

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-10-23 through 2016-10-29



Azerbaijan

Event: Christians were arrested at a private worship service

Gulbahar Guliyeva

Konul Guliyeva

Yevdokiya Sobko (**UPDATE**)

Matanat Qurbanova (**UPDATE**)

Vagif Aliyev (**UPDATE**)

[Date: March 23, 2016](#)

[Location: Gakh](#)

Givi Khusishvili (home raided by police during a [March 23, 2016](#) worship service, 56 attendees detained for hours, religious items including Bibles seized; **UPDATE**: fined US\$1,108, 25 other attendees of his worship service also fined)

[Date: between July 28 and August 1, 2016](#)

[Location: Gakh](#)

Gulara Huseynova (detained for distributing religious literature on [April 11, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Rasmiyya Karimova (detained for distributing religious literature on [April 11, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: acquitted)

[Date: May 12, 2016](#)

[Location: Gakh](#)

Rahim Karimov (detained on [May 15, 2016](#) after speaking about the Bible; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Luka Khusishvili (detained on [May 15, 2016](#) after speaking about the Bible; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

[Date: June 9, 2016](#)

[Location: Gakh](#)

Event: Two Christians were detained on [April 22, 2016](#) for talking with a neighbor about their faith, ordered to return to the police station the next day; **UPDATE: returned to the police station, both subjected to further verbal abuse, told to leave their faith**

Khayala Jafarova

Jaarey Suleymanova

Date: April 23, 2016

Location: Baku

Gulgaz Novruzova (detained for speaking about the Bible in a public park, questioned as to why she did not read the Quran, released)

Rakhila Shukurova (detained for speaking about the Bible in a public park, questioned as to why she did not read the Quran, released)

Date: July 24, 2016

Location: Baku

Jamila Gurbanova (detained for handing out state-approved religious literature on a bus, released)

Date: August 4, 2016

Location: between Barda and Yevlakh

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2222



Cameroon

Fr Carlo Girola SX (aged 68, **killed in a railway accident** during torrential rains, 78 others also killed)

Date: October 21, 2016

Location: between Yaounde and Douala

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61048->

[AFRICA CAMEROON Even a Xaverian missionary among the 79 who died in the train crash#.WBQVJsKQw5s](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61048-)



China

Bishop Emeritus Francis Tong Hui (aged 84, jailed in **March 1965**; released in **January 1980**; **UPDATE: died of natural causes**)

Date: October 27, 2016

Location: Yulin

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mgr-Francis-Tong-Hui,-emeritus-bishop-of-Yulin,-dies-38992.html>

Xu Yonghai (church elder; **UPDATE: church meeting in his home raided by police**)

Date: October 7, 2016

Location: Beijing

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/10/police-stop-gatherings-of-beijing-house.html>



Colombia

Fr Jose Fortunato Bedoya Franco IMEY (aged 91, **found dead** in a street, a witness said he had been attacked by a man with a syringe in an apparent robbery, still under investigation)

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Rionegro

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/61054-AMERICA_COLOMBIA_Investigations_underway_for_the_death_of_a_91_year_old_priest#.WBQJzsKQw5s



Congo, Democratic Republic

Fr Joseph Mulimbi Nguli (aged 52, **shot dead** in his sister's house, appears to have been targeted)

Fr Kalaba (demanded an investigation into the murder of Fr Joseph Mulimbi Nguli)

Date: October 21, 2016

Location: Katuba, Lubumbashi, Upper Katanga province

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/61055-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_The_Archdiocese_of_Kisangani_condemns_the_killing_of_Don_Mulimbi#.WBQMV8KQw5s



Germany

Event: A church wedding was attacked by a man who fondled a statue of Mary, destroyed wedding decorations and floral arrangements, and shouted "Allahu Akbar" - "God is Greater"

Marcel Lohbeck (aged 35, newlywed husband of Friederike)

Friederike (newlywed wife of Marcel Lohbeck)

Date reported: October 26, 2016

Location: Duisburg

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3874108/Does-object-marriage-Migrant-screaming-Allahu-Akbar-burts-wedding-German-church-tears-decorations.html>



