

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-08-07 through 2016-08-13



Algeria

Slimane Bouhafs (aged 49, arrested on blasphemy charges, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment, suffers from inflammatory rheumatism)

Dates: July 31 and August 7, 2016

Location: Setif

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/08/4582070/>



Austria

Vakhtang Kipshidze (church spokesman; **UPDATE:** condemned a break-in at the St Nicholas Cathedral by Pokemon Go players, said in [Moscow](#) “The developers of this game deliberately added a provocative dimension, proposing that absolutely any place could become a site for the game. I hope that the users of the game will have enough discretion to respect the interests of other people, social and religious organizations, and not to encroach upon the private lives of others”)

Date: August 5, 2016

Location: Vienna

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/players-of-pokemon-go-broke-into-st-nicholas-cathedral-in-vienna/>



Bangladesh

Simona Monti (aged 33, sister of Fr Luca Monti, **killed along with her unborn baby** in an ISIL terror attack on a bakery)

Fr Luca Monti (brother of Simona Monti, said in Santa Lucia di Serino, near Naples, Italy “It was deeply moving to me to hear my father say, ‘I have given God one son as a priest, and one daughter as a martyr’”)

Date: July 1, 2016

Location: Dhaka

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1470791438.html>

Rosaline Costa (aged 67, human rights activist; **UPDATE:** has fled the country after receiving death threats, a niece and two nephews have fled in the past year under threats to convert to Islam or be killed or forced into marriage)

Date: July 2016

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/08/11/bangladeshi-catholic-editor-flees-country-in-fear-of-her-life/>



China

Gou Hongguo aka Ge Ping (husband of Fan Lili, father of Shaner, former military officer, businessman, detained on [July 10, 2015](#); **UPDATE:** sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment for 'subversion of state power', sentence suspended, his wife had written a letter to him entitled *With love there is no fear!*)

Date: August 5, 2016

Location: Tianjin

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-activist-sentenced-to-three-years-for-subversion-38232.html>
and <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/08/wifes-letter-to-imprisoned-husband-with.html>

Mou (**UPDATE:** reported that the local government announced that Christians who gather to worship would be denied welfare or old-age insurance payments)

Date: July 2, 2016

Location: Guizhou province

Zhang Shucai (**UPDATE:** said “Not long ago, I went back to my hometown and asked my parents about [the welfare payment cancellation]. They told me that they still hadn’t received their welfare. [Authorities] only arrested my mother last time, but they canceled the [welfare] of [both of my parents]”)

Date: July 14, 2016

Location: Sichuan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/08/government-terminates-welfare-for.html>

Zan Aizong (freelance journalist; **UPDATE:** said that officials from the Religious Affairs Bureau raided a church, disrupted a service, and prohibited further meetings, the raid appears to be in anticipation of the September G20 summit)

Zhou (said that many churches will begin to close supplementary activities in mid-August and to fully close prior to the G20 summit)

Date reported: August 10, 2016

Location: Hangzhou, Zhejiang

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/08/zhejiang-locks-down-on-churches-in.html>



Egypt

Salim Qamhi (farmer, said of the burning of his church "We heard deafening sounds of explosions and crackling as the interior of the church gave way. The fire had eaten up everything -- the wooden sanctuary, the icons, the pews and the books")

Date: mid-July 2016

Location: Naj al-Nassara

Marina Ramsis (aged 21, theater arts student, said "Christians are in real danger")

Date: August 7, 2016

Location: Heliopolis

Marcus Abel Shahid (aged 37, pharmacist, said "I don't really expect much from a country whose very system is built upon Islamic law. I'm saying this in the light of recent tragedies and killings, like the murder of Sister Athanasia who got killed on the highway")

Date: August 7, 2016

Location: Mari Girgis

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160807162957.htm>

Elizabeth Ghattas Habib (aged 18, disappeared under mysterious circumstances)

Date reported: August 10, 2016

Location: Dahab village, Minya province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1703&A=25434>

Pastor Shady Afifi (attacked by police while heading to church with sixty parishioners, slapped, prevented from praying)

Date reported: August 10, 2016

Location: Mersa Matruh, Matrouh province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1704&A=25437>

Fr Abdul Massieh Bassit (said that Christians are currently suffering more than they did under the previous regime)

Date: August 12, 2016

Location: Mostorod

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1705&A=25516>



Germany

Pastor Mahin Mousapour (aged 57, convert, former Iranian citizen, has been threatened with a knife, said of Christian persecution in a nearby refugee camp "I love Muslims. But many Muslim refugees say that all Christians are unclean. During the period of Ramadan, it was particularly disastrous. The victims are afraid of revenge or of losing their asylum status if they complain. It can not be that someone seeks shelter with us because of his faith and we then don't protect him here")

