

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2019-04-28 through 2019-05-04



### Bangladesh

Teresa Sheuly Rozario (aged 19, student, daughter of Pakrashus Rozario, abducted by possible human traffickers)

Pakrashus Rozario (father of Teresa Sheuly Rozario, said "Our daughter was going to church. She was a brilliant student and dreamed of a good job. She disappeared, was kidnapped and we are very worried. My wife is getting sick, she is not eating, she is crying and she is praying to Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary")

Date: March 22, 2019

Location: Bonpara, Natore district

Ranjita Das (rescued from human traffickers along with her 3 year old daughter)

Date: March 27, 2019

Location: Bonpara, Natore district

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/65833->

[ASIA BANGLADESH Catholic women kidnapped by human traffickers alarm of the Church](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65833-ASIA_BANGLADESH_Catholic_women_kidnapped_by_human_traffickers_alarm_of_the_Church)

Fr Samson Marandy (aged 64, brother of Ovidio Marand, who was killed on January 11, 2013 after he organized a demonstration in support of Christians who lost their homes in post-election violence; **UPDATE**: filed a police report accusing 13 people including a former Member of Parliament of involvement in his brother's murder, said "I have not received direct threats, but my friends and local people warned me that I am being followed and I might be killed as I have filed a murder case to get justice for my brother, who was brutally killed", requested police protection)

Date: April 28, 2019

Location: Dinajpur district

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/bangladeshi-priest-fears-for-his-life-over-brothers-murder-case/85080>



### Burkina Faso

**Event: Jihadists attacked a church after services, killing six after they all refused to convert to Islam**

Pastor Pierre Ouedraogo (aged 80, husband, father of Wend-Kuni and six others, brother in law of Deacon Zoeyande Sawadogo, **shot dead**)

Wend-Kuni (son of Pastor Pierre Ouedraogo, nephew of Deacon Zoeyande Sawadogo, brother of six others, **shot dead**)

Deacon Zoeyande Sawadogo (brother in law of Pastor Pierre Ouedraogo, uncle of Wend-Kuni, **shot dead**)

Sayouba Sawadogo (**shot dead**)

Arouna Sawadogo (**shot dead**)

Elie Boena (primary school teacher, **shot dead**)

Adama Sawadogo (shot, seriously injured, hospitalized)

Henri Ye (Federation of Evangelical Churches and Missions [FEME] president, later said “It’s not only the church of Sirgadji that has been attacked, all the values of tolerance, forgiveness and love that have always led our country have been hurt. The freedom of worship consecrated by our fundamental law [the Constitution] has been flouted”)

Date: April 28, 2019

Location: Sirgadji village, Soum province

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/05/burkina-faso-church-leader-killed-by-islamists-id-rather-die-than-leave-my-community/>



**China**

Pastor Zhang Xiaofeng (church closed)

Date: March 30, 2019

Location: Haidian district, Beijing

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/03/authorities-continue-suppression-of.html>

Su Bingsen (home raided by police on December 20, 2018, detained along with fellow worshippers; **UPDATE**: released)

Date: April 18, 2019

Location: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong; detained on December 10, 2018; **UPDATE**: still detained)

Jiang Rong (wife of Pastor Wang Yi; detained on December 10, 2018; **UPDATE**: still detained)

Date: April 22, 2019

Location: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/04/early-rain-covenant-church-elder.html>

Shen Bing (husband of Li Xiaofeng, detained after writing under police pressure his opinion of Pastor Wang Yi's sermons)

Date: March 22, 2019

Location: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Zhang Jianqing (spouse of Yu Zhixue, detained on December 10, 2018; **UPDATE**: threatened with arrest)

Yu Zhixue (spouse of Zhang Jianqing, threatened with arrest)

Date: April 1, 2019

Location: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/04/authorities-continue-crackdown-on-early.html>

Pastor Xu (said the government had begun to post signs in churches forbidding children to enter: “In doing this, the government wants to control the development of churches. By now, the government has already demolished several thousand crosses. Now, they are not satisfied with small gains and are more and more savage. They have stipulated that [Christian] home gatherings should not exceed five people”)

Date reported: April 19, 2019

Location: Henan province

Li (said that spying for the government is expanding across China: “Before, the Communist Party members fought against each other, and afterward, they also had informants to lurk online and report on netizens. A while ago, university teachers reported on their students, and now, they have been using these informant methods to also monitor churches”)

Date reported: April 19, 2019

Location: Guangdong province

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/04/chinese-government-hires-church-spies.html>