India

Fr Michael Santhumayor (college administrator, attacked by a student he had warned would have to repeat courses due to skipped classes, hospitalized)

Date: October 20, 2016

Location: Milagres College

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Church-slams-lazy-student-who-assaulted-a-priest-in-Mangalore-38958.html>



Iraq

Fr Ammar (described an ISIL attack on university student housing during which seven Christian female students became trapped “Suddenly their street was filled with IS warriors, shouting ‘Allahu akbar’ [Allah is the greatest]. Most students were able to leave their houses in time, but seven girls couldn’t. They texted me in the evening; they were terrified: ‘We are in danger. Please come for us’. At least four IS soldiers had entered their house. The girls had gone to their bedroom, and were hiding under their beds, covered in blankets...At some moment the IS warriors even entered the bedroom, to pray and to care for one of their soldiers who’d got hurt. Luckily the electricity was cut off, so it was dark. Nevertheless it was a miracle the girls weren’t discovered [before the ISIL fighters were forced from the building]...In the end none of the students or nuns were injured. Praise God for that”)

Date: October 22, 2016

Location: Kirkuk, Kurdistan

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4694339/>

Fr Roni Salim Momika (**UPDATE**: spoke on the liberation of the towns of Bartella and Qaraqosh by the Iraqi army "Yesterday the priests, they entered the church in Bartella and they saw everything was dark, because ISIS burned everything" and "Qaraqosh is liberated. [ISIL] made a big, deep hole [climbed in and] bombed themselves...There are a lot of places destroyed, and ISIL burned our church and ISIS broke all our crosses that were above the churches. It's difficult for us because it's our history. It's a big church in the Middle East, in Qaraqosh")

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Erbil

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20161025053710.htm>

Fr Martin Banni (aged 25, as a seminarian fled [Karamlesh](#) with the Eucharist on [August 7, 2014](#) ahead of the ISIL advance; **UPDATE**: has plans to rebuild schools and hospitals after the defeat of ISIL, said "This is most important because it ensures our people can come back to their homeland and live in peace there once again. The liberation of the region is finally happening and the prospect of going home feels closer now than ever...We want to face our problems and solve them, not to escape from them. A people who have borne all these difficulties can never be broken")

Location: Erbil

Date: October 24, 2016

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20161021232836.htm>

Intisar Mateh (refugee, spoke on the current offensive "We are so happy, and hopefully we can go back home because we are not comfortable here. We feel stuck here, and there's nothing like being home")

Raeda Paulos (refugee, spoke on the current offensive "We are scared, in case it doesn't go back to normal when they clear the area. Daesh [ISIL] has been there for two years, maybe there are explosives, IEDs or bombs. So we are in a wait-and-see mode right now")

Date: October 22, 2016

Location: Erbil

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20161021230336.htm>

Nazar Elias Jaji Al Kas Putrus (grocery store owner, **shot dead** because he held a liquor license)

Date: October 26, 2016

Location: Basra

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Gunmen-kill-a-Christian-shopkeeper-in-Basra,-the-first-victim-of-Iraq's-anti-alcohol-law-38990.html>

Fr Paul Thabit Mekko (**UPDATE**: returned to his church after ISIL had been driven out "I can't describe my joy. My hopes have been realized. "I always held onto hope that we would return - and today it came true")

Date: October 27, 2016

Location: Karamlesh, Hamdaniyah district, outside Mosul

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20161027174004.htm>



Israel

Auxiliary Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo (**UPDATE**: condemned the vandalism of the Church of the Transfiguration in which the Eucharist and icons were desecrated, a fire was set, and chalices, a statue and offerings were stolen, said "The thieves even stole a bronze statue of Our Lady, which was on the tabernacle. But it is too heavy and they left it almost immediately. Some volunteers found it laying in the garden and put it back in its original place. They took the chalices thinking perhaps that they were precious, and the

donation box, which held only a small amount of money although how much, we don't know")

