

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-01-31 through 2016-02-06



Azerbaijan

Irina Zakharchenko (aged 55, widow, disabled, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in Pirallahi on [December 5, 2014](#), detained by the NSM [now SSS] secret police on [February 17, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: convicted of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released)

Valida Jabrayilova (aged 39, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in Pirallahi on [December 5, 2014](#), detained by the NSM [now SSS] secret police on [February 17, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: convicted of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released)

Date: [January 28, 2016](#)

Location: [Baku](#)

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2144



Belarus

Dmitry Chorba (aged 24, conscientious objector, criminal case opened on [June 11, 2015](#) against him; case closed in [July 2015](#); **UPDATE**: found not guilty in court, expects to be called again for military service)

Date: [January 29, 2016](#)

Location: [Rechitsa, Gomel region](#)

Mikhail Shulgan (husband of Liliya Shulgan, home raided by police during a Bible study, accused of holding an illegal meeting, later charged with 'not using living premises for their designated purpose')

Liliya Shulgan (wife of Mikhail Shulgan, charged with 'not using living premises for their designated purpose' despite the fact she was not present during her husband's Bible study)

Dates: [December 22 and 29, 2015](#)

Location: [Gorki](#)

Pastor Vladimir Daineko (church raided by OMON riot police on [May 17, 2015](#), police demanded he stop praying and read a search warrant, arrested when he refused, fined US\$235 on [June 8, 2015](#); fine upheld on appeal on [August 24, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: automobile placed under a restraining order due to nonpayment of the fine, seizure likely, computer seized)

Dates: January 12 and February 3, 2016

Location: Soligorsk

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2146



China

Event: A pastor and his wife were arrested on embezzlement and corruption charges, both sent to a black jail, had written that their church had been experiencing “unprecedented, chilling trials. Everyone must equally rely on the Lord’s grace to confront [this trial] and triumph over it”

Senior Pastor Gu Yuese (husband of Zhou Lian Mei, removed on [January 22, 2016](#) from his position as leader of the government sanctioned Three Self Patriotic Movement church in his city; **UPDATE**: arrested)

Zhou Lian Mei (wife of Gu Yuese, arrested)

Date reported: February 3, 2016

Location: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/02/breitbart-pastor-of-chinas-first.html>



Egypt

Susanna Reda Thabit (disappeared under mysterious circumstances)

Date reported: February 3, 2016

Location: Samalout, Minya province

Source [with photo]: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65795>

Fr Stephanous Shehata (reported that three churches have been closed for security reasons)

Date: February 2, 2016

Location: Samalout, Minya province

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65785>

Fr Lucas Helmi OFM (said "The building of St. George's Church...was stopped 25 years ago because of tension between Coptic and Muslim families in the village, especially the

Muslim neighbors around the old church, which is still unfinished because they refused to allow it to be rebuilt it after it was demolished")

Date: February 2, 2016

Location: Hijazah village, Qous, Qena province

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65787>

Fr Agathon Hanin (said that no progress has been made toward the opening of a church closed by Muslim neighbors in 2007)

Date: February 1, 2016

Location: Alias Manor, Samalout, Minya province

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65773>

Fr Awad Flemon (complained that officials after five years still have not issued a construction permit to allow restoration of his church, but did agree to issue a demolition permit)

Date: February 1, 2016

Location: Alexandria

Source: <http://www.mcndirect.com/showsubject.aspx?id=65772>



India

Event: Four Christian employees of an AIDS clinic were attacked by Hindu radicals after the death of a child patient, drove with the attackers in pursuit until they saw a police jeep, stopped but the police refused to protect them, the attackers told the victims to call on Jesus to protect them

Fr Kannumkuzhy Jose (aged 49, attacked, beaten, hospitalized in intensive care in critical condition with a head wound, still unconscious)

Lijo (attacked, beaten, hospitalized, released)

Stanley (attacked, beaten, hospitalized, released)

Joseph (attacked, beaten, hospitalized, released)

Fr Johnson Veeppattuparambil (eparchy [diocese] spokesman, described the attack)

Date: January 28-31, 2016

Location: Ettimada, Tamil Nadu state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Tamil-Nadu,-priest-and-three-Catholics-assaulted-and-accused-of-killing-a-child-in-a-center-for-AIDS-patients-36562.html>

Pastor Avdhesh Savita (aged 35, husband, father of four, Dalit [untouchable] caste member, abducted by Hindu extremists posing as policemen, beaten for allegedly leading illegal conversions, head half-shaved including eyebrow and moustache, forced to ride a donkey, later said "“The mob that was parading me was shouting, ‘Kill him, cut him in pieces,’ but I kept telling them that faith unites, it does not divide. I told my tormentors that I believe in Christ out of my own freewill, and that I have never hurt anyone, but

they just did not listen to me...I kept praying throughout the ordeal, I am not afraid of dying. I thought, 'This is the day when I will stand before my Savior.' But I also thought of my children, they are young, and that was my only concern. In the Lord I am persecuted, I am thankful for this privilege")

Date: January 29, 2016

Locations: Rendhar village and Orai, Jalaun district, Uttar Pradesh state

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/02/humiliating-attack-in-india-tests-young-pastors-faith/>

Event: Three Christians were arrested on witchcraft charges for having prayed over the sick

Rev Sebastian Marin (arrested)

