

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2016-09-11 through 2016-09-17



### Austria

Cardinal Christoph Schonborn (**UPDATE**: said in his homily that Europe had “squandered and wasted” its heritage like the prodigal son in the Gospel, added “Will there now be a third attempt at an Islamic conquest of Europe? Many Muslims think so and long for it and say: This Europe is at an end”)

Date: September 11, 2016

Location: Vienna

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/cardinal-schnborn-warns-of-islamic-conquest-of-europe-59849>



### China

Gao Ming (aged 27, seminary student, detained on a charge of indoctrinating minors with superstitious beliefs while attempting to drive children to a Christian summer camp, held for 15 days)

Zhou Yanhua (detained on a charge of indoctrinating minors with superstitious beliefs while attempting to drive children to a Christian summer camp, held for 10 days, had attempted to free Gao Ming by taking responsibility for the camp)

Xie Xianhua (church elder, said that after the children were taken to a police station and identified their teachers were contacted and threatened with loss of pay and their parents were threatened that they would not be advanced in school)

Date: August 4, 2016

Location: Xinyuan county, Xinjiang province

Source: [http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/09/christian-camp-leaders-detained-accused\\_69.html](http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/09/christian-camp-leaders-detained-accused_69.html)



## Cuba

Rev Mario Felix Leonart Barroso (husband of Yoaxis Marcheco Suarez, brother of Mirka Pena, arrested in [Taguayabon, Villa Clara province](#) on [March 20, 2016](#) just hours before the arrival of U.S. President Barack Obama, denied food and water, had been stabbed with a pin on public transport earlier in the week, later developed jaundice and a distended stomach; **UPDATE**: emigrated to the United States with his family after receiving credible death threats, said three weeks later that 1,400 churches are being threatened with closure, added "It's one thing to close down a church and to evict its members. That's bad enough, but then there's the problem of destroying or even burning things inside the building, not to mention, the threat of physical violence that comes with the territory of being a Christian in Cuba...The reason the government sometimes tries to silence the Church or to close down church buildings is because it is worried about how many people are turning away from the state and looking to God [and the Church] for answers and for hope")

Date: [September 15, 2016](#)

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/09/15/persecution-next-door-icc-talks-with-cuban-pastor-ousted-from-his-homeland/>



## Egypt

Gamal Sobhy Khalil (clubbed in the head during a traffic altercation between Christians and Muslims, hospitalized with a coma, arrested and handcuffed after he regained consciousness in the ICU)

Date: [September 12, 2016](#)

Location: [Ezbet Assem village, Minya province](#)

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2016/09/16/sectarianism-strikes-again-in-minya-police-arrest-coptic-man-hospitalized-in-icu/>



## India

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: described an attack on a church packed with worshippers in which Hindu radicals pelted the building with stones, said "No one was hurt, but the fact has created a climate of suspicion and distrust in the district")

Date: [September 11, 2016](#)

Location: [Shyampur village, Siddharth Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh state](#)

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/60736->

[ASIA INDIA Stones against Pentecostal Christians#.V9jIfsKV85s](#)

Balwinder Kaur (aged 55, mentally disabled after a 2015 accidental electrocution, **bled to death four hours after being hacked on her legs with an axe** for allegedly desecrating the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh sacred text)

Bishop Franco Mulakkal (**UPDATE**: said "God, forgive them for they know not what they do. All the evidence indicates that there is persecution in Punjab")

Date: September 11, 2016

Location: Veroke village, Punjab province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Punjab,-Christian-hacked-to-death:-suspected-of-having-profaned-a-sacred-Sikh-text--38583.html>



## Indonesia

Yuni Yesra Patatang (aged 27, elementary school religion teacher, youth minister, **shot dead** by suspected local militants)

Date: September 12, 2016

Location: Ilaga, Puncak Jaya district, Papua province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Papua:-Catholic-teacher-shot-dead-38561.html>



## Iran

Mohammad-Reza Yohan Omidi (convert, sentenced to 80 lashes for drinking communion wine on **October 20, 2013**; sentence executed on **November 2, 2013**, has been flogged; arrested on **May 13, 2016**; **UPDATE**: charged with acting against national security and consumption of communion wine)

Saheb Fadaie (convert, arrested on **May 13, 2016**; **UPDATE**: charged with acting against national security and consumption of communion wine)

Yasser Mossayebzadeh (convert, arrested on **May 13, 2016**; **UPDATE**: charged with acting against national security and consumption of communion wine)

Date: September 10, 2016

Location: Rasht

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/06/4488553/>



## Iraq

Christina Khidr Ebada (aged 5, abducted on [August 22, 2014](#) from her mother's lap by ISIL militants in [Qaraqosh](#); **UPDATE**: still missing, a photograph of her appeared on Facebook before the internet was cut from Mosul)

