

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2016-09-07



### Algeria

Slimane Bouhafis (aged 49, arrested in [Setif](#) on blasphemy charges on [July 31, 2016](#), suffers from inflammatory rheumatism, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on [August 7, 2016](#); **UPDATE:** sentence reduced to 3 years' imprisonment, fine of US\$900 dropped, appeal still underway)

Date: [September 7, 2016](#)

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



### China

Bishop Vincent Zhu Weifang (aged 90, led a [July 24, 2015](#) 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; **UPDATE:** **died of cancer**, had been imprisoned from 1955 to 1971 and from 1982 to 1988)

Date: [September 7, 2016](#)

Location: [Wenzhou, Zhejiang province](#)

Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin (underground bishop, reported on [August 4, 2015](#) to have condemned the cross demolition campaign; **UPDATE:** detained by police just prior to the death of Bishop Vincent Zhu Weifang in an attempt to prevent his succession, reportedly taken to Northwest China)

Fr Paul Jiang Sunian (secretary to Bishop Vincent Zhu Weifang, diocesan chancellor, detained by police just prior to the death of Bishop Zhu, reportedly taken to Yunnan province)

Date: [August 23, 2016](#)

Location: [Wenzhou, Zhejiang province](#)

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Coadjutor-bishop-of-Wenzhou,-Msgr.-Peter-Shao-Zhumin,-sized-by-police-38523.html>

Pastor Wen Xiaowu (criminally detained along with his wife and son on April 26, 2016, the detentions were likely in response for their meetings with U.S. Consulate officials in

Shanghai; **UPDATE:** released from jail, placed under house arrest for the next six months)

Date: September 9, 2016

Location: Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/09/pastor-imprisoned-for-contact-with-us.html>



## Egypt

Bishop Makarios (**UPDATE:** said after recent attacks "We are at a breaking point. People can't put up with any more of this")

Date: September 7, 2016

Location: Minya

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160907164139.htm>

**Event:** Four teens were convicted in [Minya](#) on [February 27, 2016](#) of contempt of Islam for making an alleged parody video of the Islamic State's beheading videos, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE: fled the country for Istanbul, Turkey**

Alber Ashraf Hanna

Bassem Amgad Hanna

Clinton Magdy Youssef

Molar Atef Edward

Date: April 2016

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/09/coptic-teenagers-sentenced-to-prison-in-egypt-for-defaming-islam-in-video-flee-to-switzerland/>



## Haiti

Sr Isabel Sola Matas RJM (Spanish citizen, **shot dead** while leaving a bank)

Date: September 2, 2016

Location: Port-au-Prince

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2016/09/05/pope-prays-for-spanish-nun-murdered-in-haiti/>



## India

Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto (**UPDATE**: described three cases of illegal denial of ambulances or hearses for use by low caste people, wrote "On the one hand, we are trumpeting that India is a super power and the world's third largest economy, while on the other, day-to-day incidents of apathy and the lack of basic amenities and health care for the poor continues to contradict the government's tall claims...These incidents remind us that we as a democratic state are lacking even basic amenities and facilities to provide a dignified burial or last rites for the dead, particularly the poor and vulnerable sections of the society")

Fr Savarimuthu Shankar (**UPDATE**: said "The archbishop is speaking for people of all faiths and is pointing out a tough social issue...human rights are violated every step of the way in this country")

Date: September 7, 2016

Location: Delhi

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/delhi-archbishop-speaks-up-against-hospitals-callous-attitude/77063>

Dolphy D' Souza (**UPDATE**: said of the desecration of a cross on the day of the canonization of Mother Teresa "The timing of this incident is worrisome...We feel it is a mischievous attempt to provoke the community")

Fr Nigel Barrett (**UPDATE**: said of the cross desecration "They [police] have assured us that they will do a full inquiry and investigation on this sensitive issue")

Anthony D'Souza (said of the cross desecration "God only knows who did this and what they wanted to get out of breaking it. Nobody saw it happening otherwise they would have caught them")

John D'Souza (said people did not understand the motive for the cross desecration, added "There are no tensions here. We live peacefully")

Date: September 4, 201

Location: Mumbai

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/cross-desecrated-on-day-of-mother-teresas-canonization/77050>



## Indonesia

Fr Adrianus Sulistiyono (Mass with 200 worshippers interrupted by two Muslim extremists who were then removed by police, forced to stop Mass and leave the church after the extremists returned with a larger group)

Date: September 6, 2016

Location: Surakarta, Central Java

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Surakarta,-Islamic-radicals-disrupt-the-celebration-of-Mass-38507.html>



## Iran

Ali Asadi (convert, **executed**, asked his fellow prisoners to love each other, said he was not afraid of his pending death but added that the country's leaders should be afraid of God's judgement against them)

Date reported: September 4, 2016

Location: Rajaeeshahr prison

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-man-warns-iranian-regime-to-fear-gods-judgment-before-his-execution-169153/>

