

Today's Martyrs
2015-01-25 through 2015-01-31



China

'Veritas Vincit' (alias of a major Chinese Catholic figure, wrote that the government's plan to move forward with unsanctioned ordinations of bishops in the Patriotic Church will just drive the church underground and cause it to lose control)

Date: January 26, 2015

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Opposed-to-new-unlawful-ordinations,-Chinese-Catholics-are-united-for-religious-freedom-33291.html>

Pastor Zeng Zhengliang (**UPDATE**: illegally denied a permit to travel to Hong Kong for a Gospel conference)

Date reported: January 30, 2015

Location: Jianhu county, Yancheng city, Jiangsu province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/01/public-security-bureaus-deny.html>



Colombia

Event: Several church leaders threatened with death by the Black Eagles neo-paramilitary group

Rev Milton Mejía

Rev Jairo Barriga

Elder German Zarate

Agustin Jimenez

Fr Fernando Sanchez

Fr Fernando Gary Martinez

Date: January 11, 2015

Locations: Barranquilla and Teusaquillo

Source: <http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/global-christian-body-calls-for-colombia-churches-leaders-protection-28173>



Egypt

Event: Three Christians were shot dead in a Muslim Brotherhood attack on a church, 18 rioters were killed by police

Mina Maher (aged 10, **shot dead**)

Peter Rafat (merchant, **shot dead**)

Ashraf Ibrahim (merchant, married, father of two including one not yet born, brother of Akram Ibrahim, **shot dead**)

Akram Ibrahim (brother of Ashraf Ibrahim, wants justice for his murder)

Date: January 25, 2015

Location: Maadi

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17372>
and <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17373>

Fr Polous Monir (church attacked with an explosive device, planting was seen, police called and the device was deactivated)

Date reported: January 27, 2015

Location: Kom Ombo, Aswan province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1300&A=17375>

Botrous Yacoub Shehata (aged 18, abducted from his home, US\$134,400 ransom demanded; released after a ransom of US\$3,300 paid)

Date: January 26-28, 2015

Location: Mallawi Village, Minya province

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59244>

Maggie Girgis (aged 25, abducted and forced into an Islamic marriage, family accused the police of collusion with her abductors)

Date reported: January 27, 2015

Location: Alexandria

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59253>

Waseem Abdel Gaber Saleh Samaan (husband of Hana Eshak Aziz, **killed** during a Muslim Brotherhood demonstration)

Hana Eshak Aziz (widow of Waseem Abdel Gaber Saleh Samaan)

Date: January 23, 2015

Location: Faisal, Giza province

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=59271>



Eritrea

Patriarch Abune Antonios (disappeared, reportedly detained by the government in a darkened room, health declining, diabetic condition requires medical attention; as of May 23, 2014 has begun his seventh year in detention; **UPDATE**: still in detention, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has called for his release and that of 2,000 others held for their religious faith)

Date: January 28, 2015

Location: Washington DC, USA

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/uscirf-calls-for-the-release-of-patriarch-abune-antonios-of-eritrea/>



Germany

Matthias Ebert (Concerned Parents member, demonstrated with 150 other parents against mandatory sex education, said "We go to the street because we care about our children, who are confronted too early with sexual issues", parents attacked by 600 LBGT activists and anarchists, police intervened, one 15 year old girl hospitalized with head injuries)

Date: January 24, 2015

Location: Hamburg

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/german-parents-attacked-as-they-protest-early-sexualization-of-children>



India

Narsu Madavi (beaten by Hindu radicals, suffered a severe head injury)

Mangal Mandavi (lost hearing when hit on the ear by a militant Hindu attacker, said "Today, for the sake of following Jesus, we are persecuted. We as Christian community are very strong, even after the attack on us. We will never turn back. Even if we have to die, we will never leave Jesus")

Date: October 25, 2015

Location: Madota village, Bastar district, Chhattisgarh state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2015/01/29/religious-freedom-under-attack-for-christians-in-indias-chhattisgarh-state/>

John Dayal (**UPDATE:** wrote "India's Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, does not like to be told that he, his government, his political party or the cadres of his old group, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh [RSS], have done something wrong...US President Barack Obama made international headlines with his 'town hall' speech in Delhi as he concluded a three-day visit to India for its Republic Day. The speech offered a rather sharp lesson on what makes a country great — not economic progress or military might, but the unity of its people brought about by a shared destiny, the hope of progress among the most marginalized and a sense of security among its religious minorities...But it was the Indian president, the 79-year old Pranab Mukherjee, who delivered a homily that was the strongest caution yet about the threat posed to unity and progress in India from the religious nationalism of the RSS [paramilitaries]...Mukherjee touched on a point that has worried many among those who voted for Modi...This was the increasing cacophony of many in the Bharatiya Janata Party, including several ministers and members of parliament, who were supporting a demand that India mark itself out as a Hindu Rashtra or Nation, and stop appeasing Muslims and Christians. Both minority religious groups are seen as enemies of the nation and the majority...The so-called "Ghar Wapsi", or homecoming campaign, launched by the Sangh Parivar just after the general election to forcibly convert Dalit and Tribal Christians and Muslims to Hinduism was put on hold a week before Obama's state visit. It was never in doubt that the campaign, and violence targeting religious groups, would resume. And resume it did, the day after Obama left India...")