Ayda Ebada (mother of Christina Khidr Ebada, said "Christine is still there [in a nearby location under ISIL control]...Sometimes, I fear that my Christine grows older without me, that I will never see her again", has been concerned about the pending Iraqi military offensive against Mosul, asked for prayers, added "My father stayed in Qaraqosh. He was sick, his health was not good at all. So, when everyone fled, he stayed alone in the house. Later I heard that he died three days after IS entered. He was old and sick and had no water or food. IS buried him")

Baddu Ebada (father of Christina Khader Ebada, blind; **UPDATE**: reported how his sister remained in her home after the 2014 ISIL takeover: "She was 80 years old and didn't want to leave. She refused to flee with us, she wanted to stay in her home in Qaraqosh...It might have been my sister [who was reported by Mosul TV as having died], but I'm not sure. I have no way to contact her")

Date: [September 9, 2016](#)

Location: [Erbil](#)

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/09/4625709/>

Athraa (student, one of nine in her family, refugee, said of her escape from ISIL in 2014: "The first months were a disaster. We lived in many different places. We lived in a wedding hall and a church garden. We ended up in a tent in a sports center. It was a really difficult. In the night I couldn't sleep because I heard the mice running around in my tent. There was not enough water and the food was not that good", family now shares a house with another family, added "I am glad that this happened because it changed my life. After the displacement I was bored, there was nothing to do, so I went to church more often. Soon I got involved with a Bible study group that gathers twice a week. I discovered that every line in the Bible tells us something. But what I like best is when we as a small group celebrate Holy Communion with the priest in the way the people in the time of Jesus did. We have a piece of bread and share that with each other. It is something wonderful. It gives me patience to continue my life, to see things from a bigger perspective...We don't have to spend our time asking ourselves why this happened to us. God doesn't want to hurt us. He is speaking with us and we need to hear Him and trust Him. I learned that it's good to spend these days in prayer. IS took our land and our money, but we still have our lives and we have to live them like God wants us to. When you learn these things, you have to share them. I can help God to reach the people with his message. So I want to assist the people in my community to rediscover the richness of faith and I want to be there for them when they struggle...I did go to church before my displacement, but I wasn't involved as much as I am now. I spent my time differently. I was an impatient person and always wanted to have things my way...I found a peace in my heart, peace in my life. God has made me a more patient and forgiving person. I know that God is with me and that's the most important thing")

Date: [September 7, 2016](#)

Source [with photo]: [http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/iraq\\_160907.php?ref=lnstorylnk](http://www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/iraq_160907.php?ref=lnstorylnk)

Fr Jamil Gorgis (said "Almost all Christian refugees who come to my Church to pray would favor to live in a Christian region or province under international protection")

Date: September 17, 2016

Location: Dohuk

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160916210745.htm>



### **Kosovo**

Bishop Teodosije Sibalic (aged 53; **UPDATE**: condemned the arson attack on the unfinished cathedral, the attack was only the latest of several)

Date: September 11, 2016

Location: Pristina

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/cathedral-of-christ-the-savior-in-pristina-set-on-fire/>



### **North Korea**

Emily Fuentes (Open Doors USA spokeswoman, said "North Korea has done the most they've done in a long time in [nuclear] testing recently. It is cause for concern, it is cause for speculation on what they might be doing and what their plans might be for war against the world...According to his [Kim Jong Un's] ideology, he's essentially 'god', the Kim dynasty is 'god', and because Christianity is associated with the West, it's a double whammy, a double threat, so Christians are targeted...We've got to keep praying for their safety. That they would be able to stand strong as they are enduring this persecution, that they would continue to be Christ-like")

Date: September 13, 2016

Source: <https://www.mnnonline.org/news/north-korea-something-to-prove/>



### **Pakistan**

Zeeshan Masih (teenager, **body found hanging from a tree**, had been sexually assaulted, police ruled his death was not suspicious)

Date: August 23, 2016

Location: Shreejan Wala Dhera

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/faisalabad-christian-teenager-murdered-after-being-sodomized>

**Event: Seven Christians beaten and tortured, reason unknown**

Shahzad Masih

Zahid Masih

Hanif Masih

Arif Masih

Rabat Masih

Sharifan

Perveen Bibi

Date: September 16, 2016

Location: Samundari, Faisalabad district

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/faisalabad-christians-subjected-to-brutal-torture-on-account-of-their-faith/>

**Event: Two Christians have been prevented from having construction work done on their home despite having proper permits**

Rehana Kausar Bibi (widow, mother of Rashid)

Rashid (son of Rehana Kausar Bibi)

Date: September 17, 2016

Location: Fazalia Colony [ghetto], Lahore

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/lahore-political-activists-blatantly-impede-construction-of-christians-house/>



