

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-09-25 through 2016-10-01



China

Bishop Anthony Xu Jiwei (aged 81; **UPDATE: died of natural causes**, had been sentenced in 1960 to 5 years' imprisonment followed by 20 years' forced labor, had once said "The period of imprisonment has strengthened my faith. During that period of great trial, I prayed every day...I realized that God loves me deeply and it is with me every day")

Date: September 25, 2016

Location: Taizhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Taizhou-bishop-dies,-he-had-been-recognised-by-the-pope-and-Beijing-38682.html>

Zhang Daichun (received a document from the provincial government ordering his house church to cease meeting)

Date: September 2, 2016

Location: Jiuzhaigou, Sichuan

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/09/church-penalized-for-holding-services.html>



Egypt

Dr Naguib Gibrael (attorney for the Coptic Church, head of the Egyptian Federation for Human Rights; **UPDATE: has brought a lawsuit against Salafist preacher Yasser Al Borhamy on a charge of contempt of Christianity for having said that Christian women do not belong to a respectful religion and therefore can be used for sexual pleasure without respect or love)**

Date: September 27, 2016

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1739&A=26960>



Greece

Metropolitan Alexandros Papadopoulos (aged 80, has received a summons to appear in court regarding his statements against same sex marriage)

Date: September 25, 2016

Location: Mantinea

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/97368.htm>

and [https://orthodoxwiki.org/Alexander_\(Papadopoulos\)_of_Mantineia](https://orthodoxwiki.org/Alexander_(Papadopoulos)_of_Mantineia)



Iraq

Br Raseed (survived a collision of his taxi with a U.S. armored vehicle [outside Bagdad](#) in [2003](#) or [2004](#) in which the driver and another monk were killed, hospitalized in a coma; fled his monastery in [Qaraqosh](#) during the ISIL takeover in [August 2014](#); **UPDATE**: has led religious services in his refugee camp in the absence of priests, said of his vocation “But I don’t have to be anything supernatural. I just have to be here with the people in the church because God needs me to be here...It is all about Jesus. Jesus is the core, He is the Rock we build on. And whatever might happen, our Rock will never disappear. He will always be here”)

Date: September 27, 2016

Location: Kasnazan, Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/09/4648120/>

Ghazan (aged 47, father of three aged 9 through 21, refugee, said “Back in my own town on the Nineveh Plain, I used to have a successful transport company. We had a good life until ISIL came and forced us out. I heard that ISIL stole all our cars and are using them in Mosul right now...I have lost everything, but I thank God that my family is still with me”, currently works in a bakery, said "Although I don’t earn much here and I have to work much longer hours than I did in my last job, I can at least pay rent so my family doesn’t have to live in a camp")

Suaad (widow, tailor, refugee from Mosul, currently manages a sewing factory, said “I haven’t been able to return since. I feel heavy inside, not knowing what has happened to my town...The priest asked me to be in charge of the factory so I took the job. I would have done it for nothing if necessary, but I am happy that I get paid and I can share it with my family...It’s what I like most about the job, that I can share with those in a worse position than me. Sometimes a displaced person asks me to make a dress. I don’t charge them. How could I?”)

Date reported: September 28, 2016

Location: Erbil, Kurdistan

Source: <http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/09/4650638/>



Lebanon

Jonas (aged early 50's, framer, Syrian refugee, showed a picture on Google Earth, said "This was my farm. It is very big. These buildings here were huge. I had about 2,000 olive trees here too. They're now all gone. ISIL destroyed everything – the house, the buildings, they cut down all the trees. I lost everything there...I was at the farm with the caretaker. I told them I didn't want them to take my cattle. They started shooting and then my caretaker fell dead on the ground. I was hit in my leg three times. They took all my cows and I heard they sold them in Turkey. Turkey is playing a dirty game in Syria...We're living in a small apartment now and I have some work in construction. The first year here I became depressed. But I started to pray more to God and that has helped me. I pray very often but have all these questions about why [attacks by ISIL] happen to Christians...Syria is finished. When the war is over, people will be full of hatred. They don't forget who killed their brother, son or father. They will want to take revenge. I think there is only a future for the Church in Syria when Christians all around the world help. If the Christians really disappear from Syria it will be a disaster for Christianity all around the world. You know, we Christians love our country, we would love to stay, would love to return, but we need the basic conditions to live there")

