

Today's Martyrs
2015-01-18 through 2015-01-24



Bhutan

Pastor Tandin Wangyal (aged 30 in April 2014, married, father of three, sentenced on September 10, 2014 to 3 years 11 months imprisonment for receiving US\$11,864 from a foreign Christian organization, released on bail; **UPDATE**: the appellate court reduced the sentence to two years four months, which means he will serve no additional time in jail, had fasted for three days on a mountaintop in anticipation of the verdict)

Date: January 19, 2015

Location: Dorokha, Samtse district

Source [with photo]: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/prison-time-withdrawn-for-pastor-in-bhutan-sentenced-to-nearly-four-years/>



Bosnia and Herzegovina

Fr Marko Jakovljevic (church desecrated with graffiti)

Date reported: January 23, 2015

Location: Visoko

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/the-orthodox-church-of-st-procopius-in-visoko-bosnia-and-herzegovina-attacked-and-desecrated/>



Central African Republic

Fr Gustave CSSP (abducted along with a French relief worker by anti-balaka fighters, both released)

Archbishop Dieudonne Nzapalainga (**UPDATE**: negotiated the release of Fr Gustave and the French relief worker)

Rev Nicolas Guerekoyame-Gbangou (**UPDATE**: negotiated the release of Fr Gustave and the French relief worker)

Dates: January 19-23, 2015

Location: Bangui

Source: http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/01/article_3632658.html/



China

Event: The operators of a church based kindergarten are facing trial for illegal business operations for having printed kindergarten textbooks without identification numbers, the book printer has also been charged; **UPDATE:** trial delayed after their defense attorneys refused to be subjected to an unauthorized security search upon entry to the court, the attorneys filed abuse of power charges against the chief judge and the deputy director of the court, defendants returned to detention

Cheng Jie (wife of Pastor Du Hongbo, mother of two young children, kindergarten director, detained on [February 18, 2014](#))

Li Jiatao (wife of Ma Jiawen, mother of two, kindergarten teacher, detained on [June 24, 2014](#) by police)

Huang Qiurui (church elder)

Fang Bin (book printer)

Date: [January 16, 2015](#)

Location: [Liunan district, Liuzhou city, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region](#)

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/judge-defers-trial-of-4-charged-with.html>

Pastor Huang Yizi (aged 40, taken into custody on [August 2, 2014](#); reported on [August 26, 2014](#) to have been charged with 'gathering to assault a state organ', faces a possible sentence of 10 years' imprisonment, had said "I know I will be put in jail one day"; **UPDATE:** still in detention, has filed lawsuits against the police)

Date reported: [January 21, 2015](#)

Location: [Wenzhou, Zhejiang](#)

Source [with photo]: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/lawyers-for-detained-zhejiang-pastor.html>

Fr Ye Yaomin (aged 105, **died after declining hospital care** with the words that "the Church is his home and he has to die in his home", had been banished to a farm from 1955 to 1980, gave his money to the needy regardless of their faith, had declined to emigrate because "China needs priests")

Sr Chen Jianyin (reported on the death of Fr Ye Yaomin)

Date: [January 20, 2015](#)

Location: [Guangzhou](#)

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/chinas-oldest-priest-dies-at-age-105/72842>

Event: Nine Christians have been placed in administrative detention

Pastor Li Ming (sentenced to 15 days' administrative detention)

Pastor Li Mingbo (detained)

Pastor Liu Yong (visitor from Chengdu, detained)

Wang (church elder, detained)

Pastor Sun (husband of Ma Ying, missionary from Mianyang, detained)

Ma Ying (wife of Pastor Sun, missionary from Mianyang, detained)

Zhou Chunyan (detained)

Chen Yihui (detained)

Liang Renyan (detained)

Date: January 20, 2015

Location: Langzhong, Nanchong, Sichuan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/sichuan-police-raid-gathering-of-house.html>



Egypt

Shahid Nesimis Saroufim (aged 38, **killed**; **UPDATE**: **shot dead** one day after a court hearing on the murder of his cousin Emil Naseem Saroufeem, who was bludgeoned to death on **July 5, 2013** in a mob attack)

Safwat Samaan Yasaa (director of the human rights group Nation Without Borders; **UPDATE**: said "The court and the police have all the evidence against the killers and the attackers involved in the incident, and they are dragging their feet. Instead of doing their job and arresting the killers, they are leaving them out for a long time and allowing them to do more attacks instead of enforcing the law....The police seem to do their job very well when somebody likes a Facebook page [deemed unIslamic]. In a few days they are arrested, taken to court and given a six-year sentence, while a murder case [against Muslim perpetrators] with solid testimony and hard evidence takes forever to go through court")

Date: January 13, 2015

Location: Nag Hassan village, Dabiya, Luxor province

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/christian-in-egypt-gunned-down/>