Date: January 30, 2015

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/modi-is-reminded-that-religious-minorities-are-not-for-killing/72900>



Iran

Pastor Saeed Abedini (**UPDATE:** has reported increasing abdominal pain from injuries from prison beatings; **UPDATE:** wrote a letter to U.S. President Barack Obama thanking him for meeting with his wife and for stating he will work to secure his release from Iranian prison)

Date: January 21 and 29, 2015

Location: Rajai Shahr Prison, Karaj

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/world/48038-saeed-abedini-reports-increasing-pain-in-iranian-prison>

and

<http://www.christiantoday.com/article/saeed.abedini.to.obama.you.have.my.prayers.from.inside.these.walls/46998.htm>



Libya

Mila Ishak (aged 27, described the abduction of his friends by ISIL terrorists "[My friend in a nearby apartment building] called me again and with fear and a low voice told me that they were able to break the door of the room beside his room, and had abducted all their six friends who were inside the room...[They came to my building.] I was hearing everything. One of the seven residents of the room...awoke and opened the iron door of the room. They entered the room and abducted all of them too...[They came to my room and tried to enter then one said] 'leave them. That is enough. Let's go'", fled the country and returned to Egypt)

Date: January 3, 2015

Location: Sirte

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/01/3644201/>



Myanmar

Event: Two Christians threatened with up to 2 years' imprisonment for harvesting trees for lumber and using it to erect a 16 meter tall cross without permits

Tial Cem (erected a cross without a permit, had not applied for a permit because he knew it would not be granted, said "We will have to face whatever it takes. If the authorities say I have to go to jail, I am not afraid; I am ready to go to jail for this case")

JP Biak Tin Sang (owner of the harvested trees)

Date: January 29, 2015

Location: Hakha, Chin state

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/37186->

[ASIA_MYANMAR_Remove_a_cross_in_the_state_of_Chin_the_order_worries_Christians#.VMr70cJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37186-ASIA_MYANMAR_Remove_a_cross_in_the_state_of_Chin_the_order_worries_Christians#.VMr70cJTEfg)

and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Chin-Christians-ready-to-go-to-jail-to-stop-cross-removal-33322.html>



Nigeria

Bishop Oliver Dashe Doeme (**UPDATE:** said "Boko Haram tried to enter Maiduguri twice last weekend: the first time on Friday 23 and the second yesterday, Sunday 25 January...The guerrillas of Bolo Haram were rejected by the military and the civilian militia that defend

the city. The fights were very intense. Boko Haram has lost several men. At the moment the situation in Maiduguri appears calm...We risk seeing Boko Haram conquer the entire north-east before the end of the election [in February]..."

Date: January 26, 2015

Location: Damaturu, Yobe state

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/37160->

[AFRICA NIGERIA The Bishop of Maiduguri Boko Haram could conquer the entire north east before the end of the election#.VMcjUsJTEfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/37160-)

Pastor Joshua Adah (husband, father of two aged 6 and 8, **hacked to death** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen suspected to have support from Boko Haram, another minister said "Not too long after he got born again, he left the comfort and 'luxury' of city life for a remote village on a hill without light nor potable drinking water, not even a well in sight")

Date: January 23, 2015

Location: Bantaje, Taraba state

Source [with photo]: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/slain-ministry-leader-in-nigeria-mourned-as-dedicated-servant-to-the-poor/>

Archbishop Nemuel A Babba (**UPDATE:** called for a "stronger global Christian voice against the Boko Haram violence...Arewa and Shall-Holma dioceses are the most severely affected; the bishops had to move out of the diocesan headquarters two months ago. Like thousands of other displaced people, we don't know when they can go back. Many Lutheran churches and institutions including the Gombi and Arewa cathedrals have been burned down or pillaged. Around 50,000 of our members in Arewa and Shall-Holma had no organized Lutheran worship for the Christmas and New Year seasons because of the violence...As Christians we have also made the government aware that we see Christians as being specifically targeted by Boko Haram. This is not to deny that Muslims are being attacked and killed, but Christians suffer the highest casualties")

Date: January 28, 2015

Source [with photo]: <http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/nigerian-lutheran-bishop-wants-stronger-global-christian-voice-against-boko-haram-28146#ixzz3QH8YyljZ>



Pakistan

Fredrick Farhan Das (Christian secondary school principal, described an attack by 300 Muslim students on his school in which four of his students were injured in a stampede and hospitalized, the attack was prompted by the publication of cartoons of Muhammad by the Parisian magazine Charlie Hebdo)

Rt Rev Sarfarz Humphrey Peters (**UPDATE:** said of the attack on the secondary school "After our efforts, the police have now deployed six armed policemen at the school, which remained closed on Tuesday in protest against the attack and reopened on Wednesday.

