

Today's Martyrs
2015-07-19 through 2015-07-25



Belarus

Dmitry Chorba (aged 23, conscientious objector, criminal case opened against him)

Date: June 11, 2015

Location: Rechitsa, Gomel region

Pastor Sergei Nikolaenko (church raided on May 31, 2015 by OMON riot police who asked "Why did you come to this church, not to a normal or correct one?", denied permission on June 11, 2015 to rent property for religious services; fined US\$235 on June 19, 2015 for unauthorized organization of a public event, home searched by police on June 25, 2015, threatened with a criminal investigation which could result in 2 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** fine upheld, judge stated that his plea of 'not guilty' was proof of evasion of responsibility)

Date: June 30, 2015

Location: Gomel

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2083



Cameroon

Fr Giuseppe Parietti PIME (saw two 15-year old suicide bombers kill 13 and injure 32: "I was just a few hundred meters from the blast, in Maroua's central market. We heard a bang, and then a minute later, another. People ran everywhere. Later we heard that the bombers were two girls. Sadly, violence has come here too. And it might be just the beginning. This is scary...For our part, as missionaries, we have to be with people, even if the situation is not quiet. This is our work")

Date: July 22, 2015

Location: Maroua

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/As-Islamic-extremism-comes-to-Maroua,-PIME-missionary-bears-witness-34850.html>



China

Bishop Vincent Zhu Weifang (aged 88, Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association [official church] member, **UPDATE**: led a demonstration against the government demolition of churches along with 26 priests and many laity, a priest called for people to recite the Divine Mercy prayers to support the church in China)

Date: July 24, 2015

Location: Wenzhou

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Wenzhou:-90-year-old-bishop-and-26-priests-protest-against-cross-demolitions-34864.html>



Egypt

Bishoy Armiya Boulous aka Mohammed Hegazy (aged 32, Egypt's 'most famous' convert, arrested before [December 5, 2013](#) in Minya province and charged with "inciting sedition by communicating to a US-based [Coptic] channel unfounded information on Copts persecution in Egypt"; released on bail on July 20, 2014, arrested again 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; completed his sentence in [December 2014](#), still incarcerated in [Tora Prison, South Cairo](#) as of [May 27, 2015](#), has been beaten and dragged on concrete floors almost daily; **UPDATE**: has been told that he is to be allowed only one visit per month from his attorney)

Date: July 20, 2015

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63719>



India

Fr Thankachan Jose (accused by a mob of converting Hindus, windows and earthen pots smashed at his residence, said "Though our Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, it is being violated openly")

Date: March 20, 2015

Location: Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

Source:

<http://www.christiantoday.co.in/article/mob.vandalizes.church.assaults.christians.in.jabalpur/17754.htm>

Pastor Aharon (reported being accosted by Hindu radicals before Sunday services, said "The situation is such that I cannot give a guarantee that I will go back to my family when I go to conduct worship in Masupally. On more than one occasion, the members of Hindu Vahini, threatened to kill me if I continue to hold prayers in the village. They surround

me and they use abusive language and manhandled me. They have warned me not to come back”)

Date reported: July 23, 2015

Location: Mahabubnagar district, Telangana state

Rev Ronald John (**UPDATE**: said “There has been double standard and a bias when it comes to filing cases on the perpetrators dealing with attacks on religious minorities. We demand both union and state government to ensure impartial actions both by administration and police”)

Cardinal Telesphore Toppo (**UPDATE**: said "The government has not come out to protect and defend. The Prime Minister has only once spoken in defense of the constitution and he promised to protect the Christians and other minorities. But that was only a promise")

Date reported: July 23, 2015

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2015/07/23/indias-christians-call-for-reforms-as-modis-promises-lack-action/>

Rajesh Yadav (aged 45, convert, husband of Rosalin Yadav. **died after a long illness**, denied a Christian funeral, body turned over to Hindu relatives)

Rosalin Yadav (widow of Rajesh Yadav, attempts to secure a Christian funeral for her husband were denied by the authorities)

Date: July 4, 2015

Location: Sagar, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Indian-pastor-accused-of-illegal-conversions-in-Orissa-while-deceased-convert-to-Christianity-denied-Christian-burial>

Pastor Rajan Gill (manhandled along with two other pastors)

Date: July 18, 2015

Location: west Delhi

Source: <http://www.ndtv.com/delhi-news/pastors-in-west-delhi-allege-harassment-783089>

Event: Christian school invaded by Hindu fundamentalists

Sr 'Lata' (school principal, abused)

Fr 'Raj' (brutally beaten)

Date: July 7, 2015

Location: Isagarh, Ashoknagar, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <https://speakoutagainsthate.crowdmap.com/reports/view/361>



Indonesia

Rev Ibnu Prabowo (church heavily damaged by arson in retaliation for an arson attack on a mosque, the second such attack in two days)

Fr Neles Tebay (dean of the Fajar Timur Institute of Philosophy and Theology, said that the arson attacks run counter to popular animist beliefs and called on the police to thoroughly investigate all of the attacks)