Bishop Pachomius (former acting Patriarch of Coptic Church; **UPDATE**: underwent brain surgery, visited by Pope Tawadros II)

Date reported: January 21, 2015

Source [with photo]: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1296&A=17310>

Fr Bishoy Youssef (automobile firebombed, had been the second case of a priest's vehicle being firebombed within the past year in his village)

Date reported: January 22, 2015

Location: Wasti

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1297&A=17327>

Bishoy Armiya aka Mohammed Hegazy (aged 31 in 2014, Egypt's 'most famous' convert;
UPDATE: attorney attempted to visit him in prison, found that he had been transferred to another prison without notice)

Date: January 20, 2015

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59151>

Soliman Aziz Soliman (property seized by a Muslim family, fabricated charges against him and his brother filed with police, has fled the province)

Date reported: January 22, 2014

Location: Abu Tig, Assuit province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59176>

Abram Lewis (Association of Victims of Abductions and Forced Disappearances; **UPDATE:** said that the government is violating the law by delaying the official registration of his association)

Date: January 23, 2015

Location: Cairo

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59192>



India

Rt Rev P K Samantaroy (**UPDATE:** criticized Prime Minister Modi's refusal to give a clear statement against the 'Ghar Wapsi - Homecoming' campaign by the RSS paramilitaries "Keeping silent on such sensitive issues construes his silent approval")

Bishop Franco Mulakkal (said that the 'Ghar Wapsi' campaign is a tool to divide the Dalit [untouchable] community and to indulge in communal violence)

Major Manuel Masih (Salvation Army, said that Dalits belong to many faiths and added "Who can divide them on the basis of religion?")

Daniel B Das (said "We all are Indians and we never went away from home so there is no question of Ghar Wapsi")

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Amritsar

Source:

<http://www.christiantoday.co.in/article/church.leaders.want.ban.on.ghar.wapsi.unhappy.with.pm.modis.silence/17743.htm>

Pastor D Srinivas (church destroyed by arson, said "I have been serving as the pastor for the last six years in this village. We used to meet at church members' houses, till last year we built a temporary structure. Prior to this incident, on number of occasions, right-wing activists have threatened me and warned me not to continue the church in this village. The Hindu radicals have snatched the Gospel literature from me and destroyed them a number of times in the past")

Rev Ronald John (State Chairman of the Telangana Christian Joint-Action-Committee;
UPDATE: said "The attacks have increased since the BJP formed the government at the center last year. Christians here are living as second class citizens")

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Tador village, Mahabubnagar district, Telangana state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2015/01/22/villages-only-church-torched-by-hindu-radicals-as-indias-christians-face-persecution/>

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** refuted VHP [Vishwa Hindu Parishad] accusations that Hinduism is threatened by Christianity: "the last government census shows a decline in the proportion of Christians in the country, from 2.60 per cent in 1971, they dropped to 2.44 per cent in 1981, to 2.34 per cent in 1991, to 2.30 per cent in 2001")

Fr Errol Fernandes SJ (rhetorically said "there seems to be a rise of fundamentalism and other forms of domination in the world, even in our country. Where does that lead to?")

Date: January 21, 2015

Location: Mumbai

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/A-national-anti-conversion-law-to-save-India%27s-Hindus-33247.html>

Dominic Emmanuel (director of Sadbhavana Institute for Communication and Inter-religious Dialogue; **UPDATE:** said "We have come in support of this petition-signing campaign for President Obama to put it firmly on record during his meeting with Mr. Modi, that a democracy like India cannot allow the repression of religious minorities - particularly the Muslims and the Christians")

Date: January 22, 2015

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.bignewsnetwork.com/index.php/sid/229591795>



Iran

Ebrahim Firouzi (convert, aged 28 in 2013, sentenced on July 15, 2013 in Robat-Karim for "evangelism activities" to one year imprisonment and two years internal exile to Sarbaz;
UPDATE: prison term completed, still not released a week later, the authorities appear to be planning to make new charges of "propaganda and action against national security" against him)

Date: January 20, 2015

Source [with photo]:

http://mohabatnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9740:christian-convert-still-in-prison-although-his-prison-term-is-over&catid=36:iranian-christians&Itemid=279

Naghmeh Shariat Panahi Abedini (wife of Saeed Abedini, who has been sentenced to eight years imprisonment; **UPDATE**: met with President Barack Obama, said "The president was focused and gracious — showing concern to me and my children. I know that this meeting could not have occurred without prayer, and I am grateful to the many people around the country and world who continue to pray for Saeed's release. The president repeated his desire to do all that he can to bring Saeed home. That means the world to me and my children and has given me a renewed sense of hope")

Date: January 21, 2015

Location: Boise, Idaho, United States

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/obama-meets-saeed-abedinis-wife-naghmeh-and-children-in-boise-promises-to-do-all-he-can-to-free-pastor-to-be-home-by-sons-birthday-132941/>



