

**Today's Martyrs**  
**2015-08-09 through 2015-08-15**



**Azerbaijan**

Irina Zakharchenko (aged 55, 80% disabled with arthritis, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in Pirallahi on [December 5, 2014](#), detained in [Baku](#) by the NSM secret police on [February 17, 2014](#); **UPDATE**: detention extended to September 17, 2015)

Valida Jabrayilova (aged 38, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in Pirallahi on [December 5, 2014](#), detained in [Baku](#) by the NSM secret police on [February 17, 2014](#); **UPDATE**: detention extended to September 17, 2015)

Date: [July 4, 2015](#)

Location: [Baku](#)

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2088](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2088)



**Cameroon**

Rev Samuel Heteck (**UPDATE**: said “All our summer [programs], such as youth camps, spiritual retreats and evening film-projections have now been cancelled” due to Boko Haram attacks)

Date: [August 12, 2015](#)

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Cameroonian-Christians-fearful-after-Boko-Haram-attacks>



**China**

Archbishop Paul Kwong (said “Now that the authorities forcefully removed the cross without obvious and immediate danger, it is damaging religious freedom and trampling on Christianity”)

Ng Ka-ho (wrote on Facebook “Can our Church be more proactive aside from expressing itself on written news? We should not stay silent and let outsiders misunderstand that we depend on a regime that demolishes the Church”)

Date: August 9, 2015

Location: Hong Kong

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/anglican-archbishop-says-cross-removals-must-stop/74052>

Pastor Huang Yizi (aged 41, taken into custody on August 2, 2014 while resisting the demolition of his church's cross; **UPDATE**: released from prison, in good spirits but physically weak)

Date: August 1, 2015

Location: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/08/authorities-release-wenzhou-pastor.html>

Li Chunfu (human rights attorney, detained)

Date: August 1, 2015

Source [with photo]: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2015/08/authorities-detain-christian-human.html>

**Event: Two elderly Christian women drowned from typhoon-caused flash floods while trying to prevent authorities from demolishing their church cross**

Huang Yusong (aged 77, **drowned**)

Zhou Yanxiang (aged 81, **drowned**)

Date: August 8, 2015

Location: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/typhoon-kills-two-elderly-women-who-defended-church-cross/74063>

Cardinal John Tong Hon (**UPDATE**: issued an appeal entitled 'The Sufferings of the Cross' which called upon the central government to stop the provincial governments' dismantling of church crosses, wrote "The cross is the sign most representative of the Christian faith. As Christians, we must follow Christ. That requires us to carry the cross together with Jesus Christ" and called on Christians "to choose some forms of penance, such as fast and abstinence and pray for religious freedom, the dignity of the faith and share the sufferings of the Christians" in Zhejiang province)

Date: August 13, 2015

Location: Hong Kong

Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kium SBD (**UPDATE**: said a Mass on the theme "Safeguarding the faith, safeguarding the Cross")

Date: August 14, 2015

Location: Hong Kong

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hong-Kong-cardinals,-Catholics-and-Protestants-denounce-the-sufferings-of-Zhejiang-crosses-35035.html>

Bishop Joseph Wei Jingyi (underground bishop; **UPDATE**: criticized the ordination of priests in two separate incidents by CPCA bishops not in communion with the Vatican, another church leader said "If similar incidents continue to happen, I also would suspect the government of increasing its control on the Church, turning the Church into a tool of the state to fulfill its political agenda")

Date: August 14, 2015

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/excommunicated-illicit-bishops-ordain-new-priests-in-china/74082>



## Egypt

Maher Fayed Habib (aged 18, secondary school student, reported on [May 18, 2015](#) to have been arrested on a charge of insulting Islam, held for 4 days in jail; judge ordered him held another 15 days on [June 12, 2015](#); reported on [June 29, 2015](#) to have been ordered held another 45 days; **UPDATE**: ordered held another 15 days)

Date: August 9, 2015

Location: Beni Suef

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=63924>

Medhat Isaac (arrested for passing out Bibles in a public location, charged with contempt of religion even though he said nothing against any religion, ordered held for 15 days)

Date: August 6, 2015

Location: Giza

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1441&A=19865>

Mary Magdy Attia (aged 17, disappeared 3 days after her engagement)