Date: July 20, 2015

Location: Purworejo, Central Java

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Two-Protestant-churches-torched,-possibly-in-retaliation-for-the-burning-of-mosque-in-Papua-34828.html>



Iraq

Fr Bashar Kthea (aged 39, fled Qaraqosh in August 2014 during the ISIL assault, lived in his automobile for 3 months, said that life in the refugee camps had led to "moral corruption" due to lack of work, married couples "losing patience" with each other, the young feel they cannot further their education or marry)

Sahar Mansour (aged 41, professor of chemistry, refugee camp resident, **UPDATE:** wrote "When you talk to Fr Bashar, you notice that he is fatigued, exhausted. You can easily notice the bitterness in Fr Bashar's face or in his voice, but he works with total dedication. He always says that we are created in order to work, that we are soldiers of Christ, that we want to cultivate love and peace, that we want future generations to live better than we lived, and that we do not want to inherit the culture of violence")

Date reported: July 22, 2015

Location: Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150722004750.htm>

Marolin Sabri (aged 28, mother of three, refugee, said "I have to laugh. So many people have come from the government saying they will help us, but we are only surviving on the help from NGOs and the church...Our kids keep asking, 'When will we go home? It is like a prison for them")

Bernan Petros (aged 47, said "We were almost the last family to leave [Bartella]. We left everything behind, even our money. Without my money, how can I make plans? Everything I had is under the control of ISIL...We don't have work. We just survive on what they give us")

Anoutha Ishak (said "We became depressed and psychologically unwell. I was a nurse. I left my job, my belongings, my house, and all our money. Of course after we came here our life changed", now spends most of her time in church)

Date reported: July 22, 2015

Location: Kirkik, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150722173642.htm>



Israel / Palestine

Patriarch Fouad Twal (said of the refugee crisis resulting from war in Iraq and Syria dragging on and on: “Now everyone is tired. The parish priests are tired, the donors are tired, the people are tired and losing their enthusiasm. At the beginning, they were happy to help. But now the future? Caritas does not have the resources to give three meals a day to each person”)

Date: July 23, 2015

Location: Jerusalem

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2015/07/23/donor-fatigue-is-hurting-efforts-to-help-christian-fleeing-isis-says-latin-patriarch/>



Libya

Bekhit Nageh Efrank Ebeid (aged 21, Egyptian citizen, captured by ISIL)

Adeola Ibrahim (Nigerian citizen, abducted by ISIL)

Sekyere Kofi Frimpong (Ghanaian citizen, abducted by ISIL)

Date: July 10, 2015

Location: Sirte or Noufliyah. Cyrenaica

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/media-news-events/news/3841-one-copt-and-two-christian-africans-captured-by-is-in-libya>

and <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2015/07/20/isis-kidnap-three-african-christians-in-libya/>

and <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/07/christian-family-awaits-word-on-copt-kidnapped-in-libya-by-islamic-state-affiliate/>



Niger

Rev Jacques Kanginde (church destroyed in rioting, services now held in a tent, said “Since these incidents, it is as if life had stopped,. The church has become a source of curiosity for passers-by and a hide-out for idlers. Unfortunately our current church finances don’t allow us to begin the reconstruction”)

Pastor Zakaria Jadi (**UPDATE**: said “When I returned to assess the scale of the damage, I started to step across our remaining personal belongings along the way, such as books, kitchen utensils and clothes. I felt very bad, such an indescribable feeling when I saw my ripped-

up Bible on the ground. For a pastor, it was like my entire life was torn apart. I could not stop shedding tears...It was truly hurting, but I was well supported by brothers and sisters who have encouraged me a lot. And I received my greatest encouragement from God, he has really strengthened me in order to overcome that ordeal. And he also allowed me to support those who were in tears. This painful experience shows also how it is not good for a man to place all his hope in the things of this world. If my life consisted of material belongings, maybe I would not be here today?”)

Rev Samaila Labo (church and home destroyed, has built a provisional chapel, said “It's a great relief for me to see our members protected from rain and wind. This has also challenged us, that we will not stop our efforts until we rebuild our damaged church”)

Date: January 17, 2015

Date reported: July 23, 2015

Location: Niamey

Source [with photo]: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/07/3942521/>



Pakistan

Sikander Inyat (aged 27, church security volunteer, rickshaw driver, only son and caregiver for his ageing father, lost his right eye in the explosion in the [March 15, 2015](#) terror attacks in Lahore, left leg fractured, as of [June 16, 2015](#) requires surgery on his left eye and a prosthetic right eye; **UPDATE**: still requires surgery, is in danger of total blindness)

Date reported: July 18, 2015

Location: Lahore

Source [with photos]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/bomb-blast-hero>

Event: Elderly couple forced out of their home of 40 years and onto the streets by a mob, a pro bono attorney recovered most of their assets four months later

Gulzar Masih (husband of Hadayat Bibi)

Hadayat Bibi (wife of Gulzar Masih)

Sadaf Saddique Khokhar (attorney; **UPDATE**: successfully defended Gulzar Masih and Hadayat Bibi)