Iraq

Morteza Ablahad (clergy, **executed** by ISIL)

Date reported: January 21, 2015

Location: Mosul

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59155>



Italy

Don Scarda (pastor, described an attack by five Muslims on a parishioner at prayer, family photo taken, statue of the Virgin Mary smashed and urinated on)

Date: January 8, 2015

Location: Perugia

Source: <http://www.raymondibrahim.com/muslim-persecution-of-christians/italy-muslims-destroy-and-urinate-on-virgin-mary-statue/>

Giuseppe Berlin (municipal councilor, decried the desecration of a crucifix near a mosque, said "Before we put a show of unity with Muslims, let's have them begin by respecting our civilization and our culture. We shouldn't minimize the importance of certain signals; we must wake up now or our children will suffer the consequences of this dangerous and uncontrolled Islamic invasion")

Date: January 17, 2015

Location: Cinisello Balsamo, Milan province

Source: <http://www.raymondibrahim.com/islam/italy-crucifix-near-mosque-destroyed/>



Malaysia

Archbishop Julian Leow (expressed "disappointment" at the Supreme Court's "not totally unexpected" ruling prohibiting non-Muslim use of the word 'Allah' despite 400 years of the word's use in local Bible translations, also said "I would like to believe this adverse decision is confined only to the Herald [the diocesan newspaper] and will not open a Pandora's box on curbing the rights of minorities in managing our own religious affairs")

Fr Lawrence Andrew (**UPDATE:** said "we pray that minority rights are not trampled on")

Jill Ireland (CDs containing the word 'Allah' seized, case pending in court)

Date: January 21, 2015

Location: Kuala Lumpur

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Kuala-Lumpur:-Ruling-on-the-word-'Allah'-threatens-religious-freedom-33257.html>



Myanmar aka Burma

Event: Two volunteer church teachers were tortured, raped, and killed apparently by army soldiers

Maran Lu Ra (aged 20)

Tangbau Khawn Nan Zin (aged 21)

Khon Ja Labang (former member of the Kachin Peace Network, called for an independent investigation into the murder of the two teachers)

Date: January 19, 2015

Location: Shabuk-Kaungka village, Kachin state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Thousands-of-people-attend-the-funeral-of-Kachin-Christian-teachers-raped-and-killed-by-soldiers-33271.html>



Niger

Pastor Zakaria Jadi (described the beginning of the mob attack on his church after the latest printing of Muhammad cartoons by the magazine Charlie Hebdo in Paris "I just rushed and told my colleagues in the church to take away their families from the place. I took my family to take them out from the place. When I came back I just discovered that

everything has gone. There's nothing in my house and also in the church", at least ten people were killed in the attacks on churches and Christian homes)

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Niamey

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/muslim-mobs-burn-down-churches-pastors-homes-in-niger-for-charlie-hebdos-prophet-muhammad-cartoons-10-people-dead-in-protests-132757/>

Pastor Sani Nomao (responded to the destruction of scores of Christian churches, homes, and an orphanage following the publication of the latest Muhammad cartoons in the French magazine Charlie Hebdo "I call on every single believer in Niger to forgive and forget, to love Muslims with all their heart, to keep up the faith, to love Christ like never before. Although it is painful, and what we are experiencing is really difficult, we are God's children. We must love our persecutors...Let no one seek revenge")

Date reported: January 20, 2015

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/world/47954-70-churches-destroyed-in-anti-charlie-hebdo-protests>

Event: The nation's bishops have suspended all church activities including Mass due to the continuing violence resulting from the recently published Muhammad cartoons in the Parisian magazine Charlie Hebdo

Bishop Ambroise Quedraogo

Bishop Laruent Lompo

Archbishop Michel Cartateguy (said "The Christian community in Niger is still in a state of shock: Almost all the churches [of the diocese], 12 to 14 of them, were completely plundered. Nothing remains, they were totally burned. Only the cathedral is still standing")

Date: January 22, 2015

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/masses-suspended-in-niger-due-to-church-burnings-55922/>

Rev Mai'aki Kadaidai (said "This is the first time we are witnessing violence of this magnitude against the church and Christians. In all, 68 churches were destroyed across five regions of Agadez, Damagaram, Diffa, Maradi, Zinder, and in our country's capital city of Niamey. The Muslim rioters destroyed five of our [EERN] churches, destroyed four homes of our pastors and many of our members were adversely affected")

Date: January 23, 2015

Location: Niamey

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/faith-of-christians-in-niger-grows-stronger-in-face-of-unprecedented-violence/>



Nigeria

Abigail John (aged 15, secondary school senior, daughter of Rebecca John, sister of Lucky John, abducted by Boko Haram, arm broken in an Air Force bombing the following day in which five abducted women and a child were killed, forcibly converted to Islam the next day, rescued by the Nigerian military, said her injury likely saved her from rape)