Date reported: September 28, 2016

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/09/4650638/>



Mexico

Fr Jose Alfredo Lopez Guillen (abducted from his rectory in [Janamutato, Michoacan state](#) on [September 19, 2016](#), automobile stolen; **UPDATE**: body found, had been **shot dead** days earlier)

Date: September 24, 2016

Location: [Puruandiro, Michoacan state](#)

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-37469016>

Fr Hugo Valdemar Romero (Archdiocesan spokesman; **UPDATE**: slammed a state prosecutor's allegations that the three most recent murders of priests were due to their own questionable behaviors "In these cases it has become clear that state governments that cannot handle the drug cartels are criminalizing the victims, depicting some as drunks and another as a pedophile, making it look like the crimes were not related to drug cartels but because of some immoral conduct. To physical death they are adding moral assassination, slandering the priests and holding them up to ridicule, and that has caused deep indignation in the Church...the least we expect is a public apology")

Date: September 27, 2016

Location: Mexico City

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/09/27/catholic-church-in-mexico-alleges-smear-campaign-against-three-murdered-priests/>



Nicaragua

Pastor Mauricio Fonseca Pereira (president of the Evangelical Alliance of Nicaragua, congregation denied access to pray in a public plaza, government has also imposed new restrictions on visas for foreign missionaries and foreigners travelling to Christian events in the country)

Date: September 28, 2016

Location: Managua

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/09/28/nicaraguan-government-shuts-down-evangelical-prayer-vigil/>



Pakistan

Falak Sher Masih (beaten by police while travelling to his sister's house, left thumb fractured, held until he paid US\$48 to the police despite his poverty)

Date: September 26, 2016

Location: Nabi Pura, Sheikhpura district

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/sheikhpura-policeman-bashes-christian-man-in-brazen-exhibit-of-barbarian-cruelty/>

Iqbal Masih (brother of Shahzad Masih, threatened along with other Christians by four armed Muslims on motorcycles for testifying in court concerning his brother and sister-in-law's [November 4, 2014](#) murder “They started abusing us and said get ready to die. We had warned you: not to follow the lynching case, but you have not paid heed. We were terrified, but fortunately at that moment a passerby spotted the assailants, due to which the men fled on their motorcycles”)

Date: September 3, 2016

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/christian-couple-lynching-elder-brother-of-the-victim-harassed-and-coerced-not-to-pursue-the-case/>

Event: Christians commemorated the third anniversary of the Peshawar church suicide bombing

Arif Aqeel (aged 47, husband of Jane, father of two sons, injured in the bombing, left leg amputated, left paralyzed and mute with vocal code damage, sons also injured;

UPDATE: uses a wheelchair to attend church services, monthly medicine costs equal his monthly pension)

Jane (wife of Arif Aqeel, said "I had to leave my job to take care of him as he is bedridden. Both government and churches supported us in the early days but now we have to decide between food and medicines. An NGO is paying for the school fee of my youngest son but we need regular support")

Rt Rev Sarfarz Humphrey Peters (**UPDATE:** said "Four Christians are still visiting hospitals for their treatment. The government must fulfil its promise to establish an endowment fund for the people affected by the church bombing")

Fr John William (said "[The Christian community] lives in constant danger. We cannot say that the situation has improved for minorities since the government launched the National Action Plan to fight the militants")

Date: September 22, 2016

Location: Peshawar

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Peshawar:-three-years-after-the-Protestant-church-massacre,-some-still-struggle-to-survive-38692.html>

Michael Javed (former Member of the Singh Provincial Assembly; **UPDATE:** died from cardiac arrest following a stroke)

Date: September 27, 2016

Location: Karachi

Source: <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/karachi-former-christian-mpa-michael-javaid-dies-of-a-heart-attack/>
and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6104>



Uganda

Fatuma Baluka (aged 21, convert, beaten unconscious by her husband for attending church, hospitalized, released, fled from her home)

Dates: September 18 & 22, 2016

Location: undisclosed

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/09/woman-in-uganda-beaten-unconscious-for-attending-church-service/>

Today's Martyrs

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

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