Tang Jingling (civil rights attorney, husband of Wang Yanfang, law license revoked in 2006; detained in 2012, held for 5 days; arrested in 2014; sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on January 29, 2016; family concerned for his health as of June 26, 2017, has had chest pains due to sleep deprivation; **UPDATE**: released, said “My imprisonment has confirmed my beliefs that a democratic society that values human rights is the only way to prevent tragedies, such as what happened to me, from happening again to other people”)

Date: April 29, 2019

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/04/prominent-human-rights-lawyer-released.html>

Ma Du (reported on an effort of the official Catholic church to 'appraise' clergy: “Only those who can pass the appraisal are suitable to be religious personnel, otherwise their church affairs will be prohibited. It equals political scanning. To verify religious personnel should be the right and power of a bishop. The measure is like the government management model but not the church system”)

Date: April 30, 2019

Location: Henan province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-catholics-worried-about-political-scanning/85059>



## Egypt

**Event UPDATE: A church was closed after an attack by a mob instigated by construction for expansion, 200 religious school children were traumatized by the attack**

Fr Basil (beaten over the head with a club by a 17 year old as police led him away to an armored vehicle)

Fr Pachomius (injured)

Asaad Bakhit Rizk Allah (injured)

Date: April 12, 2019

Location: Khalaf Allah Jaber village, Sohag province

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/church-closed-in-egypt-after-muslim-mob-frightens-children-in-sunday-school/>



## India

Fr Felix Anthony (**UPDATE:** described the arson destruction of a parochial secondary school)

Fr Jacob Chapao (said "Such barbaric vandalism against a school is against humanity")

Date: April 26, 2019

Location: Manipur state

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** described how AHP [Antarrashtriya Hindu Parishad] Hindu radicals broke windows at a parochial elementary school after 14 teachers were falsely accused of trying to convert students)

Date: April 23, 2019

Location: Palghar district, Maharashtra state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Persecution-against-Christian-schools-in-India-continues-46858.html>

**Event: Christian leaders responded to the call by Hindu radical politician Sadhvi Deva Thakur that Christians and Muslims be forcibly sterilized**

Fr Felix Anthony (**UPDATE:** said "[there is a] new generation of motormouth politicians who enjoy a certain amount of patronage from the present-day government")

Dr John Dayal (**UPDATE:** said the Hindu radical Sangh Parivar organizations "raised a racket when the 2016 census showed the Hindu population...under the 80 per cent

mark...Xenophobia of this nature cannot but end in tragedy if the people of this country do not challenge...[to] the soldiers of the Sangh Parivar, the RSS [paramilitary organization], words such as sterilization of Muslims and Christians, their disenfranchisement or diluting their presence in the North East and Kashmir through changes in residency rules, are each a metaphor for annihilation, wiping out, erasing from the landscape”)

Date: April 29, 2019

Source: <http://asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-radical-leader-calls-for-the-forced-sterilisation-of-Christians-and-Muslims-46881.html>

Archbishop Peter Machado (**UPDATE:** demanded an apology from a Hindu politician who said that his BJP party did not advance Christian candidates because “The Christians, like the Muslims, were not given party tickets because Christians are not loyal to the country and not honest too”)

Date: April 24, 2019

Location: Bangalore

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-archbishop-seeks-politicians-apology-for-insulting-christians/85055>



## Laos

Agoon (arrested for illegal lumbering, his non-Christian accomplices were not arrested, police beat him and demanded he renounce his faith)

Date reported: April 26, 2019

Location: Savannakhet province

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Laotian-police-accused-of-arresting-and-beating-woodcutter-because-he-is-Christian-46853.html>



## Nepal

Pastor Dhurba Kumar Pariyar (aged 40, beaten after delivering toys and stationery to Dalit [untouchable] children, said “One of them caught hold of me from my chest and pulled me down from my motorbike and dragged me towards the jungle. They said I am preaching foreign religion, converting people and ‘feeding’ on dollars in return. They asked me to hand over all the [supposed U.S.] dollars I am carrying to them, and they will spare my life. I asked them who were they to question my work and demand money from me, to which they said they were ‘underground Maoists’...They fled while warning me, ‘If you continue to preach the Jesus religion, we will not spare you – we will come and kill you, wherever you may go”)

Date: March 24, 2019

Location: Sarlahi district

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/after-attack-pastor-in-nepal-filled-with-fear-and-faith/>

**Event: Four Christians who were attending a church conference were arrested on false charges of conversion by allurement**

Pastor Dilli Ram Poudel (aged 49, Christian Society general secretary, arrested)

Gaurav Shrivastava (aged 34, Indian citizen, arrested, deported)