Date reported: August 11, 2016

Location: Frankfurt

Source: <http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/698748/Christians-hide-bibles-in-German-migrant-camps-amid-death-threats-from-Muslim-extremists>



India

Event: Thousands of Christians of all denominations march and fast to protest a church attack

Samuel B Pujari (said "The attack is not just an attack on the church. But it is a conspiracy to disturb communal harmony in the district. Christians have been living in the district for the last 200 years. They have served people at times the region was hit by plague")

Date: July 18, 2016

Location: Tumakuru

Source: <http://www.christiantoday.co.in/article/christians.rally.to.denounce.church.attack.in.tumakuru.karnataka/17939.htm>

Fr Joseph Manipadam (said of the government's latest education proposals which would promote Hindu beliefs "Our concerns are several. We believe education should be free from cultural, religious, and political ideologies of governments and leaders")

Date: August 8, 2016

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/indias-new-education-plan-leaves-church-official-reeling/76790>

Event: Christian leaders reacted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech against 'cow vigilantism'

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE:** said "We are happy that the prime minister has finally spoken out and that he has spoken very strongly. But Dalit

[untouchable] and minority groups would be happier if action could be seen at the ground level")

Samuel Jaykumar (National Council of Churches in India; **UPDATE:** said "It is just to pacify the Dalits and other minorities. Keep in mind that an election is coming next year in Uttar Pradesh", added that Modi did not mention similar attacks on Muslims)

Mary John (**UPDATE:** said Modi's words were "too little, too late...But if they are serious they should act now")

Date: August 10, 2016

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/modi-urged-to-act-just-not-talk-against-cow-vigilantism/76809>

A C Michael (United Christian Forum; **UPDATE:** met with other human rights activists to discuss the failure of government and political parties to oppose the RSS Hindu paramilitary organization, said "I am concerned of the subtle way of terror which is happening in the way of changing the education policy and introducing a uniform civil code. This is more dangerous than the physical violence")

Date: August 9, 2016

Location: New Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/rights-activists-concerned-over-pro-hindu-ideology/76821>



Indonesia

Endang Setyorini (church vandalized, statues broken and thrown in a river, said "Our relations with local people from different religious backgrounds have been good. Our parish church is open to anyone who wants to pray here. In fact, we don't hire security personnel to guard our parish church on a daily basis")

Father Ignatius Sukawalyana (called on parishioners to not jump to conclusions "while the investigation is ongoing" that the perpetrators were Islamic extremists)

Fr Peter C Aman OFM (professor of moral theology, said "we don't worship statues and we forgive others")

Date: August 9, 2016

Location: Gondangwinangun, Central Java province

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/vandalized-marian-jesus-statues-perplexes-javanese-catholics/76817>

Agnes Dwi Rusjiyati (parish official, said that the Muslim extremists who had opposed the construction of an interfaith shrine to Mary the mother of Jesus have withdrawn their opposition after finding they had created divisions in the Muslim community)

Date: August 11, 2016

Location: Gunung Kidul district, Yogyakarta province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Yogyakarta,-Islamic-extremists-withdraw:-the-Marian-shrine-remains-38281.html>



Iran

Maryam Naghash-Zargarani aka Nasim (aged 38, as of July 11, 2016 has again begun a hunger strike to force prison officials to grant her a medical leave; **UPDATE:** ended her hunger strike after prison officials said she would receive better medical attention)

Date: July 31, 2016

Location: Evin Prison, Tehran

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3048>



Iraq

Event: Three priests were ordained in a refugee camp

Fr Emad (ordained)

Fr Petros (ordained)

Fr Roni Salim Momika (ordained, said "We left Qaraqosh during this time two years ago [during the ISIL attack]", will continue to serve in the camp)

Archbishop Yohanna Petros Moshe (**UPDATE:** celebrated the ordination)

Date: August 5, 2016

Location: Aishti 2 camp, Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/new-iraqi-priests-bring-joy-amid-years-of-sadness-displacement-52205>

Fr Emanuel Adel Kelo (said "If organized migration were possible, then I can say that 90 percent of the inhabitants of this camp would leave")

Raad Bahnam Samaan (husband, father of five including Iva, refugee for 2 years, said "There is always hope, but when? Nobody knows. It might be a year, two years, a day, a couple of days. Three or four years from now if we go home there won't be anything left of our house...The boys are growing up, how can I secure their future?", added that the end of ISIL may not improve his situation with Iraqi Muslims "We'll still be afraid. I will go to Mosul and I will be afraid because they will say, here comes the Christian")

Iva Samaan (aged 25, son of Raad Bahnam Samaan, engaged to be married but cannot obtain housing in the refugee camp to start his family)

Date: August 9, 2016

Location: Ankawa, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160809163404.htm>



