

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2017-06-04 through 2017-06-10



Belarus

Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz (**UPDATE**: said at a news conference regarding the government regulation of the ministry of foreign clergy "I don't know any country which has this. The Law is not in line with the spirit of the age and should be amended", added that an upcoming meeting of European bishops will require that each get government approval to say Mass)

Date: April 11, 2017

Location: Minsk

Fr Robert Maciejewski (Polish citizen, left the country after authorities refused to extend his religious activities permit)

Date: April 25, 2017

Location: Mstislav, Mogilev region

Fr Slawomir Laskowski (Polish citizen, voluntarily left the country after his application for citizenship was rejected)

Date: May 28, 2017

Location: Gomel

Fr Vyacheslav Barok (said "The Constitution guarantees us our religious rights but the state constantly interferes in the Church's affairs. The [government] Plenipotentiary decides who will serve and where...Unless the Plenipotentiary's Office is reformed the situation will continue. You won't find such an institution anywhere in the world, even in Russia")

Date: May 29, 2017

Location: Vitebsk

Heorhi Dmitruk (church sponsored bicycle ride cancelled by the government, the event had been organized to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the translation of the Bible into Belarusian)

Date: May 5, 2017

Location: Brest

Vitaly Antonchikov (**UPDATE**: church ordered closed by court bailiffs and police, parishioners refused to leave, police left)

Date: April 26, 2017

Location: Minsk

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2284



Cameroon

Bishop Jean-Marie Benoit Bala (aged 58, disappeared on **May 31, 2017**, suicide note found in his automobile; **body found in the Sanaga River** near **Monatele** on **June 2, 2017**; **UPDATE**: autopsy showed signs of torture and that death occurred before the body was placed in the river)

Date: June 6, 2017

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/06/07/signs-of-torture-found-on-body-of-bishop-who-allegedly-committed-suicide/>



China

Event: Church demolished after parishioners refused to pay an illegal road tax, 40 Christians arrested, 32 released

Pastor Zhang Di (arrested on false charges of attacking a village representative and a police station during questioning)

Date: May 2, 2017

Location: Shangqiu, Henan

Lu Yuexia (church vice director, arrested)

Date: May 5, 2017

Location: Shangqiu, Henan

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/06/henan-officials-destroy-under.html>

Jiang Tianyong (human rights attorney, abducted by police on **November 22, 2016**; **UPDATE**: charged with 'subversion of state power')

Date: May 31, 2017

Location: Changsha, Hunan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/06/christian-human-rights-lawyer-pinned.html>



Greece

Event: Bishops defended doctors who have refused to participate in abortions

Metropolitan Seraphim Mentzenopoulos (**UPDATE**)

Date: June 7, 2017

Location: Piraeus

Metropolitan Eusebios Pistoris

Date: June 7, 2017

Location: Samos

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/104140.htm>



India

Archbishop Thomas D'Souza (**UPDATE**: condemned the burglary and vandalism of a church in which the tabernacle was profaned, the church was only yards away from the location of the [March 13, 2015](#) gang rape of a 72-year old nun)

Date: June 6, 2017

Location: Ranagath, West Bengal

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Archbishop-of-Calcutta:-saddened-by-vandalism-of-St.-Luke's-Church-40951.html>



Iran

Anousheh Reza-bakhsh aka Veronika (convert, mother of Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani, arrested on [February 20, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: whereabouts still unknown)

Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani aka Augustine (convert, son of Anousheh Reza-bakhsh, senior psychology university student, arrested on [February 20, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: whereabouts still unknown)

Date: June 2, 2017

Location: Urmia, Western Azerbaijan province

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3530>

Fr Hormoz Aslani Babroudi (condemned the ISIL terror attack on the Iranian parliament which killed 17: "I am saddened by such inhumane acts, mostly accomplished by people who present themselves faithful to God and Islam, and therefore spread a false image of faith and religion")

Date: June 7, 2017

Location: Tehran

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/62425-ASIA_IRAN_Iranian_priest_following_the_massacres_in_Tehran_terrorists_will_not_succeed_in_frightening_our_people#.WTIZYevyuM8



Kazakhstan

Valery Zhigalov (arrested for handing out religious literature on [January 28, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: indicted)

Date: [April 5, 2017](#)

Location: [Stepnogorsk, Akmola region](#)

Ruslan Sadvakasov (arrested for handing out religious literature on [January 28, 2017](#); indicted on [April 5, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: case dismissed due to late filing of the indictment)

Date: [May 17, 2017](#)

Location: [Stepnogorsk, Akmola region](#)

Roman Pugachev (arrested on [January 18, 2017](#) for handing out religious literature in [Novotroitse village](#); **UPDATE**: fined US\$362, banned from religious activity for 3 months)

Date: [March 2, 2017](#)

Location: [Ualikhhanov, North Kazakhstan region](#)

Serkali Kumargaliyev (sentenced to 3 days' imprisonment on [January 31, 2017](#); fined by police on [February 5, 2017](#) for attending an unregistered worship service; **UPDATE**: fined US\$328 for distributing religious literature, was unaware of the charges or court hearing)

Date: [February 6, 2017](#)

Location: [Oral, West Kazakhstan region](#)

Karlygash Zholomanova (indicted on [February 17, 2017](#) for distributing religious literature; fined US\$728 on [February 27, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Date: [March 28, 2017](#)

Location: [Satpayev, Karaganda region](#)

Fariza Iskakova (indicted on [February 17, 2017](#) for distributing religious literature; fined US\$669 on [March 9, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Date: [April 6, 2017](#)

Location: [Satpayev, Karaganda region](#)

Natalya Konopleva (cited for selling a religious newspaper from her shop on [October 1, 2016](#); fined US\$316 on [November 2, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Date: [December 5, 2016](#)

Location: [Karaganda](#)

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281



Kyrgyzstan

Bishop Daniil Kuznetsov (invited to a hearing to discuss proposed legislation which would impose complete censorship of all religious literature, increase the required number of adult members for legal registration of a church to 500, and require state approval for travel abroad for religious education, issued no statement in response, another critic said that past criticism of such legislation was used to make the law more repressive)

Date: May 29, 2017

Location: Bishkek

Galina Kolodzinskaia (**UPDATE:** said "If there is no unified voice from civil society and religious communities, the amendments might move through parliament quickly. Sadly, religious communities are fragmented and are unlikely to work together on this. But it's quite possible they will be postponed until after the presidential elections now scheduled for 15 October [2017]. If that is the case, all will depend on what attitude the new president will take, as religious policy is in the hands of the president")

Date: May 31, 2017

Location: Bishkek

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2283



Pakistan

Irfan Masih (aged 30, sanitation worker, **suffocated while in a sewer, died at the hospital after doctors refused to treat him because of the sewage on his body**)

Nasir Saeed (**UPDATE:** said "A life could have been saved if medical aid had been given in time. This is not the first time that any sewer cleaner has died doing his duty. The government should provide safety kits to their workers but since these menial jobs are reserved for the Christians nobody cares about them")

Michelle Chaudhry (**UPDATE:** said "A society becomes extremely dangerous when it becomes inhumane. An innocent life has been lost because someone refused to carry out his duty, at a deontological and public service level. The doctor violated Hippocrates' oath that obliges him to treat a patient in any circumstance, beyond religion and social class")

Date: June 2, 2017

Location: Umerkot

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1336977>

and http://www.fides.org/en/news/62404-ASIA_PAKISTAN_Doctors_deny_treatment_a_Christian_worker_dies#.WTVgAevyuM8

Bishop Emeritus Andrew Francis (aged 70, survived a 1996 assassination attempt in Lahore by two men; condemned the July 4, 2012 lynching of a mentally ill young Muslim accused of Quran desecration; **UPDATE: died of natural causes**)

Date: June 6, 2017

Location: Lahore

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Msgr.-Andrew-Francis,-%E2%80%98spiritual-healer%E2%80%99-has-died-40957.html>

and <http://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistan-mourns-as-it-loses-a-good-shepherd/79446>

Tabish Shamoun (aged 24, driver for attorney Jacqueline Sultan [who is now in hiding due to death threats], beaten and threatened at gunpoint by two men who demanded to know the attorney's hiding place)

Date: June 6, 2017

Location: on the road from Hyderabad to Karachi

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6491>

Dr Julius Salik (former member of parliament; **UPDATE: protested the treatment of Muslims in Kashmir and Myanmar [aka Burma]**)

Date: June 8, 2017

Location: Islamabad

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6492>



Russia

Dennis Christensen (Danish citizen, arrested for 'continuing the activities of a banned extremist organization', ordered held for 2 months pending trial)

Date: May 25, 2017

Location: Oryol

Avel Lukin (aged 18, conscientious objector, denied permission to perform alternative civilian service by a military conscription office, has filed an appeal)