Dates: [October 29, December 7, 2014](#)

Location: Mubi, Adamawa state

Rebecca John (mother of Abigail and Lucky John, was not present when Boko Haram attacked her home)

Date: [October 29, 2014](#)

Location: Mubi, Adamawa state

Lucky John (disappeared after the Boko Haram attack on his home, reappeared weeks later)

Dates: [October 29, 2014, January 7, 2015](#)

Location: Mubi, Adamawa state

Source: <http://www.vanguardngr.com/2015/01/teenager-recounts-seven-week-ordeal-boko-haram-den/>

Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme (**UPDATE**: said that nearly 70,000 of the 125,000 Catholics in his diocese have fled, added “More than half of my diocese has now fled their homes. The threat we face presents a very bleak future for the Church. Many of our members are scattered and others have been killed. In some areas there are no Christians anymore. The [extremists] point a gun or a knife at them saying that if they do not convert they will be killed. Some of them have been killed for refusing to convert...The West should bring in security – land forces to contain and beat back Boko Haram. A concerted military campaign is needed by the West to crush Boko Haram...Among the [Nigerian] soldiers, there were sympathizers with Boko Haram – some of them were even Boko Haram members and many of them just ran away...The most important thing is to pray for our people; I know people are praying for us and I am very grateful”)

Date: [January 21, 2015](#)

Location: Maiduguri

Source [with photo]: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1421795510.html>



Pakistan

Ilyas Masih (father of Sehrish and Farazana, attempted to file a police report on his daughters' abduction and rape; **UPDATE**: wept as he thanked the donors who paid for the construction of an indoor toilet and shower in his home "I thank all the Christians of Britain for their generosity and prayers, you have made my faith stronger than before. We thought we had been forgotten, but you have provided protection to my daughters, as a father I cannot express my gratitude")

Sehrish (aged 18, daughter of Ilyas Masih, sister of Farazana, abducted and gang raped on December 4, 2014; **UPDATE**: spoke on the construction of an indoor toilet in her home "Our family could not afford such facilities, for so long we have had to suffer ridicule. Local Muslim boys are still taunting us and threatening to rape us again, but this toilet means we will be safe from their evil hands")

Fr Babu Pervaiz (helped arrange for the construction of the indoor toilet for Sehrish and Farazana)

Date: January 20, 2015

Location: Jaranwala district

Source [with photos]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/tears-of-sadness-become-pools-of-hope-as-christian-victims-of-gang-rape-begin-to-see-bilding-of-new->



Sudan

Rev David Yein Reith (arrested by NISS secret police)

Date: January 9, 2015

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59175>



Syria

Kenji Goto Jogo (convert, Japanese citizen, journalist, held captive by ISIL, threatened with death)

Date: January 20, 2015

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/One-of-the-two-Japanese-men-held-and-threatened-of-death-by-the-Islamic-State-in-Syria-is-Christian-33250.html>



Uganda

Namugonya Jamirah (aged 15, convert, sister of Naigaga Saidah, **beaten to death** by her father for converting)

Naigaga Saidah (aged 12, convert, sister of Namugonya Jamirah, beaten by her father for converting, hospitalized and later released, in hiding due to death threats)

Date: December 11, 2014

Location: Kaliro district

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/imam-in-uganda-beats-daughter-to-death-for-converting-to-christ/>



Ukraine

Bishop Jacek Pyl (Polish citizen, told by Russian authorities that he will be allowed to remain)

Fr Krzysztof Kontek (spoke on the ouster of Catholic clergy and religious from Russian controlled areas "The sisters tried to get Russian papers to remain in Crimea but couldn't. Some chose not to apply for Russian papers – Migration Service officials had 'recommended' to them not to apply...Now we have only the bishop, six priests and five sisters")

Date: January 15, 2015

Location: Simferopol, Crimea

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2028



United Kingdom

Richard Page (Justice of the Peace, disciplined after he admitted that his Christian faith influenced his adoption rulings)

Bishop Emeritus Michael Nazir Ali (**UPDATE**: said that Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice "have declared war on even residual notions of the faith having any place in our legal process. The Government, and law officers, it seems are intent on preventing Christians from manifesting their belief in the public square. The implications are wider than that, for what is said about Mr Page could apply equally to Jews, Muslims and others")

Date: January 16, 2015

Location: Kent

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/family/lord-chief-justice-disciplines-christian-magistrate-for-belief-about-family>



United States - Louisiana

Fr Jeff Bayhi (ordered by the state supreme court to divulge the contents of a confession;
UPDATE: appeal declined by the U.S. Supreme Court, a hearing will now be held to
determine if he must be compelled to testify)

Date: January 21, 2015

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/could-a-us-priest-face-jail-for-refusing-to-break-confession-seal-76133/>

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