Kunsang Tamang (arrested)

Oleana Cinquanta (aged 49, U.S. citizen, arrested, deported, texted “The allegations are completely false”)

Pratik Bista (said “How is it a crime for a Christian to carry his Bible, and how is it a crime for an American to carry dollars when visiting a foreign country? If a Hindu carrying his holy scriptures is not a crime, then how does it apply on Christians? How could they come to the hotel and detain the Christians without a First Information Report? I am really disappointed, this is pure harassment. They are portraying us [Christians] as ‘bad’”)

Pastor Sagar Baizu (Federation of National Christians in Nepal [FNCN] spokesperson; **UPDATE:** said “When detained, these Christians were not preaching or roaming on the streets or even distributing anything. They were detained from their hotel rooms in early morning hours. It is shocking that they are kept in the police custody since 7:30 in the morning and not being released”)

Date: April 23, 2019

Location: Ghorari

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/four-christians-including-u-s-woman-arrested-from-hotel-in-nepal/>



**Nigeria**

Peace Joseph (aged 6, **killed**)

Date: March 8, 2019

Location: Miango

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/nigeria-herdsmen-attacks-boko-haram-and-the-cross/>

**Event: An off duty Muslim security officer rammed his vehicle into an Easter procession, killing eight Boys and Girls Brigade [Scout] members, up to 31 Christians were hospitalized, the two Muslims in the vehicle were killed**

Ruth Samson Samanja (aged 13, Girl Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Keziah Amos Kwatam (aged 13, Girl Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Polina Yusuf Samanja (aged 11, Girl Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Sunday Samuel Gurnet (aged 19, Boy Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Irimiya Amos Ibrahim (aged 14, Boy Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Joseph Daniel (aged 21, Boy Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Joseph Danjuma Paul Gavan (aged 15, Boy Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Jesse Markus Baka (aged 15, Boy Brigade [Scout] member, **killed**)

Isaac Kwadang (Boys Brigade chairman, said “This incident, no doubt, is motivated by terrorist acts, as the driver deliberately crashed into the procession. The driver of the vehicle is a Muslim and an official of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps [NSCDC], while his passenger is a Muslim police officer”)

Most Reverend Nicholas Oko (said “It is unfortunate that such a thing should happen on Easter Day. It also shows that our country has not arrived [at the point] that people tolerate others. People are marching, showing joy, showing happiness, and somebody decides to crush them and kill so many for no reason”)

Date: April 21, 2019

Location: Gombe, Gombe state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/funeral-held-for-eight-christians-killed-in-easter-procession-in-nigeria/>

Archbishop Matthew Manoso Ndagoso (**UPDATE**: said "...Since last October there have been serious attacks in villages especially in my archdiocese of Kaduna. Hundreds and hundreds of villagers have been killed...Unfortunately, local leaders among the Christians and followers of the traditional religions are the ones who are arrested and imprisoned while nothing has been done about those who have been killing...the first duty of every government anywhere in the world is to protect and safeguard the lives and property of their citizenry. But I can tell you right now in our country that is not the case, especially in the northwest. Citizens are being killed like chickens...the rainy season has come and villagers who provide food for us are afraid to go to their farms because they will be kidnapped, because they will be killed. So I do actually fear that if nothing happens between now and the next two months when people are supposed to be planting and they don't go to their farm, only God knows what will happen to us next year in terms of food security...")

Date: April 26, 2019

Location: Kaduna, Plateau state

Source: [https://www.lifesitenews.com/mobile/news/christian-persecution-in-nigeria?\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://www.lifesitenews.com/mobile/news/christian-persecution-in-nigeria?_twitter_impression=true)



Peru

Br Paul McAuley FSC (aged 72, British citizen, school director, **died under unusual circumstances**, investigation opened by prosecutors)

Date: April 2, 2019

Location: Belen district, Iquitos, Maynas province, Loreto region

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/65829->

[AMERICA PERU Bishops ask to investigate the death of a British Lasallian religious](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65829-AMERICA_PERU_Bishops_ask_to_investigate_the_death_of_a_British_Lasallian_religious)



## Philippines

Bernardino Patigas Sr (aged 72, human rights activist, **shot dead**)

Bishop Geraldo Alminaza (denounced the assassination of Bernardino Patigas Sr, said "His faith moved him to serve his poor brothers and sisters and he was admired by locals because of his humility and simplicity...In sadness, we all are crying out: End the Killings! These barbaric and calculated assassinations must end! We should not tolerate this kind of crime")

Date: April 22, 2019

Location: Negros Oriental province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/filipino-bishop-condemns-killing-of-another-rights-activist/85050>