Almost 50 per cent of our students didn't show on Wednesday because of the fear resulting from Monday's incident")

Date: January 26, 2015

Location: Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

Source: <http://directory.ucanews.com/news/hebdo-protesters-attack-christian-school-in-pakistan/1889>

and <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/01/charlie-hebdo-protestors-ransack-christian-school-in-pakistan-demand-closure/>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenews.php?hnewsid=5159>



Syria

Deacon Gabriel Bassam Gabro (petrochemical engineering student, **killed** in a car bombing)

Zahi Saad (**killed** in a car bombing)

Date: January 21, 2015

Location: New Sabri neighborhood, Homs

Source [with photos]: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/01/two-assyrians-in-homs-syria-killed-in-car-bombing/>

Archbishop Jean Clement Jeanbart (**UPDATE**: said "As pastor of this church, I will never leave this people. I will die but I will not abandon my flock. I am convinced that the Lord will ask me an account of my commitment, my courage and my hope for this portion of his people that He entrusted to me. I have to admit that there was a time, early in the war when I thought of leaving, but the Lord stood by me, and now at 71 years of age, I feel at least 15 years younger, and I do not fear disappointment and discouragement. I know that the Lord takes care of me and my flock...Christians here suffer because they have lost their homes, their relatives and even their churches. What was the middle class no longer has enough to live on. Everything has been corrupted, especially the press, which no longer tells the truth [but now engages in] a true act of disinformation...Christians are a sort of thorn in the side. Christians are the only ones who have some type of relationship with the West, and are able to uncover the great scam that underlies this war and the many interests that are being protected")

Date: January 30, 2015

Location: Monreale, Sicily, Italy

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150130195204.htm>



United Kingdom

Chris Gray (Principal of Durham Free School, reacted to government inspectors from OFSTED interrogating students and using the replies to withhold government funds and force the Christian school to close: “Several parents complained to me about what they saw as intrusive and deeply personal questioning of their children in the group sessions. It has been reported back to me that children aged 6- 9 were asked whether they knew anything about Diwali and whether they were familiar with the Torah. In addition, I have also heard reports of primary school children being asked if they knew of any boys or girls who thought they were in the ‘wrong body’. Another parent has complained to me in writing that her ten year old daughter was asked if she knew what lesbians did. Pupils were embarrassed and surprised to be asked questions about sexuality...It is now well known that the manner in which inspectors questioned our pupils in November was hostile, inappropriate and raises serious safeguarding issues. OFSTED’s approach to us was negative at every stage, as if the data collected had to fit a predetermined outcome...The questioning by inspectors makes clear that their idea of a balanced curriculum is for us to force pupils to celebrate non-Christian religious festivals. This would breach our Christian foundation which stipulates that we are a Christian school”)

John Denning (chairman of governors at Dunham Free School, said “The school is in the process of taking legal advice and will take whatever action necessary to protect the interests of its pupils and their families”)

Simon Calvert (Christian Institute, commented on the government agency OFSTED's hostility to Durham Free School and Grindon Hall Christian School: “The government’s 'British values regime' is twisting OFSTED’s priorities out of all proportion. Inspectors are asking all kinds of invasive questions and then issuing reports that the parents whose children attend the school don’t recognize”)

Date reported: January 26, 2015

Source: <http://christiannews.net/2015/01/26/uk-christian-school-shut-down-for-having-discriminatory-views-toward-other-faiths/>
and <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/education/christian-schools-gear-up-for-legal-action-against-ofsted>

Dennis Sewell (wrote an article on the government's OFSTED agency's investigation of Grindon Hall school in which he criticized the OFSTED report for stating "The Christian ethos of the school permeates much of the school’s provision. This has restricted the development of a broad and balanced approach to the curriculum")

Date: January 29, 2015

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/issues/january-30th-2015/i-was-wrong-ofsted-is-a-real-menace/>



United States: Iowa

Event: Christian owners of a gift shop and bisto have decided to no longer host weddings because they would have to host same sex weddings, said they would continue to serve same sex couples for non-wedding events

Betty Odgaards

Richard Odgaards

Date: January 30, 2015

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/us/48113-we-are-definitely-making-a-sacrifice-for-our-convictions>



Vatican City

Pope Francis aka Jorge Mario Bergoglio SJ (**UPDATE:** said “In this moment of prayer for unity, I would also like to remember our martyrs, the martyrs of today. They are witnesses to Jesus Christ, and they are persecuted and killed because they are Christians. Those who persecute them make no distinction between the religious communities to which they belong. They are Christians and for that they are persecuted. This, brothers and sisters, is the ecumenism of blood”)

Date: January 25, 2015

Location: Rome, Italy

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2015/01/26/pope-francis-says-ecumenism-of-blood-is-uniting-christians/>



Venezuela

Bishop Mariano Jose Parra Sandoval (robbed at gunpoint along with fifty parishioners during a parish meeting, said "I spoke with the governor to tell him that we cannot continue like this. Money is spent on many things, but not on citizen safety...We cannot close the churches, we need to teach children to live without violence. But one thing is certain, we do not live well in the Venezuelan society")

Date: January 27, 2015

Location: Ciudad Guyana

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/37195-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_Mgr_Parra_robbed_during_a_parish_meeting_Money_is_spent_on_many_things_but_not_on_safety#.VMxeXMJTE5s

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