Kazakhstan

Maksim Sulyargin (foreign citizen, fined US\$610 and ordered deported for speaking to his religious community; appeal upheld, case dismissed)

Dates: August 8 and November 5, 2015

Location: Astana

Robert Panczykowski (cardiologist, Polish citizen, charged on August 24, 2013 with acting as an unregistered missionary; fined US\$1,100 on November 18, 2013 and ordered deported;
UPDATE: appeal upheld, case dismissed)

Date: June 16, 2016

Location: Astana

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2207



Nigeria

Joshua (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Saleh (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Date: May 2016

Location: Ninte, Jema local government area, Kaduna state

Jerry (aged 40, attacked by Muslim Fulani herdsmen with machetes, hospitalized)

Date: mid-June 2016

Location: Ninte, Jema local government area, Kaduna state

Akoro (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Danladi (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Friday (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Jerry (**killed** by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Joseph (aged 25, brother-in-law of Martha Yohanna, missing after a Muslim Fulani herdsmen attack, **presumed killed**)

Martha Yohanna (sister-in-law of Joseph, described the recent Muslim Fulani herdsmen attacks, fled her village)

Mamman (killed by Muslim Fulani herdsmen)

Rev Nathan Jaweson (swam across the river to escape being killed)

Date: August 2, 2016

Location: Gada Biyu, Jema local government area, Kaduna state

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/08/at-least-13-christians-killed-in-muslim-fulani-herdsmen-attacks-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



Pakistan

Event: Christian leaders condemned the terror bombing of a hospital emergency room that killed over 70 and wounded 40

Arthur Victor (attorney, killed in the suicide bombing of a hospital emergency room)

Ashiknaz Khokhar

Daud Sharif Sohatra

Bishop FS Bhatti

Dr Julius Salik (former member of parliament and Federal Minister)

Majid Zia

Mushtaq Gill

Dr Nazir S Bhatti

Pervez Iqbal

Raymond Wallace Durrani

Date: August 8, 2016

Location: Quetta, Baluchistan

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/eminant-christian-leader-julius-salik-denounces-quetta-hospital-blast/>

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/quetta-a-christian-advocate-perishes-in-civil-hospital-suicide-blast/>

and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6026>



Philippines

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (criticized the government for the large number of killings of drug dealers by police, wrote “From a generation of drug addicts, shall we become a

generation of street murderers? Can the do-it-yourself justice system assure us of a safer and better future?"")

Date: August 7, 2016

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2016/08/08/philippines-archbishop-strongly-criticises-president-dutertes-violent-crackdown-on-drug-crime/>



Poland

Christina Shabo (aged 25, U.S. resident, said that despite the murder of several relatives in Iraq by ISIL she has come to pray that God have mercy on them even though she has not yet forgiven them)

Date: July 29, 2016

Location: Krakow

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/the-shocking-prayer-of-a-young-iraqi-have-mercy-on-isis-51601/>



Syria

Sr Anne-Francoise OCD (French national, one of six nuns in her convent, said "When the Syrian army attempts to prevent the opposition and other groups from entering the city, the bombing and shelling is really close to us. Thank God, they haven't hit us yet, but we are constantly hearing the shells pass over our heads...The bombs are falling all around us, but we are not going to leave the people in their suffering. The people here are suffering and dying...By now it is only the poorest of the people who are still left here in Aleppo. So many Christians have left the city during these years of war...The diplomatic solutions have not worked. We simply pray to the Lord that this war may stop. Please take pity on these thousands of lives, torn apart by war. Please don't forget us. We need your prayers and your practical help!"")

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Aleppo

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1470478790.html>

Bishop George Abu Khazen OFM (**UPDATE**: unable to return to his church "because the road has been closed" due to combat, which has only "partially reopened in some directions", added "the situation is critical, and people are afraid...[Christians and Muslims] are praying unceasingly for peace")

Date: August 11, 2016

Location: Aleppo

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Vicar-of-Aleppo-fears-a-pitched-battle,-Christians-and-Muslims-pray-for-peace-38287.html>

Fr Ibrahim [Alsabagh OFM?] (**UPDATE:** reported to Vatican Radio “We don't know what's going to happen. We announced to all the priests, since yesterday, and we've also told the people, that we want to fast and pray the next 72 hours so that the will for peace always prevails and so that it wins over the will for war...It's a miracle and divine providence that we bought everything [food, water, etc.] before Aleppo's main street was closed off...the bombardments, which are intensified at night, continue, but there are also missiles falling on the western side of the city, where we're living...in recent days two areas were evacuated and many people have slept and continue to sleep on the streets or in tents...The army for its part wants to retake the parts it lost in recent days, while these military groups are getting ready to advance further toward Hamdaniya and the entire western area of the city...within the city it's more the jihadists than the rebels who are taking the helm of these military groups which are very, very diversified”)