Date reported: August 11, 2015

Location: Minya

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1442&A=19882>



## India

Archbishop John Moolachira (protested the vandalism of a statue of St John Bosco "The contribution of the Salesian apostolate to education is well recognized by all religions in Assam, and a significant percentage of the population was emancipated thanks to them. This incident is unfortunate and some elements are responsible. Disagreement and dissent must be seen in a positive light, but to desecrate and then throw into the river wounds our religious sentiment", four members of the BJP Hindu nationalist party were arrested)

Date: August 7, 2015

Location: Guwahati, Assam state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Assam:-Don-Bosco-statute-vandalized-and-thrown-into-river-34996.html>

Fr Cedric Prakash SJ (**UPDATE:** commented on the state government's withdrawal of a textbook on the life of Babasaheb Ambedkar, the Dalit ["untouchable"] father of the Constitution, after it was discovered that the book highlighted his conversion from Hinduism to Buddhism: "It is clear that, with this book, the government wanted to co-opt as many Dalits and Buddhists as possible. However, they realized that in highlighting Ambedkar, they also had to address the honest but painful reality of what he thought of Hinduism")

Date: August 12, 2015

Location: Ahmedabad, Gujarat state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Gujarat,-book-on-father-of-the-Constitution-withdrawn-because-anti-Hindu-35023.html>

**Event: Christians protested the continuing exclusion of Christian and Muslim Dalits ["untouchables"] from Scheduled Caste status, thus making them inferior to Hindu, Sikh, and Buddhist Dalits**

Rev Dr Roger Gaikwad (National Council of Churches in India; **UPDATE:** said "India became republic the day the Constitution was signed on 10th August 1950 - it was a Black Day for Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims because they have been denied equal rights with other Dalits. It is a tragedy of being Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims in the country. The government must give equal rights to them")

Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto (**UPDATE**)

Bishop Collin C Theodore

Alwan Masih (**UPDATE**)

Dr John Dayal (**UPDATE:** said "This [exclusion of Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims from Scheduled Caste net] is nothing but racism. And it must be repealed without further delay")

Fr Z Devasagayaraj (**UPDATE:** criticized the government for maintaining that granting equality to Christian Dalits will facilitate conversions: "By saying this, they are undermining their own religion. People do not convert on a whim")

Date: August 10, 2015

Location: Delhi

Source:

<http://www.christiantoday.co.in/article/christians.demand.equal.rights.for.dalit.christians.observe.black.day/17800.htm>

and <http://www.ucanindia.in/news/christians-rally-for-equal-dalit-rights/29754/daily>



**Indonesia**

Rasnius Pasaribu (church secretary, denied Islamist charges that the church fraudulently obtained signatures of neighbors to gain approval of building permits, the church has been trying

to get a permit for 15 years, the Islamists demonstrated to demand that the permit be revoked)

Date: August 10, 2015

Location: North Bekasi, near Jakarta, West Java

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/in-indonesia-muslim-group-protests-against-planned-church-construction/74053>

Dorman Wandikmo (denied media allegations that Christians prevented Muslims from praying “We never [prohibited] the Muslim congregations from praying. We sent a notification to the local police office about a special church event two weeks beforehand [as it coincided with the Eid al-Fitr festival], recommending [that] both the church and mosque not use loudspeakers to avoid disturbing each other”, when the mosque used loudspeakers Christian youth asked them to turn down the volume, police responded with gunfire wounding 12 and killing a 15 year old boy)

Date: July 17, 2015

Location: Tolikara regency, Papua

H K (accused of instigating a riot on July 17, 2015)

J W (accused of instigating a riot on July 17, 2015)

Date: July 25, 2015

Location: Tolikara regency, Papua

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2015/08/3963098/>



## **Iran**

**Event: Eight Christians arrested in a raid on a home worship service**

Ms Hayedeh Shadnia

Ms Shahin Bashiri

Ms Mona Chahardoli

Mr Esmael Falahati

Mr Nematollah Youssefi

Razmik

Date: August 7, 2015

Location: Karaj, Alborz province

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/iran-eight-christians-arrested-during-worship-service-in-a-house-church/>