Maryam Naghash-Zargaran aka Nasim (aged 37; **UPDATE**: released from prison on medical leave)

Date: August 28, 2016

Location: Evin prison, Tehran

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3109>

**Event:** Five Christians were arrested in **Firuzkuh** on **August 25, 2016** without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with their wives; **UPDATE: whereabouts still unknown**

Amin Afshar Naderi (aged 28, convert, arrested, beaten when he asked to see the arrest warrant)

Amir Sina Dashti (arrested)

Hadi Askary (arrested)

Mohamad Dehnay (arrested)

Ram-iel Beth Tamraz (son of Pastor Victor Beth Tamraz and Shamiram Isavi; arrested)

Date: September 7, 2016

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3113>



## Iraq

Fareed Behnam (aged 34, **killed in a car bombing** along with 323 others)

Date: July 3, 2016

Location: al-Karada, Bagdad

George Shamoun (church elder, husband, father of two sons and a daughter, abducted, released after payment of US\$70,000)

Date: July 21-27, 2016

Location: Bagdad

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/09/4619310/>

Fr Bashar Kthea (aged 42; **UPDATE**: said that many of his parishioners wish to return home, said "I even get phoned by my people abroad, to ask if the liberation of Qaraqosh is starting")

Sr Huda (school administrator, said "Most people can think of nothing else than going back...This school will remain open for those who stay, and now we know how easy it is to build a new one over there")

Emad al-Dalakta (teacher, said "The trust in politicians is gone. They just talk, while the church is helping. The church will have a bigger role after we return. Now it actually already does what the government should be doing")

Marwan Butrus Jiji (attorney, favors more local autonomy, said of the return to peaceful governance "I believe the process will fail if it is not led by the church. Our only hope is the church")

Date: September 9, 2016

Location: Ainkawa, Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160907223953.htm>



## Nigeria

Emmanuel Emeka (pharmacist, attacked by youths after allegedly writing a blasphemous word on a magazine, rescued from a lynching by police, detained)

Date: September 4, 2016

Location: Ketu area, Lagos state

Source: <http://punchng.com/hausa-youths-attack-lagos-chemist-blasphemy/>



## Pakistan

Pastor Gulzar (begged police and 'land mafia' to not illegally evict Christian families from their homes and steal their possessions, cross stripped from his church and thrown to the ground)

Date: September 8, 2016

Location: Chak 9, Akhtarabad, Tehsil Renala Khurd, Okara district

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/okara-christians-houses-usurped-by-land-mafia-enjoying-patronage-of-local-police/>



## Turkey

**Event:** Four teens were convicted in [Minya, Egypt](#) on [February 27, 2016](#) of contempt of Islam for making an alleged parody video of the Islamic State's beheading videos, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment; fled the country in [April 2016](#) for Turkey; **UPDATE: flew to Switzerland for asylum, had been living in a safe house for five months**

Alber Ashraf Hanna

Bassem Amgad Hanna

Clinton Magdy Youssef

Molar Atef Edward

Date: [September 1, 2016](#)

Location: [Istanbul](#)

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/09/coptic-teenagers-sentenced-to-prison-in-egypt-for-defaming-islam-in-video-flee-to-switzerland/>

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I aka Dimitrios Arhondonis (**UPDATE:** falsely accused by Turkish media of having supported the July 15, 2016 attempted coup)

Date: [September 7, 2016](#)

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/96833.htm>



## Uganda

Enoch Shaban (aged 32, convert, **found hanged from a tree**, had received death threats for his conversion)

Date: [August 10, 2016](#)

Location: [Mbarara district](#)

Aisha Twanza (aged 25, convert, poisoned with insecticide by family members, hospitalized, later said “I never expected my parents to do such a thing to me, but I thank God for saving me and healing”)

Date: [August 10, 2016](#)

Location: [Kedenge, Iki-iki county](#)

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/09/persecution-in-eastern-uganda-persists-as-christian-convert-is-killed-in-western-area/>



### **United States - Arizona**

Lisa Gregory (high school parent, complained of the desecration of a statue of Mary the mother of Jesus "It's beyond offensive. There's nothing worse than to desecrate an image of [Mary]...It's probably high school hijinx, but [the vandal] needs to understand that it was bigotry and intolerance. He probably doesn't realize that")

Mike Williams (high school parent, complained of a Jesus character on the football field, "He was dancing with the devil and mocking what we as Christians consider holy and sacred...Kids are young and dumb and make mistakes, but if you can't pray in a public school, you shouldn't be able to mock [Jesus] in a public school")

Date: September 2, 2016

Location: Scottsdale

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pranks-against-a-catholic-high-school-crossed-the-line-parents-say-37769/>

### **United States - Illinois**

Allen Smith (aged 80, retired pastor, **shot dead** by another retired pastor in their retirement home during a theological argument)

Date: September 5, 2016

Location: near Chicago

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/us/59777-pastor-shoots-fellow-minister-dead-in-potential-matthew-10-fulfillment>

## **Today's Martyrs**

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

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