Date: August 9, 2016

Location: Aleppo

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/in-syria-aleppos-catholics-pray-and-fast-for-peace-18610/>



Taiwan

Fr Anselm Hsu OP (reported on a church vandalism by a mentally ill man "It is lucky that only the clothes of the statue and the spotlight were burnt and no one was harmed. It is a dilemma for us to enhance more security measures when we want the church to reach out to people")

Date: August 3, 2016

Location: Wanjin, Pingtung county

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/marian-statue-set-on-fire-in-taiwans-oldest-church/76774>



Thailand

George Naz (Pakistani refugee, fled Pakistan after receiving false blasphemy accusations, said at a vigil in front of the French embassy "We cannot stay silent we must speak out against these atrocities. When we choose to ignore the plight of others we are only serving to embolden extremists and in the long term we all will suffer")

Date: August 2, 2016

Location: Bangkok

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/asylum-seekers-sow-seeds-of-hope-through-solidarity-vigil>



Uganda

Waiswa Sowedi (aged 30, convert, student, attacked by the father of Sera Muzamiru for his involvement in her conversion, severely injured when a thrown metal object embedded in his forehead, hospitalized, operated on twice after a week, released, in hiding)

Sera Muzamiru (aged 18, convert, beaten by her father, in hiding)

Date: early June 2016

Location: Nabidongha village, Nakigo sub-county

Pastor Brian Mukisa (aged 29, threatened with death for his conversion of Muslim children, church destroyed)

Date: May 25, 2016

Location: Busalamu village, Bukanga sub-county, Luuka district

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/08/youths-in-eastern-uganda-pay-heavy-price-for-turning-to-christ/>



United Kingdom

Lord David Alton (human rights advocate; **UPDATE:** wrote "In Parliament I hosted a meeting of the charity, Aid to the Church In Need [ACN]. We heard of how a Christian pastor in a village of Aleppo was told to convert or die. He was forced to watch as his 12-year-old son was tortured: the boy's fingers cut from his hand. Neither the father or son renounced their faith, and both were executed...Despite Resolutions being passed in the House of Commons, the American Congress, the European Parliament and the Australian House of Representatives, the British Government still fails to name these events for the genocide that they are – or to lay a Resolution before the Security Council...In November, ACN is arranging for Westminster Cathedral and Westminster Abbey to be floodlit in red to commemorate the persecuted. If every parish in the country did the same it might at last wake up our political classes to the scale of the suffering")

Date: August 5, 2016

Source: <http://ctscatholiccompass.org/an-article-of-faith/>



Uzbekistan

Jurabek Vapayev (home raided by anti-terrorism police, no religious literature found, personal diary and cell phone seized, beaten and tortured, fined US\$308 but notified only after the court decision, unable to determine under what charge he was fined)

Dates: May 17, June 16, early July 2016

Location: Urgench City Criminal Court in north-western Khoresm Region

Pastor Latifahon Mamazhanov (brother of Marifzhon Mamazhanov, arrested on March 12, 2016, whereabouts unknown, sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment for 'not submitting to authorities'; released on March 28, 2016, had been held in a cell designed for two with seven others, fed poor food once a day, cell contained lice and bedbugs, two prisoners with tuberculosis were deliberately placed in the cell; as of May 25, 2016 has fled the country with his family to avoid further persecution; **UPDATE:** fined US\$886 in effect as a second sentence for the March 12, 2016 arrest)

Date: June 27, 2016

Location: Fergana

Sergei Alekseyev (home raided by anti-terrorism police without warrant, administrative case opened)

Saidat Abdurakhimova (administrative case opened)

Dates: May 29 and July 17, 2016

Location: in or near Navol City

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2206



Vietnam

Fr Peter Le Quoc Hung (traveled with six others to investigate persecution, vehicles' tires spiked by masked men)

Tran Thi Tram (a police attack on a prayer meeting at her home was investigated by Fr Peter Le Quoc Hung)

Date: August 10, 2016

Location: Muong Khuong district, Lao Cai province

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/catholics-in-northern-vietnam-seek-help-to-end-persecution/76842>



Yemen

Fr Tom Uzhunnalil SDB (aged 56, Indian citizen, abducted when armed men attacked a nursing home in Aden on March 4, 2016, killing 16 employees and residents including 4 nuns;
UPDATE: reported by the Indian government to still be alive)

Bishop Paul Hinder (**UPDATE:** said "no one has ever had direct contact with Fr Tom. We do not have any proof that he really is ok")

Date: August 5, 2016

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Indian-Foreign-Minister:-Fr.-Tom-is-well.-Msgr.-Hinder:-Caution-38233.html>

Today's Martyrs

For more information please visit our web site at: <http://todaysmartyrs.org/>

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