## Iraq

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE**: wrote "For the Chaldean Church, and our sister churches of the East, the persecution our community is enduring is doubly painful and severe. We are personally affected by the need, and by the reality that our vibrant church life is dissolving in front of our eyes. The massive immigration that is now occurring is leaving my church much weaker. This is a deeply sorrowful reality. We who are part of the church hierarchy are very often tempted to encourage our parishioners to stay – keep the presence of Christ alive in this special land. But truly I and my brother bishops and priests can do no more than to advise young mothers and fathers to take all the necessary considerations into account and to pray long and hard before taking such a momentous, and perhaps perilous, decision. The Church is unable to offer and guarantee the fundamental security that its members need to thrive. It is no secret that hatred of minorities has intensified in certain quarters over the past few years. It is difficult to understand this hate. We are hated because we persist in wanting to exist as Christians...", added details on how the global church is helping Iraqis)

Date: August 8, 2015

Source [full text]: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/38299-ASIA\\_IRAQ\\_We\\_are\\_hated\\_because\\_we\\_persist\\_in\\_wanting\\_to\\_exist\\_as\\_Christians\\_testimony\\_of\\_Mgr\\_Warda#.VcgwYcLJAfg](http://www.fides.org/en/news/38299-ASIA_IRAQ_We_are_hated_because_we_persist_in_wanting_to_exist_as_Christians_testimony_of_Mgr_Warda#.VcgwYcLJAfg)

Srood Maqdasy (Member of Parliament, said Christians are often treated as second class citizens by Kurds "We can call it a feeling of superiority, we have religious problem, we have problem with regard to land occupation and properties, a lot of problems")

Date: August 10, 2015

Location: Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150810103646.htm>



## Kazakhstan

Pastor Sergei Li (described a police raid on a church youth camp and questioned children and adults from morning to late evening "[Police] pounded on the doors with such force that the children became nervous and frightened. The officials continued speaking very loudly, and broke into the bigger hall, where there was also a lesson for children. They behaved like they were detaining some criminals...Officials questioned the minors without the presence of their parents, One seven-year old girl was frightened and cried, and after that I told them to stop questioning the children...all the material – posters, signs, and other study materials from the walls, as well as all the presents and prizes[were confiscated]")

Nadezhda Kogay (parent of a church youth camp attendee, said parents were "fully satisfied with the Church" with the operation of the camp and that parents "they gave their permission for giving their children the English lessons")

Date: July 30, 2015

Location: Almaty region

Pastor Sergei Li (**UPDATE**: rebutted local media attacks on the church youth camp which alleged improper foreign participation and that parents were deceived about the curriculum "All the parents knew very well that the children will be taught on the basis of the Bible and they also gave their written permission" and that the South Korean and U.S. citizens who worked at the camp were not detained)

Nadezhda Kogay (parent of a church youth camp attendee, **UPDATE**: said "What right do the authorities have to scare our children, and with what right do they film me with a hidden camera, and the TV takes my words out of context?", the television station combined her words on religious freedom with 'expert' commentary about children becoming 'zombified' and video of terrorist bombings)

Date: August 4-5, 2015

Location: Almaty region

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2089](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2089)



## Lebanon

**Event: A vehicular convoy of church officials was stopped at gunpoint by a group of outlaws, their leader politely asked them to get his wife released from prison, all were released**

Bishop Hanna Alwan

Fr Elias Nasr

Date: August 11, 2015

Location: Bekaa Valley

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Maronite-bishop-stopped-at-gunpoint-in-a-country-where-anarchy-reigns-35027.html>



## Nigeria

Victoria Oyekpen (magistrate, wife of a bishop, abducted by three armed Muslims, testified to her abductors about Jesus, escaped)

Date: July 11-12, 2015

Source [with video]: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/international-persecution/speaking-of-jesus-in-the-midst-of-kidnapping>



## Pakistan

David Irfan (magazine editor, fled the country with his family after receiving death threats for his coverage of the March 15, 2015 church attacks in Youhanabad, Lahore)

Date: August 11, 2015

Source [with photo]: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5538>

Asif Masih (son of Emmanuel Masih, brick kiln worker, beaten by his employer when he demanded to be paid the legal minimum wage, hospitalized with a serious head injury but not treated, police refused to act)

Date: August 11, 2015

Location: Sahiwal, Punjab

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5540>

Allah Dita (shot and beaten after he prevented two Muslims from harrassing Christian girls on the way to church, hospitalized in critical condition)

Date: July 11, 2015

Location: Village 136/16-L, Mian Chanu, Khanewal district

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5541>

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/a-christian-man-who-tried-to-save-christian-girls-from-street-harassment-severely-beaten-and-shot-by-two-muslim-men/>