Date: October 24, 2016

Location: Mount Tabor

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Bishop-Marcuzzo's-pain-and-sorrow-for-act-of-vandalism-against-the-Church-of-the-Transfiguration-38963.html>



Kenya

Event: Twelve people were killed in an al-Shabaab terror attack, most if not all were Christians

Veronica Wambui (actor, survived an al-Shabaab terror attack on a guesthouse, injured when an explosion collapsed a wall onto her, shot in the left hand, hospitalized, said "I could see the lights from the torch [flashlight] when they were checking out the room but the collapsed wall had covered me")

Date: October 25, 2016

Location: Mandera

Source: <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2016/10/25/12-killed-as-islamist-gunmen-target-christians-in-kenya-shooting/>
and <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4694021/>

Event UPDATE: Six Christians killed in an al-Shabaab terror attack

John Ndegwa (quarry worker, **killed**)

Duncan Ndegwa (quarry worker, **killed**)

Evans Araka (fiance of Rebecca, father of five, credit manager for Islamic Relief, **killed**)

Lewis Mwalimu (Islamic Relief employee, **killed**)

David Chege (barber, **killed**)

David Muchoki Munene (aged 40, husband of Eunice Wangari, son of Nancy Muthoni, brother of Billie Mbugi and Paul Maina, construction materials truck driver, **killed**)

Eunice Wangari (wife of David Muchoki Munene)

Nancy Muthoni (mother of David Muchoki Munene, had asked her son to move home, said "My heart is torn apart after losing my first born son. I have not slept or eaten since I found out that he is dead")

Billie Mbugi (brother of David Muchoki Munene, said "My mother was in shock on hearing the news... Wangari [David's wife] has gone to the Chiromo Mortuary in Nairobi to identify the body")

Paul Maina (brother of David Muchoki Munene)

Date: October 6, 2016

Location: Mandera

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4694021/>

and <http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/m/article/2000218904/he-was-jovial-with-lots-of-friends-before-al-shabaab-killed-him>



Kyrgyzstan

Kanygul Satybaldiyeva (aged 76, mother of Zhyldyz Azayeva, **died of natural causes** on **October 13, 2016**, burial in **Sary-Talaa village, Ala-Buka district** prevented by a Muslim mob on **October 14, 2016**, taken to **Oruktu village, Ala-Buka district** and buried, body exhumed by a mob under the watch of NSC secret police; reburied in the **Ala-Buk district's** central cemetery as close to the Orthodox section as possible on **October 15, 2016**; exhumed a second time by a mob on **October 17, 2016**, whereabouts unknown)

Zhyldyz Azayeva (daughter of Kanygul Satybaldiyeva, forced to convert to Islam on **October 14, 2016** in an unsuccessful attempt to have her mother buried in **Sary-Talaa village, Ala-Buka district**, threatened with stoning; retrieved her body after the first exhumation in **Oruktu village, Ala-Buka district** by a mob on **October 14, 2016**; said she did not attempt to stop the second exhumation in **Ala-Buk district** after police called her on **October 17, 2016** because "I was afraid for my life and also did not want to go through the same humiliation", later said "I continue in my faith in Jesus Christ but I am afraid for my own life, for my 19 year old daughter and 80 year old father. I would like to move out of the area, but cannot leave my father behind...I pray that they did not throw away the body somewhere. I hope that we can soon find out where my mother's body is")

Pastor Nurgazy Babanazarov (said "We just want peace and that we can peacefully practice our faith. I don't know whether the Imams are provoking people. Whoever is organizing this does it for one purpose: to humiliate in the eyes of society Kyrgyz who became Christian")

Dates: **October 13-17, 2016**

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2226



Myanmar

Archbishop Paul Zingtung Grawng (aged 77, **UPDATE**: spoke on the ongoing conflict in which nearly 1.7 million Christians are at risk "Some of parishes have no villagers left, they are all in the camps for five years. There is no privacy. It creates all sorts of problems. There is a hopelessness. And the children's education is suffering...For a long time, Karuna-Caritas was not allowed into some places, but finally some food was able to be sent. It is

the army who is in control of the situation – the army doesn't want peace, and so the fighting goes on. They have used planes to bomb some areas")