Vishnu Kudve (arrested)

Vaibhav Tare (arrested)

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** said "Pentecostal Christians see no contradiction in prescribing medicine, and, at the same time, trusting God for divine healing. People go to this center, as well as Pentecostal-run facilities to pray, hoping to receive physical healing...Jesus is the Healer and there's nothing magic about praying or laying hands. The arrest of the three Christians is unfair and has, as its sole purpose, to intimidate the community")

Date: January 31, 2016

Location: Vasai village, Maharashtra state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Maharashtra:-Pentecostal-pastor-arrested-on-charges-of-practicing-black-magic-36603.html>



Kenya

Mwaura (**beheaded** in an al-Shabaab terror attack)

Date: January 31, 2016

Location: Kaisari area, Maporomoko village

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/02/al-shabaab-kills-christians-in-raid-on-village-in-coastal-kenya/>

Mikhail Reznik (missionary base and orphanage robbed)

Date: February 4, 2016

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue27297.html>



Nigeria

Pastor David Onubedo (abducted, US\$249,000 ransom demanded)

Date: January 25, 2016

Location: Okene, Kogi state

Pastor Ayo Raphael (abducted, US\$249,000 ransom demanded)

Date: January 10, 2016

Location: Lokoja, Kogi state

Source: <http://www.bosnewslife.com/36382-breaking-news-islamic-militants-kill-dozens-of-christians-children-torched>



Pakistan

Tariq Masih (husband of Rukhsana Bibi, father of seven, arrested, **tortured to death** by police)

Rukhsana Bibi (widow of Tariq Masih)

Date: January 25, 2016

Location: Muridke, Punjab province

Source: <http://www.bosnewslife.com/36408-christian-tortured-to-death-by-pakistan-police>

Patras Hanif (father of five, construction worker, threatened by coworkers that he would be accused of blasphemy if he did not convert to Islam)

Date reported: February 5, 2016

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/multan-christian-man-considers-suicide-after-mental-torture-from-co-workers/>

Event: Two brothers have gone into hiding after their Muslim tenant accused them of blasphemy in an apparent attempt to occupy their property, has received multiple death threats against their children

Nasir Yousaf

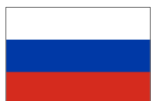
Nisar Yousaf

Kathreen Yousaf (aged 65, mother of Nasir and Nisar Yousaf, attacked twice, the second beating appeared to be an attempt to kill her but Muslim neighbors intervened)

Dates: December 18, 2015, January 1 and 25, 2016

Location: Rawalpindi

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5780>



Russia

Metropolitan Hilarion (said “...despite the remaining obstacles of ecclesial nature, it has been decided that a meeting should be urgently held between His Holiness Patriarch Kirill [of Moscow] and Pope Francis of Rome. The problem of the persecution against Christians will become central at this meeting”)

Date: February 5, 2016

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Russian-Patriarchate,-the-“genocide-of-the-Christian-population”-made-the-Kirill-Francis-meeting-urgent-36606.html>



Sudan

Rev Kowa Shamal (arrested in [Khartoum Bahry](#) on [December 18, 2015](#) by the NISS secret police; **UPDATE**: released)

Date: January 16, 2016

Rev Hassan Abdelrahim (arrested in [Omdurman](#) on [December 18, 2015](#) by the NISS secret police; **UPDATE**: still captive in an unknown location, wife denied a visitation)

Telahoou Nogose Kassa Ratta (aged 36, church worker, arrested in [Bahri](#) on [December 14, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: still captive in an unknown location)

Date: February 2, 2016

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/new/Sudan-releases-pastor-but-another-pastor-and-a-Christian-activist-still-held>



Syria

Event: Two Christians killed and three injured in a double suicide terror bombing

Morris Khajo (**killed**)

Fawzi al-Kaldani (**killed**)

Date: January 25, 2016

Location: Qamishli

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=45895>



Turkey

Fr Yusuf Akbulut (**UPDATE**: church attacked with rocket propelled grenades during a fight between Turkish and Kurdish forces, sheltered his family in the church residence, escaped, later falsely charged by the media with caching ammunition for Kurdish forces)

Pastor Ahmet Guvener (**UPDATE**: repeatedly called his friend Fr Yusuf Akbulut to plead that he escape the fighting)

Date: January 28, 2016

Location: Diyarbakir

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/02/4276119/>

Event: Christian refugees from Iraq have been forced to hide their religious identity

Anonis Alis Salciyan (wife, mother of two, said "My husband and I fled with our two children one year ago with around 20 other families. There was pressure on us in Iraq. We have relatives in Europe. Only thanks to their support are we getting by. Our children cannot go to school here, they cannot speak Turkish")

Linda Markaryan (wife of Vahan Markaryan, fled Iraq after an ISIL raid on their home, said "My daughter, Nusik, seven, stopped talking that day. She has not spoken since. We are working hard to provide her treatment, but she still will not speak... We are pious people, but we have to conduct our sermons and prayers at home. This is hard")

Vahan Markaryan (husband of Linda, father of Nusik, electrical technician)

Nusik Markaryan (aged 7, daughter of Vahan and Linda Markaryan)

Date reported: December 18, 2015

Location: Yozgat

Source: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/christian-refugees-face-difficulties-hide-religion-in-turkey-.aspx?pageID=238&nID=92719&NewsCatID=339>

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