## South Sudan

Archbishop Paulino Lukudu Loro FSCJ (**UPDATE**: commented on the continuing intertribal civil war “This war has to end! The peace agreement has to be signed to defend life...war has made people indifferent to human life, people are dying and nobody cares”)

Date: August 8, 2015

Location: Juba

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/people-are-dying-and-nobody-cares-say-sudanese-priests/>



## Switzerland

Bishop Vitus Huonder (sued by homosexual activists for quoting the Bible, could face up to 3 years' imprisonment)

Date: August 10, 2015

Location: Graubunden canton

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/gay-activists-sue-swiss-catholic-bishop-for-inciting-violence-after-he-quot>



## Syria

Bishop Philip Barakat (spoke on the ISIL abduction of 250 Christians "We have no communication with them [Christian residents], as land lines and mobile lines are being cut off")

Date: August 9, 2015

Location: Alqariatin

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150809025854.htm>

**Event: Christians returning to their homes after rebel forces left, churches aided them with rebuilding**

Emad Husni (teacher, said "I have returned home since the city was liberated from the rebels. Debris and rubble as well as barriers, which were made of pieces of refrigerators and washing machines, were everywhere")

Ali Salim

Ghassan Bitar

Date reported: August 11, 2015

Location: Homs

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20150811185615.htm>

Fr Isaac Moawad (abducted, still missing as of [April 22, 2013](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been **executed**)

Fr Michel Kayyal (aged 27, abducted by rebels on [February 10, 2013](#) near Aleppo; **UPDATE**: reported to have been **executed**)

Date: August 12, 2015

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/kidnapped-priest-killed-chopped-up-by-isis-as-christians-become-a-form-of-currency-in-mid-east-war-says-aid-to-the-church-in-need-142658/>

Archbishop Jacques Behnan Hindo (**UPDATE**: said that the recent release of 22 elderly Christian captives by ISIL could be the harbinger of another attack "Perhaps we can do an analysis on why [the Islamic State] returned them, because one month ago they attacked Hassake to take it, [and] they couldn't. Maybe, maybe, they are giving a signal

that we are expecting another attack. It's a little like a drug for us, to reassure us so that we aren't vigilant, and then they'll make a new, large attack")

Date: August 12, 2015

Location: Hassake

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/could-the-release-of-22-christians-signal-another-islamic-state-attack-31187/>



## Uganda

Jafalan Kadondi (convert, mother of Ibrahim Kasoono and Ismael Feruza, beaten and strangled by her Muslim husband for having converted, left for dead, hospitalized, lost her voice and has difficulty swallowing)

Ibrahim Kasoono (aged 18, convert, son of Jafalan Kadondi, brother of Ismael Feruza, beaten by his Muslim father for having converted, right arm broken, has abdominal injuries, hospitalized)

Ismael Feruza (aged 16, convert, son of Jafalan Kadondi, brother of Ibrahim Kasoono, beaten by his Muslim father for having converted, escaped with minor bruises)

Date: August 11, 2015

Location: Nsinze village, Namutumba district

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2015/08/muslim-relatives-attack-mother-sons-in-uganda-for-turning-to-christ/>



## Ukraine

**Event: Three religious arrested by the government while providing humanitarian aid**

Sr Tatiana Shirolapova (later released)

Archimandrite Alexander Dublyazhenko

Fr Leonid Mironenko (later released)

Archpriest Zakharia Kerstyuk (reported on the arrest of the three religious)

Date reported: August 13, 2015

Location: Donbass

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/81370.htm>



## **United States - Ohio**

Judge C Allen McConnell (refused in Toledo on [July 6, 2015](#) to officiate at a same sex wedding citing his “personal and Christian beliefs”; **UPDATE**: told by the state Supreme Court Board of Professional Conduct that he cannot follow his personal beliefs, said that he would comply with the ruling)

Date: August 11, 2015

Source: <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/us/2015/August/Ohio-Board-Judges-Must-Perform-Gay-Weddings/>



## **Vietnam**

Pastor Dung Kim Kha (released from prison after 5 years, will continue on probation for 5 years, has no home to go to)

Date reported: August 11, 2015

Location: Binh Thanh district, Ho Chi Minh City

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Ho-Chi-Minh-City,-Mennonite-pastor-released-from-prison-after-five-years-35009.html>

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