**Sweden**

Rev Johanna Andersson (resigned from the Church of Sweden after founding with two other priests an internet initiative called 'My Cross' in which Swedes took selfies with a cross to show solidarity with persecuted Christians, wrote "Church leadership has for several weeks been running a campaign against us who started the group 'My Cross'. In this campaign, I have been discredited, called 'questionable', 'unclean', 'agitator', 'un-Christian' and attributed xenophobic hidden agendas")

Dr Ann Heberlein (lecturer of Theology, wrote after the attacks on Rev Johanna Andersson "The leadership of the Church of Sweden no longer wants to lead a Christian community; they want to lead a general ethical association for humanistic values of the most vulgar kind")

Date reported: September 15, 2016

Location: Lund University, Scania province

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Swedish-church-leaders-oppose-support-for-persecuted-Christians>



## Sudan

Rev Samuel Suliman (Christian school headmaster, arrested along with 12 teachers by the NISS secret police on charges of supporting rebels, all released on bail after 8 hours' detention, school property seized)

Date: September 5, 2016

Location: Madani, Al Jazirah state

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/09/authorities-arrest-christian-leader-in-al-jazirah-state-sudan-in-school-takeover/>



## Syria

Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh OFM (aged 44; **UPDATE**: said "we were awakened by a rocket that fell near here [which] hit the Syrian Catholic bishop's residence...Neither the bishop nor his vicar were present at the time, this prevented casualties or injuries. The damages to the building remain", added that the cathedral had "been targeted by rockets and mortar fire for a while" by rebel forces)

Date: September 16, 2016

Location: Aleppo

Source: [http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Aleppo-pastor-says-rocket-hit-Syrian-Catholic-bishop-residence,-expresses-fears-for-truce-\(photos\)-38603.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Aleppo-pastor-says-rocket-hit-Syrian-Catholic-bishop-residence,-expresses-fears-for-truce-(photos)-38603.html)

Bishop Maurice Amsih (denounced Kurdish abuses including forcing Assyrian schools to adopt Kurdish curricula and putting Assyrian soldiers in the front ahead of others)

Date: September 16, 2016

Location: Gozarto and Hassakeh

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20160916175558.htm>



## Thailand

Wilson Chowdhry (criticized a new policy of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Bangkok which reduced the time to appeal a denial of asylum from 90 to 30 days and

which would render all verdicts in English without translation, said "Pakistani Christians find themselves in a nadir, they are not wanted by their home nation because their faith makes them ritually impure, the equivalent of a demon. They cannot seek asylum in the west as Christians are not welcome there anymore, and they face definite re-persecution in Buddhist, Hindu and other Muslim nations - if they can even get there. The international community needs to think long and hard on this issue, persecution for Christians across the globe is increasing rapidly. To stem the tide a sanctuary has to be declared for them")

Date: September 13, 2016

Location: London, United Kingdom

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pakistani-christian-asylum-seekers-are-being-targeted-by-the-unhcr-through-disturbing-policy-change>



### **United States - Illinois**

David Hall (aged 42, information technologist with the Federal Social Security Administration, suspended without pay after refusing to watch a LGBTQ 'diversity and inclusivity' video, said that other employees shared his opinion but feared reprisal)

Date reported: September 15, 2016

Location: Champaign

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/christian-could-lose-his-job-after-refusing-to-watch-lgbt-video>

### **United States - Maryland**

Archbishop William E Lori (condemned anti-religious comments by the chair of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that attacked religious liberty as 'hypocrisy' and 'code words for discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia or any form of intolerance': "These statements painting those who support religious freedom with the broad brush of bigotry are reckless and reveal a profound disregard for the religious foundations of his own work...He makes the shocking suggestion that Catholic, evangelical, orthodox Jewish, Mormon, and Muslim communities are comparable to fringe segregationists from the civil rights era...Rest assured, if people of faith continue to be marginalized, it is the poor and vulnerable, not the Chairman and his friends, who will suffer")

Date: September 14, 2016

Location: Baltimore

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/archbishop-lori-slams-reckless-comments-by-civil-rights-chair-29083/>





## Venezuela

Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino (**UPDATE:** said of the country's situation which has included deaths by starvation in a psychiatric hospital in Barquisimeto "There is no food, and there are no medicines, this has become a serious problem but we have to solve it peacefully")

Date: September 10, 2016

Location: Caracas

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/60724->

[AMERICA\\_VENEZUELA\\_There\\_is\\_no\\_food\\_or\\_medicine\\_people\\_are\\_starving\\_and\\_tension\\_increases\\_in\\_the\\_country#.V9di88KV85s](http://www.fides.org/en/news/60724-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_There_is_no_food_or_medicine_people_are_starving_and_tension_increases_in_the_country#.V9di88KV85s)

## Today's Martyrs

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

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