Date reported: October 27, 2016

Source: <http://www.catholicregister.org/home/international/item/23423-retired-archbishop-says-myanmar-s-kachin-people-live-in-fear>



Pakistan

Pastor Michael Hussain (son of Robert Hussain, husband, beaten in an attempt to evict his family from their home, hospitalized)

Robert Hussain (father of Pastor Michael Hussain, beaten, hospitalized)

Date: October 19, 2016

Location: Farooqabad, Sheikhpura district, Punjab province

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4698717/>

Izhan (aged 9, son of Shakeela Kauser, accused of Quran desecration, arrested, tortured, released the next day after no evidence of desecration was found)

Shakeela Kauser (nurse, mother of three including Izhan, arrested after Izhan was accused of Quran desecration, tortured, released the next day after no evidence of desecration was found)

Fr Renard Lawrence OMI (**UPDATE:** said "We are delighted with this outcome. It is significant. In the province of Baluchistan no one so far has been charged and convicted for blasphemy")

Date: October 20-23, 2016

Location: Quetta, Baluchistan province

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61066->

[ASIA PAKISTAN A case of alleged blasphemy solved thanks to political and religious leaders#.WBQFx8KQw5s](#)

and <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2016/10/28/pakistani-mother-and-child-escape-blasphemy-death-sentence/>



Russia

Yevgeny Vernik (committee member, described a police raid on his Kingdom Hall "When I asked to show me a copy of the [search] order, he rudely demanded that I leave the building")

Pavel Puzyrev (committee chair, charged with 'Production or mass distribution of extremist materials', said that security video confirms the police planted 'extremist' literature in the Kingdom Hall and his home)

Date: September 20, 2016

Location: Nezlobnaya village, Stavropol region

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2228



Syria

George Assaf (aged 18, son of Alice Assaf, **killed** by ISIL for hiding Syrian Army soldiers in their home, had been betrayed by a neighbor)

Alice Assaf (claimed that ISIL murdered 250 girls, most of whom were Christian, by putting them in an industrial dough kneader, the youngest was 4 years old, 50 more were beheaded in front of their parents, of the murder of her son said "So, they broke into the house like crazy and arrested my son. They told him they would not kill him if he abandoned his religion. But, he said to them, 'I will never abandon my religion.' So, they started to beat him in the guest room. They took him to backyard and shot him. And they killed him...The army buried him in a mass grave because there were many people dead. Yes, many were killed. I continued to search for my son in hospitals for two months, hoping to find him among the corpses. I went over and over again to look for him and I did not give up hope until they confirmed his death a while ago. My wish was to find his body and bury him myself")

Date: 2014

Location: Adra al-Ummaliya, outside Damascus

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20161025175039.htm>

and <http://www.westernjournalism.com/horrific-isis-atrocity-of-christian-children-as-all-hell-breaks-loose-in-the-shrinking-caliphate/>



Turkmenistan

Sanjarbek Saburov (detained on **July 17, 2016** for refusing military service; **UPDATE:** convicted, sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment, sentence suspended)

Date: August 9, 2016

Artur Yangibayev (detained on **June 16, 2016** for refusing military service, forced to retract his petition for alternative service, released; detained on **August 8, 2016**; **UPDATE:** convicted, sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment, sentence suspended)

Date: August 30, 2016

Location: Seydi, eastern Lebap region

Dayanch Jumayev (sentenced to 1 year's imprisonment in [Ashgabad](#) in [February 2016](#) for refusing military service; **UPDATE**: subjected to home confinement, one-fifth of his wages seized)

Event: Three Christians received 2 year suspended sentences for refusing military service

Merdan Ochanov

Konstantin Sivkov

Ruslan Rahmetulov

Dates: [between February and August 2016](#)

Location: [Ashgabad](#)

