

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2017-01-15 through 2017-01-21



Azerbaijan

Event: Two women were fined US\$1,166 on [November 17, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for their Bible discussions; **UPDATE:** fines upheld without a hearing

Jaarey Suleymanova

Gulnaz Israfilova

[Date:](#) January 5, 2017

[Location:](#) Gyanja

Ziyad Dadashov (fined US\$865 on [December 2, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for speaking of his faith and offering Bible literature to 4 men; **UPDATE:** fine upheld without a hearing)

[Date:](#) January 5, 2017

[Location:](#) Gyanja

Hamid Shabanov (husband of Hinayat Shabanova; home in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) raided by police during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service, 26 people detained for 5 hours; **UPDATE:** found guilty, fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed)

Mehman Agamammadov (detained at the home of Hamid and Hinayat Shabanov in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service; **UPDATE:** found guilty, fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed)

[Date:](#) December 5, 2016

[Location:](#) Zakatala

[Source:](#) http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2247



China

Li Chunfu (human rights attorney, husband, detained on [August 1, 2015](#); **UPDATE:** released on bail, was afraid to enter his apartment, had been held in a black jail where had been tortured and fed unknown medications, told his wife his heart was damaged and he expected to die soon)

Date: January 12, 2017

Location: Tianjin

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/tortured-human-rights-lawyer-believes.html>

Hwa-Young (aged 40-plus, alias, underground North Korean refugee worker, said “They are still prisoners in a jail called ‘North Korean women’. They don’t know the outside world. Whenever I tell them stories about things happening outside North Korea and north-east China, they cannot grasp what I tell them. They feel like victims all the time. If I give them something, they don’t receive it as a kind gesture. To them, it feels like somehow I’m taking advantage of them...They go to pre-school at about five, but they are still forced to watch public executions. Sometimes friends or neighbors are murdered in front of them. Even when they are older and leave the country, they still experience fear. There is much more freedom here in China, but the women are not safe and continue to live in fear...Most of them have been abused in North Korea and in China. They feel numb, not even feeling the hurt anymore. They grow up in severe poverty, always going hungry. All of them know what it is like to worry about every meal, to eat from the rubbish and beg for food...Sometimes, in our group meetings, I invite them to forgive others. I ask: ‘Do you know any people whom you can’t forgive?’ Everyone knows at least one person”)

Date: January 18, 2017

Location: north-east China

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4869392/>

Event: Six members of a women's Bible study were detained

Pastor Hao Zhiwei (detained)

Hong Ying (detained)

Long Yujie (detained)

Wang Qiufen (detained)

Wang Yourong (detained)

Yu Hongxing (detained)

Pastor Zhang (said "We rented a room in the county for regular gatherings. The religious affairs bureau posted a notice, accused us of illegally [gathering], and threatened to ban our church. We did not stop the gatherings, on the contrary, we kept on meeting. The officers from the government departments came and took away our doormat, but we managed to get it back. After about 30 or 40 minutes, they simply walked in and began to grab our chairs. The brothers tried to stop them, and the officers began to shove us away and beat us up. They took our stuff away in the end”)

Date: January 10, 2017

Location: Hubei province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/01/6-christian-women-face-charges-for.html>



Egypt

Dr Bassam Safouat Zaki (general surgeon, **died from multiple stab wounds** in his home)

Adel Ishak (aged 30, father of one, accountant, acquaintance of 3 victims of the December 11, 2016 church bombing in Cairo, said "Every time I go out, I am afraid of being the next victim. In the end, I am able to overcome this feeling of fear and I go to church")

Date: January 13, 2017

Location: Assyut

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Fear-grows-among-Egypt%E2%80%99s-Christians-after-a-Coptic-doctor-was-stabbed-in-the-throat-39667.html>



Germany

Rev Gottfried Martens (has baptized more than 1,000 Muslim immigrants, criticized the government for rejecting their applications for asylum in “kangaroo court” hearings where “Questions are put such as the names of the two sons in the parable of the Prodigal Son, or what Martin Luther died of, or the occasion of Queen Margarethe of Denmark’s recent visit to Wittenberg”, the officials “are manifestly clueless about the situation of Christians in Iran and Afghanistan, and, worse yet, they are utterly clueless concerning questions relating to the Christian faith, [the applicants] repeatedly undergo being mocked and laughed at when they relate how it is important to them that Jesus Christ died for their sins on the Cross”, added that the government employs “almost exclusively Muslim translators” who deliberately give false translations to harm the converts)

Date: January 16, 2017

Location: Berlin

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4863711/>

Fr Eugen Vogt (church rector, said “The Christian faith also has the right to a respectful attitude” after a fine arts graduate crossed a rope and recorded himself performing push-ups on a church altar as a work of art, the 'artist' was convicted and fined)

Dates: February 2016 and January 17, 2017

Location: Saarbrücken

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100267.htm>



Greece

Metropolitan Ambrose Lenis (aged 79, published a letter to Prime Minister Tsipras in which he accused the openly atheist politician of "the goal of destroying the Greek Orthodox Church” with anti-family policies and of shameful behavior at Divine Liturgies in which

he laughed and showed indifference, asked the Prime Minister “Perhaps it is worth it to recall the example of St. Ambrose of Milan’s not allowing Emperor Theodosius the Great into the church?”)