## Sri Lanka

**Event UPDATE: Nine explosive devices targeted three churches and three hotels, among other locations, killing 253 and wounding at least 500**

Sneha Savindi (aged 12, **killed**)

Date: April 21, 2019

Location: Katuwapitiya village, Negombo

Source: [slide show](#)

Thirukkumaran Shalom Malkiya (aged 11, son of Pastor Thirukkumaran, **killed**)

Verlini Ranjith Suranga (wife, mother, sister of Verl, Sunday school teacher and church bookstore operator, **killed**, daughter blinded)

Rasalingam Sasikumar (aged 40, husband of Chandrika, father of Sasikumar Merijan, **killed**)

Sasikumar Merijan (aged 13, son of Chandrika and Rasalingam Sasikumar, **killed**)

Chandrika (widow of Rasalingam Sasikumar, mother of Sasikumar Merijan, later said "When I heard the blast I was in shock. I knew my husband had been helping Pastor Ramesh remove a suspicious man from the church and feared the worst. My young son Sasikumar always stayed close to his father and when I realized they both were dead my whole world collapsed. Rasalingam was my provider and best friend and Sasikumar my only son and now my daughter and I will struggle to survive on our own. The men who planned this attack are void of any morals or love the hate that manifests within them is sheer evil, without thought they have taken their own lives to kill innocent people. They have left me a widow and have done the same to many others but we serve a might God who will protect us. I thank God that one day he will unite me with my son and husband and for the care he is now giving to them")

Anayah Peter Suthagar (aged 9, recent convert, son of Sutharshan, **killed**)

Sutharshan (recent convert, father of Anayah Peter Suthagar, later said "The killing of my young son has left me in great anguish. So many of us lost so much this Easter for nothing more than attending church to worship God. At first I felt great anger at the situation and questioned God, but I realize now this is the doing of evil men and that whatever has happened because my son believed he will be heaven now and before our merciful God. I long for the day I can be reunited with Anayah but understand that God still has a plan for my life on this earth. There will not be a day I do not remember my son, however but I will not let the pain of his loss destroy the purpose God has for my wife and I")

Iruthayaraja Santhosh (aged 10, son of T Iruthayaraj and I Manjula, hospitalized with severe burns on his face, neck, hands and arms)

T Iruthayaraj (husband of I Manjula, father of Iruthayaraja Santhosh)

I Manjula (wife of T Iruthayaraj, mother of Iruthayaraja Santhosh)

Date: April 21, 2019

Location: Batticaloa

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/bpca-reaches-victims-of-zion-church-batticaloa>

Pastor Roshan Mahesen (said on Facebook video "As the senior pastor of Zion Church Batticaloa, the whole congregation and every family affected, we say to the suicide bomber, and also to the group that sent the suicide bomber, that we love you and we forgive you, no matter what you have done to us, we love you, because we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ")

Date: April 26, 2019

Location: Batticaloa

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/sri-lankan-churches-kept-closed-week-after-bombings-pastor-forgives-terrorists>



**Uganda**

Hassan Podo (aged 28, convert for three weeks, former imam who had attacked a church, seen entering a church for prayer, later confronted by his family, said “Without my completing answering them, my brothers immediately began surrounding me, with sticks. It was difficult to escape. They began shouting, beating and insulting me as an ‘infidel’ and enemy of the Islamic religion”, fled and later found unconscious, hospitalized for two days, wife and children fled to a Christian neighbor)

Date: March 16, 2019

Location: Kerekerene village, Katira sub-county, Budaka district

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/imam-in-eastern-uganda-faces-wrath-of-muslims-after-putting-faith-in-christ/>



## Ukraine

Archpriest Sergei Korenyuk (parishioners resisted a mob attempt to take over his church)

Date: April 20, 2019

Location: Stari Koshary village

Source: <http://orthochristian.com/120843.html>



## United Kingdom

Andrea Minichiello Williams (Chief Executive of Christian Concerns; **UPDATE:** wrote “We’re awaiting the judgment in the case of Felix Ngole. I’m not holding my breath for justice. We’ve ordered a transcript of what went on 12 and 13 March 2019, in Court 69 of the Court of Appeal in front of Lord Justice Irwin, Lord Justice Haddon-Cave and Sir Jack Beatson, because the statements in court were incredibly shocking and disturbing...Freedom of speech and, in particular, freedom to speak for Christ is rapidly ending. Can we not see this? Freedom of speech is hanging by a thread, and this is by a combination of governmental policy and because of our vacillating and weak courts. Better not say what you think at school, university, or work. Someone will not like it. