

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-01-17 through 2016-01-23



Burkina Faso

A terror attack by al-Qaeda linked militants kills 30.

Michael Riddering (husband of Amy Boyle Riddering, U.S. citizen, missionary, orphanage director, **shot dead** in a cafe)

Amy Boyle Riddering (widow of Michael Riddering, wrote "In 2011 Mike and I left our life in south Florida and traveled with our family halfway around the world to Burkina Faso. He submitted himself to The Lord's Will by dedicating the last four years of his life to advocating and defending the most vulnerable people in society. He made an eternal impact on an immeasurable number of people in Burkina Faso and throughout the world. His legacy on earth will not be forgotten")

Yves Carrier (husband of Gladys Chamberland, father of Maude and Charles-Elie, retired secondary school principal, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Gladys Chamberland (wife of Yves Carrier, stepmother of Maude Carrier and mother of Charles-Elie Carrier, former civil servant, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Charles-Elie Carrier (aged 19, son of Yves Carrier and Gladys Chamberland, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Maude Carrier (aged 37, daughter of Yves Carrier and stepdaughter of Gladys Chamberland, mother of two, secondary school teacher, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Suzanne Bernier (former school principal, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Louis Chabot (teacher, Canadian citizen, missionary, **shot dead**)

Marie-Claude Blais (sister of Gladys Chamberland, wrote "I still can't understand how people who had such a love of life, who were always ready to help, always smiling and loved by so many people, can be taken away in such a horrendous way. They did good only to be killed by evil")

Pastor Valentin (witnessed the murder of Michael Riddering, hid from the terrorists, rescued by the army)

Carol Boyle (mother-in-law of Michael Riddering, said that he was "extremely well-loved and respected...He had his guiding light, and he followed it")

Dr Ken Elliot (husband of Jocelyn Elliot, Australian citizen, missionary, abducted)

Jocelyn Elliot (wife of Dr Ken Elliot, Australian citizen, missionary, abducted)

Date: January 15, 2016

Location: Ouagadougou

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/01/17/american-missionary-killed-in-burkina-faso-attack-by-al-qaeda-linked-militants.html>

and <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/01/4249436/>

and <http://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2016/01/18/six-canadians-did-only-good-to-be-killed-by-evil.html>



China

Li Heping (husband of Wang Qiaoling, civil rights attorney, disappeared)

Wang Qiaoling (wife of Li Heping)

Date: July 10, 2015

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/01/wife-of-detained-lawyer-says-happiness.html>

Senior Pastor Gu Yuese (removed from his position as leader of the government sanctioned Three Self Patriotic Movement church in his city)

Date: January 22, 2016

Location: Guizhou province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/01/pastor-of-largest-government-approved.html>

Pastor Li Guozhi aka Yang Hua (husband of Wang Hongwu; **UPDATE**: formally charged with 'obstructing justice' and 'gathering a crowd to disturb social order')

Date: January 22, 2016

Location: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/01/guizhou-officials-formally-arrest-house.html>



Cuba

Rev Bernardo de Quesada Salomon (husband of Damaris, **UPDATE**: detained during a 4 AM raid on his home, released after the demolition of his church was completed)

Damaris (wife of Rev Bernardo de Quesada Salomon, detained during a 4 AM raid on her home, released after the demolition of her church was completed)

Date: January 8, 2016

Location: Versalles, Camaguey

Rev Juan Carlos Nunez Velazquez (church demolished)

Date: January 8, 2016

Location: Victoria de las Tunas

Pastor Mario Felix Lleonart Barroso (home surrounded by state security, not arrested because he was not home)

Date: January 8, 2016

Source: <http://www.csw.org.uk/2016/01/11/press/2948/article.htm>



Egypt

Fr Bolous Halim (described to placement of a homemade bomb next to a church)

Date reported: January 23, 2016

Location: Aswan

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65666>



India

Fr Seraphym (Russian citizen, deported, had arrived to serve the pastoral needs of Russian diplomats)