Date: January 16, 2017

Location: Kalavyrta

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/100281.htm>

and <http://www.romfea.gr/epikairotita-xronika/12592-skliri-epistoli-mitropoliti-kalabruton-pros-ton-prothupourgo-a-tsipra> - with translation



India

Event: Two men accused of the June 20, 2015 drugging and rape of a nun were acquitted

Fr Sebastian Poomattathil (**UPDATE:** quoted the judge as saying that the police investigation was 'totally negligent')

Arun Pannalal (president of Chhattisgarh Christian Forum; **UPDATE:** said “The youths arrested and tried for the rape were not the real culprits. They are absolutely innocents. It was an attempt to cover up the crime. So the judgment is not surprising at all”)

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (**UPDATE:** complained of the "half-hearted attitude of the police”)

Date: January 3, 2017

Location: Chhattisgarh state

Source: <http://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4855667/>



Iraq

Event: Christians continue to return to their homes after the ouster of ISIL

Fr Sharbil Eeso (aged 72, said "We are not allowed to clear up the mess yet. First, the damage needs to be assessed carefully and documented thoroughly, and that can only start when the city is safe. Last week, a jihadist emerged from the tunnel system which ISIL has built underneath the city. The red brigade of the army immediately shot and killed him: the boy was about thirteen years old")

Yacoob Gewargis Yaco (Member of the Kurdistan Parliament; **UPDATE:** said "There is a lot of unrest among Iraqi Christians. The Kurds support Iraq in their battle against ISIL and the recapture of Mosul and the surrounding cities and villages. The inhabitants appreciate that, but many of the Christians suspect the Iraqi government of giving the Kurds land in return. The Kurds dig deep canals and build high fences that, according to them, are meant to stop ISIL. In the meantime, the Kurds and the Iraqi government deny being

promised territory for support and they assure the Christians that no deals were made about the land. But the canals and fences are not built on Kurdish land, but on the Nineveh plain. Many Christians suspect that this border is not temporary, but the start of a permanent border correction")

Manal Matti (said "The jihadists used the church as a shooting range and the mannequins as targets. The mannequins are completely riddled! I do not know when I will ever be able to see the inhabitants of Qaraqosh coming again to my beauty salon")

Louis Petrus (security guard, said "I don't understand how people can harm each other so much")

Date: January 17, 2017

Location: Qaraqosh

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1484631436.html>

Fr Luis Montes (Argentine citizen; **UPDATE**: said "Approximately 60 percent of the homes on the Nineveh Plains were burned down. The terrorists not only seized all of their belongings. They riddled the region with land mines, put bombs in with children's toys. It is true that some people were able to return to their houses. However, they were only able to determine that they still exist. Because it is impossible to live there. The mines first need to be cleared out of the entire region. Only then can the villages be restored, and from the ground up. Everything still needs to be done, the people have nothing left...Despite everything, Iraqis have lost neither their smiles nor their hope")

Date reported: January 18, 2017

Source: <http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1484703686.html>



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**; **UPDATE**: whereabouts of her body still unknown)

Date: January 20, 2017

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2248



Mexico

Rosa Blanca Vazquez de la Rosa (wife of Victor de la Cruz Gonzalez, expelled from her home along with her daughter aged 9 and son aged 3 and six other families by 2,000 "Traditionalist [syncretic] Catholics", said "They put us in the vans and abandoned us right there outside the village, at Las Banderitas crossing, with nothing at all but the clothes we had on when they came", now living in a wine cellar)

Victor de la Cruz Gonzalez (husband of Rosa Blanca Vazquez de la Rosa, primary school teacher, was teaching when his family was expelled, still teaching)

Date: January 26, 2016

Location: Jalisco state

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4865086/>



Nigeria

Bishop Aaron Tanko (**UPDATE**: reported on a Fulani terror attack on a market that killed 3 Christians and injured 5, the attack occurred after security measures including a curfew were imposed "They came in and started shooting. People were going about their normal business. The unfortunate thing is that there were security men in the town, what were they doing? What is the curfew for after the attacks have happened? I don't understand. With the previous curfew imposed on the other parts of Southern Kaduna, villages were still attacked during the curfew!")

Date: January 18, 2017

Location: Samaru-Kataf, Kaduna state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2017/01/18/attack-on-nigerian-market-leaves-three-christians-killed-by-fulani-militants/>

Fr Gabriel Oyaka CSSP (abducted on [September 7, 2015 on the Okene-Auchi road, Kogi state](#); **UPDATE**: still missing)

Cardinal John Olorunfemi Onaiyekan (**UPDATE**: spoke on the abduction of Fr Gabriel Oyaka "This is a tragedy that has overtaken our land and the name keeps on recurring that Fulani herdsmen are behind all these killings, kidnappings and destructions of lives and property in the Country")

Date: January 20, 2017

Location: Abuja

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/61556-AFRICA_NIGERIA_A_year_after_the_kidnapping_Cardinal_Onaiyekan_recalls_Fr_Oyaka_whose_fate_we_know_nothing#.WIMKOFMrKM8



Philippines

Fr Sebastiano D'Ambra PIME (**UPDATE:** said that Islamic persecution against Christians "is becoming alarming")

Date: January 20, 2017

Location: Mindanao

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-in-mindanao-face-dangerous-situation/78147>

Datu (alias, convert, husband, father, **stabbed to death**)

Date: January 2, 2016

Location: Mindanao

Source: <http://www.christianaid.org/News/2017/mir20170112.aspx>



Sri Lanka

Event: Ministers were threatened by local Buddhists

Rev Ranjan Palitha (said "Our car was blocked by the Buddhist monk of Gothamiramaya, who used foul language towards us. He then threatened more serious punishment if we continued to conduct liturgies")

Adrian De Vissar

Date: January 1, 2017

Kamal Wasantha (convert, farmer, church destroyed by Buddhists, said "First, they threatened us verbally. Then they came with wooden sticks, iron bars and knives and destroyed everything. [We] begged the attackers not to damage the place of worship, [but] the Lord's house was pulled down in front of our eyes, as we asked God to forgive them.. We have not cursed them and shall not attack them in retaliation. Judgment belongs only to God...No attack can stop us. We shall continue to love God and pray under a tree")

Lakshan Dias (attorney, said police "know the names and facts about the culprits, who live in the same village. Sri Lanka has failed to uphold freedom of religion. The country's dominant ideology, that of Buddhist Sinhalese, undermines the minorities")

Date: January 5, 2017

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Buddhists-destroy-a-church-in-Sri-Lanka.-Christians-continue-to-pray-under-a-tree-39658.html>



Sudan

Pastor Koat Akot (detained by the NISS secret police on [November 18, 2016](#) for preaching and founding three churches, ordered to report to the police every day for three weeks; **UPDATE:** ordered deported, left the country three days later)

Date: [December 6, 2016](#)

Location: Khartoum

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2017/01/sudan-deports-south-sudanese-pastor-for-evangelistic-activities-sources-say/>



United Kingdom

Aisleen Hubert (aged 23, as of [October 27, 2014](#) has brought a private prosecution against 3 doctors implicated in illegal gender-selection abortions after Crown prosecutors refused to prosecute; Crown prosecutors announced on [March 13, 2015](#) that they would take over and then drop the prosecutions as 'not in the public interest', have refused to release her video recordings of the doctors agreeing to abort females, which is a crime under UK law; **UPDATE:** ordered to pay court costs totaling £36,000 - US\$44,555 by August 18, 2017, must now raise the money to pay the costs, said "These little girls' lives are infinitely valuable, so in a sense the costs mean nothing. This case has shown that doctors are willing to kill innocent girls not just abroad, but right here in the UK, and do it for money. Yet nobody is prosecuting them. The costs awarded against me are unjust, but I hope to raise the funds and continue to stand up for preborn girls. I'm glad that this case has now reached its end but the fight is not over. I will continue to seek justice for the most vulnerable members of our society")

Date: [January 17, 2017](#)

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/abortion/court-rules-aisling-hubert-must-pay-huge-costs>



United States - Florida

Event: Christians and others shot in an airport by a mentally ill man under Islamist influences

Olga Woltering (aged 84. wife of Ralph Woltering , great-grandmother, **shot dead**)

Ralph Woltering (husband of Olga Woltering, great-grandfather, shot, hospitalized)

Shirley Timmons (aged 70, wife of Steve Timmons, grandmother, **shot dead**)

Steve Timmons (aged 70, husband of Shirley Timmons, grandfather, shot, hospitalized in critical condition)

Terry Andres (aged 62, husband, father, grandfather, **shot dead**)

Date: January 6, 2017

Location: Ft. Lauderdale

Source: <http://people.com/crime/ft-lauderdale-airport-shooting-victims/>

United States - District of Columbia

Rev Franklin Graham (son of Rev Billy Graham; **UPDATE**: denounced as a 'notorious Islamophobe' by an Islamist organization which also demanded that his invitation to the presidential inauguration be rescinded)

Date: January 17, 2017

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/muslim-trump-drop-islamophobe-franklin-graham-inauguration-cair-173100/>

Today's Martyrs

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

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