

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2016-11-20 through 2016-11-26



### Armenia

Pastor Rafael Grigorian (severely beaten in his church for refusing to become involved in politics and an election, hospitalized, said "If our society, our citizens live according to the Gospel, such thing will not happen. When the hole in a society is not filled with Christian values, it gets filled with the evil")

Date: October 4, 2016

Location: Vanadzor

Source: <http://www.christiantelegraph.com/issue27825.html>



### Cameroon

Bishop Bruno Ateba Edo (**UPDATE:** described a double suicide Boko Haram bombing in a market in which 20 were killed and dozens wounded, said more would have been killed had a church service not been underway)

Date: February 19, 2016

Location: Meme

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1479071579.html>



### China

Jiang Tianyong (human rights attorney, abducted by police)

Date: November 22, 2016

Location: Changsha, Hunan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/11/tortured-attorney-kidnapped.html>



## Colombia

Fernando Padilla (aged 35, **shot dead** in church during Mass)

Archbishop Dario de Jesus Monsalve Mejia (**UPDATE**: presided at the Mass in which Fernando Padilla was killed, later wrote "Taking advantage of the gathering in churches to kill a parishioner and create terror among the faithful, goes beyond any rational consideration...Unfortunately not even the fear of God stops the absolute disregard for human life that has roots in the soul of vast sectors of our Colombian society")

Date: November 22, 2016

Location: Ciudad Cordoba neighborhood, Cali

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61248->

[AMERICA COLOMBIA Murder in a church in Cali in front of the Archbishop who was celebrating Mass#.WD11esKQw5s](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61248-AMERICA_COLOMBIA_Murder_in_a_church_in_Cali_in_front_of_the_Archbishop_who_was_celebrating_Mass#.WD11esKQw5s)



## Congo, Democratic Republic

Godefroid Paluku (deacon, hospital apprentice, abducted on the [Kiwanja-Ishasha road, Rutshuru, North Kivu](#) on [November 18, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: released after the residents of Nyamilima blocked roads and shut down commercial activity in protest of his abduction)

Date: November 19, 2016

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/61227->

[AFRICA DR CONGO Popular mobilization allows the release of a kidnapped deacon#.WDZUM8KQw5s](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61227-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Popular_mobilization_allows_the_release_of_a_kidnapped_deacon#.WDZUM8KQw5s)



## Egypt

Fr Ayoub Youssef (aged 43; **UPDATE**: denounced the attack on an elderly Copt in which he was stripped naked and beaten on a public street after prosecutors cleared his son of impropriety with a Muslim woman)

Date: November 21, 2016

Location: Delga, Minya province

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1778&A=28443>

Magdy Maken (aged 53, father of Malak, fish vendor, arrested by police after a collision between his horse drawn cart and a police cruiser, **beaten to death** while in custody)

Malak (aged 30, son of Magdy Maken, said “My father responded to the policeman’s insults by saying ‘and you too’ and that was it! People told me that then it was as if the police were playing football with my father’s body. They beat him in a barbaric way and dragged his body across the asphalt” added that when he inspected the body he saw “bruises, and one of his testes smashed...It was a horrible scene. I can’t describe”)

Date: November 20, 2016

Location: Cairo

Source: <http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2016/11/19/egyptian-fish-vendor-latest-victim-of-alleged-police-abuses/>



## France

**Event: An armed man attacked a missionary retirement home, killing a 54 year old caregiver, still at large**

Fr Francois du Penhoat SMA (said “For us Christians, faced with an absurd gesture that can't be explained, there is only prayer”)

Fr Olivier Ribadeau Dumas (wrote “Our prayers reach out also to the missionaries attacked in their retirement home in Herault. May God grant his Peace to all”)

Date: November 24, 2016

Location: Montferrier-sur-Lez

Source: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/one-dead-in-attack-on-retired-missionaries-home-in-france-25672/>



## India

Pastor G Suvarna Raju (church demolished, said “Many of our believers are day laborers and can hardly meet their daily needs. Yet, with their meager earnings, they sacrificially provided for the church construction, including offering their own free labor to build the church. Today, all of our years of work and labor were brought down to the dust. We are not sure if we can build it again”)

Mrs Shamala (said “There were around 10 of us inside the church having a prayer meeting. Our fellow believers pulled us out, but then we were manhandled by the male policemen when we refused to get out of the way of the bulldozer”)

Mrs Dayamani (aged 40, right ankle fractured by police during the church demolition)

Sunitha (aged 28, fainted during the church demolition, hospitalized)

Date: November 2, 2016

Location: Telangana

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/11/19/demolition-of-church-in-telangana-leaves-christian-community-with-little-hope/>

### **Event: Church leaders criticized a proposed national education policy**

Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto (**UPDATE:** said "The government is trying to impose an anti-people policy on the whole country. If the draft is finalized it will disturb the secular and peaceful fabric of the country")

Fr Joseph Manipadam (**UPDATE:** said that the proposal would reinforce the caste system by imposing student fees and segregation based on performance, added "This will naturally push poor students into caste-based jobs...The government gradually wants to control and centralize the education sector by inviting investment from private bodies")

Samuel Jaykumar (**UPDATE:** said the proposal would advance the "communalization and commercialization" of education)

Date: November 22, 2016

Source: <http://www.ucanindia.in/news/christians-oppose-indias-draft-education-policy/33496/daily>



### **Iraq**

Fr Samir Yousif Al-Khoury (**UPDATE:** wrote "...For our part, we are living in great expectation, waiting to discover how the battles against the Islamic State [ISIL] will end. The Iraqi troops are advancing and are now close to the city of Mosul. The Nineveh Plain is almost entirely liberated, but unfortunately the churches are largely burned and many houses were destroyed...How so many people were killed, decapitated. How in every neighborhood a house was converted by the militiamen into a prison where the women were sex slaves of the militiamen. Several mass graves have been discovered, and in one of these the bodies of about 200 people were found. Among them were women and children. Only the Lord knows what else the ISIL jihadists did in the city of Mosul...")

Date: November 23, 2016

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pastor-of-Amadiya:-Mosul's-Christian-refugees,-torn-between-emergency-aid-and-the-longing-to-return-home-39222.html>

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE:** said of the aftermath of the defeat of ISIL "Going back I think is certain: people will go back but they need some time. When? This 'when' is not a time, it's a status: when Mosul is liberated, when Mosul is secure, when the government starts moving towards reconstructing and trying to really make these places [on the Nineveh Plain] secure. Of course some people will stay in Duhok and Erbil because they have made their life and started small businesses, but if concrete signs are given people will definitely return. We expect this to happen but I would say hopefully by the summer of 2017 we will be seeing people on the ground working, cleaning and trying to open institutions again")

Date: November 18, 2016

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1479437816.html>



## Nigeria

### **Event: Boko Haram control of rural areas has put 75,000 children at risk of death by hunger**

Bishop William Naga (said “Christians in Borno State are traumatized, displaced and truly they have lost hope. In the Gwoza area there is no single church standing. In the eastern part of Gwoza, Christians were a majority. And even inside Gwoza town, and in its surroundings, there were many Christians. Now there are no Christians left in that area...The Borno governor did his best when the Christians had to flee their places in 2014 and 2015. But when the care of the camps was handed over to other organizations, the discrimination started. They will give food to the displaced, but if you are a Christian they will not give you food. They will even openly tell you that the relief is not for Christians. There is open discrimination”)

...Only the bigger towns are fully under the control of the Nigerian army. The outskirts of these towns and villages in Borno state are not safe. Boko Haram is still in control of big parts of the state. We cannot go back there now. And we fear to live together with our former Muslim neighbors. We don't know if we can trust them”)

John Gwamma (Christian refugee camp chairman, said “We have started informal, purely Christian camps because Christians were being segregated in the formal camps. They had not been given food, nor allowed to go to church. There is a term called ‘arne’, meaning you are pagan, you are not a Muslim. And as long as you are not a Muslim, they don't like you to stay together with them”)

Mary Charles (refugee, said “We had to flee Boko Haram because they didn't allow us to go to our farm. We had no drinking water and we didn't have anything to eat. But I take courage from the Bible. It is written that there is a time when we will suffer, but that the suffering will end by the grace of God. We have to endure. I thank God for this food aid and I thank the people who brought it. We now have food that we can give to our children. We didn't have anything to give them”)

Date reported: November 18, 2016

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/11/4733785/>

### **Event: Muslim herdsmen attack 5 villages, kill at least 45**

Samuel Adamu (said “They laid siege to the village before they started shooting sporadically and throwing explosives at our homes. They were armed with guns, knives, machetes and explosives. They slaughtered, butchered women, children and old people who could not escape”)

Date: November 13, 2016

Location: Kitakum

Rev Zachariah Gado (said "We have come to the unfortunate conclusion that the announced intention of the Kaduna state government - to re-create existing cattle grazing reserves in Southern Kaduna - serves as a major motivation for the renewed ethno-religious violence and cleansing currently being visited on southern Kaduna communities...Since the violent aftermath of the 2011 Presidential election, there have been increasing indications of the existence of a desperate, well-funded, organized and executed campaign not only to make life unbearable for the entire southern Kaduna territory through threats, intimidation and psychological warfare, but also to occupy the land through what can only be described as ethno-religious cleansing by Fulani herdsmen militia")

Date: November 16, 2016

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/11/4735147/>

Pastor Filibus Madu (said of a Boko Haram attack "they came to Makalama suddenly on Saturday night and started shooting. They burned down houses, but God saved the lives of the people...some of the villagers had already harvested their crops and stored them, but the crops were burned by the insurgents. Prayer is keeping us in Chibok, otherwise we would not be existing by now")

Rev Daniel Mbaya (**UPDATE**: said "our District Church Council Secretary covering the area just updated me. It is devastating! Eighty percent of the houses in the village were burnt. Though there was no loss of lives, three persons sustained bullet injuries")

Date: November 19, 2016

Location: Makalama, Chibok local government area

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/11/21/boko-haram-continues-persecution-in-chibok-area/>



## Pakistan

Fr Morris Jalal (**UPDATE**: commented after the government closed all Christian cable television stations and arrested at least six employees "What is the future of church media in Pakistan? It is a very difficult time for us. We were just trying to reach our own community who are generally ignored by other TV channels...As citizens, Christians have the right to practice their religion, but if they block you, it means not all citizens are equal. When someone bans the expression of faith, which is a fundamental right, there is persecution")

Date reported: November 18, 2016

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/pakistan-bans-all-11-christian-tv-stations-arrests-cable-operators-in-crackdown-171582/>

Fr Qaier Feroz (**UPDATE**: criticized the new Prevention of Electronic Crimes Bill "The internet is an important tool to proclaim the word of God and faith formation in the Islamic republic. Many priests use Facebook to share their activities in restive regions. Restricted

internet means restriction on evangelization. The bill is ambiguous and could be misused. We support the ban on immoral sites and content against religious belief but there should be no restriction on information related to democracy or development")

Jasber Ashiq (director of Catholic TV Pakistan, said after the government shut down all Christian cable television stations "Now we stream our programs live on Facebook and recorded programs are posted on YouTube. But we had to look for alternate sites when the government imposed a three-year ban on YouTube [which was lifted in January]")

Bishop Joseph Arshad (head of the Commission for Social Communications, said that internet activity must proceed with caution "We have to be careful not to hurt the other community [i.e. Muslims]")

Date: November 24, 2016

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/internet-restrictions-a-further-blow-to-church-mission-in-pakistan/77686>

Jacqueline Sultan (attorney; **UPDATE:** commended the Anti-Terrorism Court for convicting and sentencing to death five men for the November 4, 2014 lynching in which Shahzad Masih and Shama Bibi were burnt alive on false Quran desecration accusations)

Date: November 25, 2016

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6194>



### **United States - Illinois**

Pastor Calvin Lindstrom (wrote after a pro-life memorial at his school was twice defaced "Christian Liberty is troubled that someone would deface a sign promoting life for the unborn. We pray for those who are responsible and for their repentance and salvation in Jesus Christ. We are certainly not going to stop promoting a message of life")

Chris Iverson (school advisor, said "The students are saddened that people would do this, since all they're trying to do is speak the truth. We want to respond in kindness. We don't want to render evil for evil. This is a school where small children go. This is really an attack on pro-life...on free speech...on Christianity. It's kind of an attack on the whole community")

Date: November 22, 2016

Location: Arlington Heights

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/illinois-pro-life-student-groups-abortion-memorial-vandalized-twice-in-thre>

### **United States - New Mexico**

#### **Event: Arsonists destroy a pro-life pregnancy center**

Dominique Davis (center director, said "Authorities notified us around midnight that there was a break-in and fire in our facility, leading fire Marshalls to call the FBI, who confirmed this was an act of arson...The first fire was started inside the Holy Innocents chapel, which

destroyed the chapel. The second fire was located in the foyer where our literature and signs were displayed. The extent of the damages has still not been confirmed, although the facility has suffered great damage and currently has no power. Due to the damages and the current investigation, Project Defending Life will be shut down until further notice")

Fr Stephen Imbaratto (said "Project Defending Life and the Holy Innocents Chapel always [have] been about mercy and healing...Those who love life will continue to be a light in this world. We must continue to pray and fast that darkness such as this does not prevail. Life always overcomes death because Jesus came into the world to bring light into the darkness and to conquer death through eternal life")

Date: November 23, 2016

Location: Albuquerque

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-arsonist-sets-fire-to-new-mexico-pro-life-pregnancy-center>



## Uzbekistan

Tohar Haydarov (sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in [Gulistan](#) in [March 2010](#) on fabricated drug charges, as of [April 17, 2013](#) has not been allowed to have a Bible; as of [January 5, 2016](#) has been told that he will not be paroled in 2016, visitor hours have been curtailed since the death of his mother, has complained about salt in his drinking water but has been restricted to 12 kilograms of outside supplies per year; **UPDATE**: released on parole, returned home)

Gleb Serin (brother of Andrey Serin; **UPDATE**: said "Tohar [Haydarov] was amnestied for his good behavior, and because he had already served more than half of his prison term")

Andrey Serin (brother of Gleb Serin, said "Tohar [Haydarov] was released quietly, which came as a surprise to him and us, and no one was there to meet him outside the prison when he was released")

Date: November 8, 2016

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2232](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2232)

## Today's Martyrs

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

or write to

**2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455  
Fairfield CT 06825-2400**

Permission is granted to copy, disseminate and forward this document without charge or fee, provided no changes are made and full attribution is made to Today's Martyrs