocir.org/2015/01/10/christian-prisoners-were-deprived-to-attending-of-the-christmas-celebrating/>



Iraq

Fr Youhanna Issa OAOC (aged 50, has been aiding refugees, said "Christians are suffering a lot. They live in abandoned, crumbling houses. Food is sometimes in short supply. There is no money to provide for everyday basic needs. The crisis is here to stay and will not be solved in a few weeks...With ISIL's arrival, they no longer believe that they can live with Muslims...there is no more trust")

Date: January 12, 2015

Location: Mella Baruan

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Iraqi-priest,-the-Islamic-State-has-destroyed-Christians'-trust-in-Muslims-33159.html>

Fr Josphe Abdel Sater (aged 57, said "Our church is on the border with the Islamic state [ISIL]...Here in Iraq the New Evangelization means being ready for martyrdom")

Date: January 15, 2015

Location: Alqosh

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Alqosh:-a-frontier-church,-stronger-than-the-threat-of-the-Islamic-State-33196.html>

Archbishop Amel Shamon Nona (**UPDATE:** appointed to lead the Eparchy of St. Thomas the Apostle of Sydney, the Chaldean diocese of Australia and New Zealand)

Date: January 15, 2015

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150115172317.htm>

Sr Sanaa Hana (said "Our sisters were just able to consume the Blessed Sacrament before they fled [Mosul]. They did not want it to fall into the hands of the jihadists", returned to Mosul with volunteers to retrieve church documents "I did not want to make anyone go with me. It was very dangerous, after all. Other nuns have been kidnapped by ISIL")

Fr Janan (monk, said "We fled from Bakhdida on [August 6 \[2014\]](#). We even left our identity cards behind because everything had to go so quickly. We thought that the Kurdish fighters would protect us. However, when they suddenly pulled out, we dropped everything and fled")

Date: January 15, 2015

Location: Ankawa, Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150115033250.htm>



Israel

Fr Dimitry Sammara (church vandalized)

Date: January 12, 2015

Location: Haifa

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/76543.htm>



Kazakhstan

Nikolai Novikov (aged 34, arrested on [November 10, 2013](#) at an unregistered Sunday religious service; fined 50 MFIs on [December 18, 2013](#); sentenced on [August 18, 2014](#) to 5 days' imprisonment for refusing to pay his fine; **UPDATE**: received a restraining order on his garage, apparently in preparation of its seizure)

Date: January 5, 2015

Location: Oral

Maksim Volikov (father of six small children, fined US\$550 - at the level for an individual without a family - for passing out religious literature without permission in Novoukrainka on [August 21, 2014](#), seized personal religious literature included Bibles ordered to not be returned)

Date: December 19, 2014

Location: Aiyrtau

Vitaly Nikitenko (cited for sharing his faith on a street on [March 3, 2014](#) in Saumalkol, fined on [July 11, 2014](#), fine upheld on appeal)

Date: August 6, 2014

Marat Babulov (cited for sharing his faith on a street on [August 2, 2014](#), fined on [October 13, 2014](#), fine upheld on appeal)

Date: November 12, 2014

Location: Astana

Samat Musin (cited for street evangelization on [October 4, 2014](#), fined on [November 11, 2014](#), fine upheld on appeal)

Date: [December 4, 2014](#)

Location: Astana

Tatyana Kostrygina (cited for street evangelization on [October 4, 2014](#), fined on [November 11, 2014](#), upheld on appeal)

Date: [December 18, 2014](#)

Location: Astana

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2026



Kenya

George Karidhimba Muriki (aged 25, **shot dead** while arriving at his church in an assassination attempt on his pastor, the shooters were overheard to have mistaken him for the pastor)

Date: [January 11, 2015](#)

Location: Mombasa

Ngoro Nyaga (aged 70, shot in the shoulder while leaving his church, the two assailants were angry that he possessed a Bible, hospitalized)

Date: [January 12, 2015](#)

Location: Mombasa

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/christian-shot-to-death-outside-church-in-mombasa-kenya/>



Kosovo

Zoran Simijonovic (church president, commented on the vandalism of his church with KLA [Kosovo Liberation Army] graffiti, said “We did not see something like this coming and we are worried about potential new incidents”)

Fr Slavisa Spasic (said the graffiti was 'distressing')

Date: [January 10, 2015](#)

Location: Lipljan

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/kla-graffiti-appears-on-serbian-orthodox-church-walls/>



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Lebanon

Fr Paul Karam (**UPDATE:** said “Four people have died from hypothermia and concern increases, as a new drop in temperatures has been announced...official estimates speak of a million 200 thousand refugees registered, but according to our estimates the real figure reaches one million 600 thousand. We are trying to do everything possible to distribute food, blankets, stoves, fuel, warm clothes. The international community has put the Syrian conflict in the shadow. And the most defenseless, those who pay the highest price are children and young people, who account for nearly half of this immense multitude of refugees”)

Date: January 16, 2015

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lebanon-syrian-refugees-falling-a-prey-to-frostbite-due-to-severe-snowfall-and-frost/>



Nigeria

Fr Timothy Cosmas (**UPDATE:** described the attack in which hundreds were likely killed and possibly thousands “It was a massacre. Baga was a populated and active town, despite having already been attacked by Boko Haram. The majority of the victims were killed after the Boko Haram militants occupied the multinational force base in the town Saturday [January 3, 2015], which had been recently abandoned by a contingent deployed

by Chad...the massacre confirms the incapacity of the government and Nigerian army to stop the Boko Haram advance”)

Date: January 7, 2015

Location: Baga, Borno state

Source: <http://www.misna.org/en/other/boko-haram-witnesses-of-a-massacre-09-01-2015-813.html>

Dr Allen Mannaseh (said “President Jonathan made empty promises to us. He did not even say a word about Chibok girls, our daughters. It is unfortunate. We all understand the purpose of his visit to Maiduguri 277 days after our sisters were abducted. We have serious doubts if the federal government is doing anything to rescue those school girls...As a Director of Information of the Chibok community nationwide, I am short of answers when people call to ask me why the president has kept mute about the Chibok girls on his visit to Maiduguri”)

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Maiduguri

Source: <http://thenationonlineng.net/new/chibok-community-angry-jonathans-silence-missing-girls/>



Pakistan

Pastor Tariq Masih (described the burning of his church, cause under investigation, police have been uncooperative)

Ghazala Saleem (heard sounds in the church, called to report the fire, the Fire Brigade did not respond)

Elder Shah Masih (suspected arson in the burning of his church, saw evidence of a chemical accelerant)

Elder Mubashir Zain Iqbal (said that the police appear to be trying to assign the cause of the church fire as electrical without any evidence)

Karamat Masih (church security, always turned off electricity when closing the church)

Date: December 29, 2014

Location: Rawalpindi

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenewsd.php?hnewsid=5138>

Majid Mushtaq (St Francis high school lab assistant, shot in the shoulder and hand, survived, no police report filed)

Date reported: January 13, 2015

Location: Peshawar

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/undefined-person-fired-two-shoot-on-majid-mushtaq/>

Farha Javeed (aged 26, severely injured in the [September 22, 2013](#) twin suicide bombing of All Saints Church, had become bedridden and had a colostomy as a result, **died of her injuries**)

Date: January 11, 2015

Location: Peshawar

Source [with photos]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sister-farha-javeed-the-latest-fatality-from-the-2013-peshawar-twin-bomb-attack>



Philippines

Event: Nuns travelling to join the welcoming ceremony for Pope Francis detained, accused of being members of the communist New People's Army, released

Sr Noemi Degala

Sr Evangelina Labanda

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Tanauan, Leyte province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/harsh-security-sees-nuns-detained-over-papal-visit-in-tacloban/72803>



Poland

Jacek Kotula (aged 48, pro-life demonstrator, a judge has ruled on [October 16, 2014](#) in a closed session that when he called abortion 'killing' he defamed the Rzeszow hospital that performs the abortions, ordered him to publicly apologize with words chosen by the court and to pay all court fees, the court refused to allow witness testimony and refused to release the legal reasoning for the decision; **UPDATE**: attended a demonstration of 150 persons at the Canadian Embassy to protest the [December 24, 2014](#) arrest and continued detention of Mary Wagner)

Przemysław Sycz (aged 35, pro-life demonstrator, a judge has ruled on [October 16, 2014](#) in a closed session that when he called abortion 'killing' he defamed the Rzeszow hospital that performs the abortions, ordered him to publicly apologize with words chosen by the court and to pay all court fees, the court refused to allow witness testimony and refused to release the legal reasoning for the decision; **UPDATE**: attended a demonstration of 150 persons at the Canadian Embassy to protest the [December 24, 2014](#) arrest and continued detention of Mary Wagner)

Date: January 8, 2015

Location: Warsaw

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/150-poles-protest-outside-canadian-embassy-to-support-mary-wagner>



Sierra Leone

Moses (husband, father of two, church mission employee, **died of suspected Ebola**)

Br Themis Adams (Australian citizen, former rock musician; **UPDATE**: wrote a eulogy for his friend and co-worker Moses)

Date: January 7, 2015

Location: Freetown

Source [with photos]: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/ebola-strikes-at-orthodox-mission-sierra-leone-father-themis-loses-a-beloved-co-worker-to-the-deadly-virus/>



Syria

Fr Nawras Sammour SJ (Director of Jesuit Refugee Services; **UPDATE**: said “None of the possible solutions for the Syrian crisis includes the Christians. None of it. If you are talking, for example, about a divided Syria, you have a region for the Kurds, another region for the Sunni, a third region for Alawite and a fourth region for Druze. Christians? They would be around... Now I would say we are completely ignored...Because we are threatening nobody, not considered a threat to anybody, considered as nobody, we would be able to work with everybody. Then we could be something like the salt of the land, everywhere in a very hidden way”)

Date: December 2014

Location: Toronto, Canada

Source: <http://www.catholicregister.org/item/19494-christians-maintain-hope-in-syria-s-bleakness>

Fr Krikor Milad (described his cathedral's partial destruction by Islamic Front artillery “If the bombing had taken place just two hours later, the church would have been full of worshippers”)

Date: January 9, 2015

Location: Aleppo

Source: <http://www.raymondibrahim.com/muslim-persecution-of-christians/old-armenian-church-bombed-in-syria/>



Turkey

Umut Sahin (secretary-general of the Union of Protestant Churches, convert, described some of the problems faced by Protestant Turks, described how “anti-Christian bigotry in Turkey is deeply rooted”)

Date: January 7, 2015

Source: <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/01/turkey-france-christianophobia-turkish-protestants.html#ixzz3OI07BkYI>



United States - California

Pastor Dwayne Shepherd (injured in a shooting in his church parking lot, he and another minister were deliberately targeted, hospitalized, released)

Date: January 4, 2015

Location: San Diego

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/us/47847-watch-you-won-t-believe-what-this-church-did-after-pastor-was-shot>

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