Dates: March - June 2015

Location: Chak No. 189, GB Patli, Toba Tek Singh

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenews.php?hnewsid=5480>

Qaisar Ayub (brother of Amoon Ayub, husband of Amina, father of three, arrested on blasphemy charges, 14-year old son developing psychological problems)

Amina (wife of Qaisar Ayub)

Date: November 10, 2014

Amoon Ayub (brother of Qaisar Ayub, husband of Huma, arrested on blasphemy charges while trying to leave the country)

Huma (teacher, wife of Amoon Ayub)

Date: November 14, 2014

Location: Lahore

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenews.php?hnewsid=5483>

Aasiya Noreen aka Asia Bibi (aged 50, **UPDATE**: the Federal Supreme Court has ordered a stay of execution and a new hearing on the 2009 blasphemy charges)

Date: July 22, 2015

Location: Islamabad

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/After-Supreme-Court-stays-Asia-Bibi's-execution-and-orders-new-hearing,-Paul-Bhatti-hopes-to-see-her-free-34834.html>

Tarfa Younis (aged 12, orphan, sold into sexual slavery by her two brothers at age 11, escaped)

Date reported: July 23, 2015

Location: Lahore, Punjab province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/a-12-year-old-christian-girl-sold-to-a-muslim-who-repeatedly-raped-her/>

Fouzia Sadiq (aged 25, wife, mother of three, abducted by her employer and forcibly married and converted to Islam)

Date: July 23, 2015

Location: Burj Mahalam Chak No.35, Pattoki

Musarat Bibi (mother, abducted, raped, forcibly married and converted to Islam)

Date: July 6, 2015

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/headlinenews.php?hnewsid=5495>



South Africa

Fr Samuel (Ethiopian citizen, **killed** in a xenophobic attack)

Date buried: July 23, 2015

Location: Durban

Source [with photo]: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/2015/07/ethiopian-orthodox-priest-killed-in-durban/>



Sudan

Event: Two young women who had been arrested with 10 others on June 25, 2015 and had been forced to undress at the police station were convicted and fined, threatened with prison if the fines are not paid within 30 days, a church leader said “They have targeted these girls because of their faith and their race”

Ferdoos Eltoum (aged 19, fined US\$85 for 'indecent dress')

Rehab Omer Kalkom (aged 18, fined US\$85 for 'indecent dress')

Date: July 15, 2015

Location: North Khartoum

Source [with photo]: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/07/two-young-christian-women-in-sudan-fined-for-indecent-dress/>



Syria

Pastor Ibrahim Nasir (**UPDATE:** said that two-thirds of Syrian Christians have now fled the country. many of those remaining are internally displaced)

Date: July 20, 2015

Location: Aleppo

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63718>

Archbishop Jacques Behnan Hindo (has become the 'almost-mayor' of his city while it has become tied down in fighting between the ISIL and Kurdish militias, said "I have become responsible for the cleaning, the waste emergency, the pest control and all the services that have to do with public health. The conflict puts the population in danger and at risk of epidemics. It all becomes even more complicated with the summer heat. I have taken charge of these needs because I saw that no one would do it, and I coordinate a team of 130 operators - including almost 100 Muslims - who work in neighborhoods inhabited by 400 thousand people, and do not ask for any money...We need trucks to collect waste. But now we do not know exactly where to find them")

Date: July 21, 2015

Location: Hassake

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/38221-ASIA_SYRIA_Archbishop_Hindo_becomes_almost_mayor_of_Hassake#.Va8X-8LJAfg



United Kingdom

Archbishop Emeritus George Carey (**UPDATE:** accused the British government of ignoring the persecution of Christians by ISIL and refusing to grant them refuge)

Date: July 21, 2015

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/uk-criticized-for-denying-refuge-to-christians-of-syria-and-iraq-fleeing-isis/>



United States - Indiana

Linda G Summers (county clerk, fired for requesting a religious accommodation for same sex marriage license issuance, has brought suit)

Date: December 2014

Location: Corydon

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/80858.htm>

United States - Washington state

Kevin Stormans (pharmacy owner, ordered to sell abortifacients, said "With 33 pharmacies stocking the drug within five miles of our store, it is extremely disappointing that the court and the state demand that we violate our conscience or lose our family business. All we are asking is to be able to live out the beliefs that we hold, as Americans have always been able to do, and to be able to refer patients for religious reasons, as the medical and pharmaceutical associations overwhelmingly recommend")

Date: July 23, 2015

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/us/50695-christian-pharmacy-forced-to-sell-abortion-drugs>



Venezuela

Fr Alex Pinto OFM (body found, had been set on fire, possibly had been shot dead, had disappeared five days earlier)

Dates: July 15-20, 2015

Location: road near Ciudad Bolivar

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/38218-](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38218-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_The_body_of_a_Franciscan_who_died_a_few_days_has_been_found#.Va8ZKcLJAfg)

[AMERICA_VENEZUELA_The_body_of_a_Franciscan_who_died_a_few_days_has_been_found#.Va8ZKcLJAfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38218-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_The_body_of_a_Franciscan_who_died_a_few_days_has_been_found#.Va8ZKcLJAfg)

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