Date: May 12, 2017

Location: Shumerlya, Chuvash Republic

Sh Gataullin (fined for holding a religious gathering)

Date: May 15, 2017

Location: Uchaly

Marat Sharakhov (fined US\$18 for holding a religious gathering)

Date: April 19, 2017

Location: Kyzyl, Tyva Republic

Stanislav Glotov (fined US\$17 for giving a television interview on the pending ban of his church)

Date: May 4, 2017

Location: Ulan_Ude, Buryatil Republic

Z Dzhafarov (fined US\$88 for sharing his religious views with his neighbors)

Date: April 19, 2017

Location: Muravlenko, Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Region

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2282



Thailand

Maherwar Ishaq (Pakistani asylum applicant, subjected to an attempted rape by a Pakistani embassy official when she applied for a passport renewal)

Date: December 26, 2016

Location: Bangkok

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/christian-charity-says-pakistan-embassy-worker-sexually-harassed-tried-to-drug-asylum-seeker-186214/>



Ukraine

Archpriest Vasily Kobelsky (said “On that day activists and priests of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic [aka Uniate] Church organized a traditional procession to the grave of the streltsy [Russian military corps in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries] of Sech, not far from our church. A representative of the Ukrainian Security Service approached me and asked me to allow them to come into the church to pray. We gave them permission. But the Uniate priests—and there were thirteen of them—immediately proceeded to the sanctuary to serve their liturgy. We did not expect that...”)

Date: June 4, 2017

Location: Kolomiya, Transkarpatya region

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/104086.htm>



United Kingdom

Kirsty Adams (candidate for Parliament, attacked in print by a major newspaper for having prayed for a deaf man who was cured)

Date: May 4, 2017

Location: London

Prime Minister Theresa May (attacked in print by a major newspaper for visiting a church which has held traditional Christian beliefs)

Date: May 30, 2017

Location: London

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Christianophobia-awards-BuzzFeed-Daily-Mirror-Independent-and-Spectator-out-Christian-candidates-as-unfit-to-hold-office-because-they-are-Christians>

Ignacio Echeverria (aged 39, Spanish citizen, brother of Isabel and Joaquin, bank auditor, **stabbed to death** by an Islamic terrorist when he attempted to defend a female victim with his skateboard)

Christine Archibald (aged 30, Canadian citizen, social worker, daughter of Greg and Barbara Archibald, sister of Kathryn Fairbank and Caroline Stuart, fiancée of Tyler Ferguson, **killed** by Islamic terrorists diving an automobile)

Date: May 4, 2017

Location: London

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/06/08/catholic-who-died-saving-a-womans-life-at-london-bridge-hailed-as-a-hero/>



United States - District of Columbia

Lance Corporal Monifa Sterling USMC (convicted at court martial for refusing an order to remove a displayed Bible verse from her workstation at [Camp Lejune, North Carolina](#) despite the existence of personal messages on other workstations, **UPDATE**: the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear her appeal)

Date: June 5, 2017

Source: <http://www.charismanews.com/politics/issues/65324-scotus-members-of-the-military-have-no-religious-liberties>

Russell Vought (nominee for Deputy Director of the Office of Management and Budget, told by U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders during his confirmation hearing that he is 'really not someone who this country is supposed to be about' due to his traditional views on Christian salvation)

Date: June 7, 2017

Source: <http://www.nationalreview.com/corner/448393/watch-bernie-sanders-unconstitutionally-impose-religious-test-public-office>

and <http://www.christianpost.com/news/bernie-sanders-trump-appointee-christian-vought-187025/>

United States - Massachusetts

Pastor Scott Lively (sued by a homosexual group for allegedly inciting ‘a dozen minor incidents’ of persecution against homosexuals in Uganda over the past decade, he denied the charges, a Federal judge ruled on [August 28, 2013](#) that the trial may proceed; petition for dismissal denied on [December 5, 2014](#) by a three judge panel of the Federal First Circuit Court in [Boston](#); **UPDATE**: suit dismissed, issued a statement which noted the judge’s 4 year delay after an [April 17, 2013](#) U.S. Supreme Court ruling eliminated the statutory basis for the suit)

Date: June 6, 2017

Location: Springfield

Source: <https://www.lc.org/newsroom/details/060617-victory-for-american-pastor-falsely-accused-of-crimes-against-humanity>

Today’s Martyrs

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

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