Date reported: January 18, 2016

Location: Chennai

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Delhi-Moscow-spat-over-visa-denied-to-Orthodox-priest-36431.html>

Event: Twelve people claiming to be "followers of Jesus" but "not Christians" arrested under the anti-conversion law during a Hindu festival

Janu Bai (aged 35, arrested)

Shankar Singh (arrested, said "I have faith in Jesus and regularly pray to him")

Pastor Anar Jamre (advisor to the group of "followers of Jesus")

Richard James (**UPDATE**: said "police were hand in glove with the right-wing Hindu activists")

Date: January 14, 2016

Location: Dahar village, Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/india-arrests-12-for-violating-anti-conversion-law/74989>

Joseph Dias (**UPDATE**: said of a report on Christian persecution in India "There is at least a 20% increase in the incidents in terms of the number of people victimized as against 2014. The real numbers are much higher as many don't want to report such incidents as the police force is communal. Then we have incidents from areas where RSS

[paramilitary] is very dominant and victims are threatened to not report the attacks. In some cases the media is also biased. Being less in number, Christians can't fight back...With the BJP government in the center, there is huge increase in RSS shakhas [Hindu religious schools]. Even though there is no BJP government in Kerala, the state has the highest number of shakhas. West Bengal, which has long been under communist rule and is now governed by liberal forces, BJP has a strong hold over five districts where reconversions are picking up. There is saffronization of secular institution and in every sphere secular activities have been saffronized - be it in the northeast, Tamil Nadu, Kerala or Goa")

Date: January 18, 2015

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/85-major-anti-Christian-incidents-in-2015-claims-NGO/articleshow/50618719.cms>

Sr Bertilla Capra (aged 77, Italian citizen, director of the Vimala Dermatological Center in Mumbai, reported on December 30, 2015 to have been denied a visa to stay in the country, has cared for people with leprosy for 44 years; **UPDATE**: has been granted a one-year visa)

Date: January 22, 2016

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Sister-Bertilla-Capra-receives-a-one-year-Indian-visa-36466.html>



Indonesia

Archbishop Ignatius Suharyo Hardjoatmodjo (**UPDATE**: condemned the January 14, 2016 terror attack)

Bishop Yohanes Harun Yuwono (joined in an anti-terror demonstration attended by 10,000 people)

Fr Alexius Andang Binawan SJ (said "We are shocked but life in the capital continues normally. As the government and public officials say, we have also told the faithful not to be overcome by the fear of terrorism. Terrorists want visibility and demonstrate the supposed weakness of the government. Indonesian people will respond in a united manner, with firmness and dignity, without fear")

Date: January 17, 2016

Location: Jakarta

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-bishops-denounce-terrorist-attack/74991> and http://www.fides.org/en/news/39195-ASIA_INDONESIA_After_the_massacres_Christians_and_Muslims_together_in_the_street_against_terrorism#.Vp2uCMIUufg



Iran

Pastor Saeed Abedini (aged 35, convert, US citizen, husband of Naghmeh Shariat Panahi Abedini, father of Rebekka and Jacob, arrested during a family visit, held in Evin Prison in Tehran and threatened with death; convicted on [January 27, 2013](#) of undermining the government by spreading Christianity and sentenced to eight years in prison; **UPDATE:** released, has left the country and has been undergoing medical testing)

Date: January 16-17, 2016

Location: Germany

Source: <http://aclj.org/persecuted-church/breaking-american-pastor-saeed-abedini-and-other-americans-have-just-been-freed>

and <http://www.persecution.org/2016/01/16/pastor-saeed-abedini-freed-from-prison-in-iran-along-with-three-other-americans/>



Israel

Auxiliary Bishop William Shomali (**UPDATE:** condemned vandalism at the Basilica of the Dormition which included Hebrew script reading 'May his name be obliterated')

Theodoros Mitropoulos (principal of the Patriarchal School of St Zion, school vandalized)

Date: January 17, 2016

Location: Jerusalem

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Cowardly-acts-against-Christians,-education-against-intolerance,-says-vicar-for-Jerusalem-36423.html>

and <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45823>

Archbishop Atallah Hanna (said "Threats by Jewish terrorists to slaughter Christians strengthens our determination to adhere to Jerusalem, to our holy places, to our nation and to our national cause")

Date: January 18, 2016

Location: Jerusalem

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65634>



Pakistan

Riasat Masih (brother of Liaquat Masih, arrested and beaten by police along with 5 other Christians during a peaceful demonstration, said that his brother will not be buried until the police officers responsible for his torture and murder are arrested)

Date: January 14, 2016

Location: Gujranwala

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/01/police-in-pakistan-torture-christian-to-death-family-says/>

Nazir Masih (husband of Samina, father of Waqar, Dilawar, Zoya, Zoha, and Zohaid, street sweeper, **shot dead** while performing his duties in front of the municipal administration building, no one arrested, government has refused to pay a death benefit)

Samina (aged 50, widow of Nazir Masih)

Waqar (aged 21, child of Nazir Masih)

Dilawar (aged 18, child of Nazir Masih)

Zoya (aged 16, child of Nazir Masih)

Zoha (aged 14, child of Nazir Masih)

Zohaid (aged 11, child of Nazir Masih)

Date: January 14, 2016

Location: Sialkot Tehsil, Punjab province

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-cleaner-shot-dead-whilst-at-work>
and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5760>

Event: Three Christian girls were deliberately run over by four drunk Muslim men after they refused their advances to get in their automobile, were told "Christian girls are only meant for one thing the pleasure of Muslim men"

Kiran (aged 17, beautician, skull fractured, **died from internal bleeding**)

Shamroza (aged 18, beautician, ribs fractured)

Sumble (aged 20, beautician, hip fractured)

Date: January 13, 2016

Location: Defence Colony [ghetto], Lahore

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-girl-killed-for-shrugging-off-advances-of-rich-muslim-boys>



Syria

Bishop Mario Zenari (apostolic nuncio, **UPDATE**: said of the civil war “Using hunger, and thirst, as a weapon of war is a crime, a shameful thing...I am surprised that the international media is just talking about it now. In some places, people have been dying

of hunger for more than a year with lorries full of food, milk, and medicines, just waiting outside”)

Date: January 15, 2016

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Nuncio-to-Damascus,-using-hunger-and-thirst-as-a-weapon-of-war-is-an-outrage-36405.html>

Prof Jany Haddad (humanitarian aid distributor; **UPDATE:** wrote "On Sunday service morning at Emanuel Armenian Evangelical church, just after the general service there was a youth gathering, it was concluded just around 11:45-11:50, and the attack was just when the leader of the youth went out of the church. We are very grateful to my Lord's protection and guidance. Otherwise, the number of deaths and wounded Christians were going to be in tens and hundreds...Still as you know, the weather is getting cold more due to a windy snow storm. Still no fuel, no heating system, and since more than four months no electricity to cover some heating needs. Gas cylinders are rare and rocketing in the prices...Daily, there are people admitted to hospitals, private and general, with H1N1 [avian] flu and daily we hear about one or two deaths. In spite the government has, generously, providing vaccine to everyone who needs it, but the epidemic is still active and spreading like crazy horse. No control. The pollution rate increasing and no control for it as well")

Date: January 17, 2016

Location: Aleppo

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Syrian-Christians-in-Aleppo-endure-terrible-suffering-as-rockets-kill-and-swine-flu-spreads>



Thailand

Riaz Masih (Pakistani refugee, became critically ill while in detention, hospitalized)

Date reported: January 16, 2016

Location: Bangkok

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/thailand-another-pakistani-christian-asylum-seeker-in-critical-condition/>



Vietnam

Sr Mary Le Thi Thao LHC (has been fighting the government seizure of three schools, asked for prayers)

Date: January 19, 2016

Location: Ho Chi Minh City

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Card-Marx-calls-for-action-to-defend-religious-freedom-and-the-Lovers-of-the-Holy-Cross-in-Th%E1%BB%A7-Thi%C3%A4m-36441.html>

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