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2220



Turkey

Ryan D Keating (aged 39, husband, father of four aged 6 through 12, U.S. citizen, doctoral student in Philosophy of Religion at Ankara University, minister for refugees, denied re-entry to the country, deported, family remained in the country, said "I've always known that it was possible to get kicked out of Turkey for my Christian beliefs, just like it used to happen in Turkey 10 years ago. But there is no indication why, no evidence or justification for this...it was a shock to be taken into custody, and to hear that I was being given a lifetime ban!... If I can't come back into the country my years of work on my dissertation will be wasted")

Date: [October 17, 2016](#)

Location: [Istanbul](#)

Norine Brunson (wife of Andrew Brunson, detained as a 'national security risk' in [Izmir](#) on [October 7, 2016](#), denied access to U.S. diplomats, attorneys, and fellow parishioners, told she would be deported; **UPDATE**: released)

Date: [October 19, 2016](#)

Andrew Brunson (husband of Norine Brunson, detained as a 'national security risk' in [Izmir](#) on [October 7, 2016](#), denied access to U.S. diplomats, attorneys, and fellow parishioners, told he would be deported; **UPDATE**: transferred to another detention center)

Date: [October 20, 2016](#)

Pastor Ihsan Ozbek (Association of Protestant Churches, **UPDATE**: said "I think the state's interest in us has increased, but not from a positive perspective. If you look at the investigations of foreigners in our churches, you can't find anything illegal. They are not openly accused of anything. Until today we haven't heard of a single solid accusation. But people are denied entry to the country; those here are being deported. This is

extremely disturbing...All these arbitrary practices are enabled by the 'state of emergency'"")

Date reported: October 21, 2016

Location: Ankara

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4689797/>



United States - Georgia

Dr Eric Walsh (public health director, part time minister, job offer with the state Department of Public Health withdrawn on [May 16, 2015](#) after the department investigated the contents of his homilies; **UPDATE:** the state of Georgia has in its defense against his legal suit for religious discrimination demanded all of his homilies and ministerial training documents, announced that he will fight the request as discriminatory)

Date reported: October 26, 2016

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/georgia-demands-pastor-surrender-sermons-after-filing-federal-religious-discrimination-claim-171121/>

United States - Kansas

Fr Tom Kearns (aged 82, beaten unconscious outside his church, wallet and automobile stolen, hospitalized, will require surgery to repair his eye socket)

Fr Mark Mertes (reported on the attack against Fr Tom Kearns)

Date: October 21, 2016

Location: Kansas City

Source: <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/82-year-old-priest-attacked-robbed-outside-kansas-city-church>



Uzbekistan

Pastor Andrei Ten (arrested with three others in a taxi on [August 2, 2016](#) for possession of a religious book; **UPDATE:** fined US\$4,363)

Date: August 19, 2016

Location: Tashkent

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2221

Stanislav Kim (home raided again on [May 17, 2016](#), Christian literature seized; questioned at the police station for six hours on [May 18, 2016](#); indicted for illegal possession of religious literature on [June 27, 2016](#), threatened with 3 years' imprisonment if he does not

cooperate with police; **UPDATE:** sentenced to 2 years' corrective labor, home incarceration, and seizure of one-fifth of his income)

Date: August 26, 2016

Location: Urgench

Aleksandr Ko (home raided on April 28, 2016; **UPDATE:** fined US\$893 under administrative law, criminal case opened)

Date: May 23, 2016

Location: Sergeli district, Tashkent

Event: Four Christians were detained in a May 14, 2016 NSS secret police raid, detained, released; **UPDATE: each was fined US\$314**

Bakhtiyor Odinayev (home raided by NSS secret police on May 14, 2016, Bibles seized)

Andrei Serin (**UPDATE**)

Mahmud Hakimjanov

Shamsiddin Begmatov

Date notified: September 7, 2016

Location: Tortuvli village, Denau district, Surkhandarya region

Pastor Dmitri Butov (husband of Svetlana Butova, **UPDATE:** home raided on July 28, 2016, Bibles seized; fined US\$860)

Svetlana Butova (wife of Pastor Dmitri Butov, **UPDATE:** home raided on July 28, 2016, Bibles seized; fined US\$645)

Date: September 8, 2016

Location: Zarafshan, Navoi region

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2219

Today's Martyrs

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

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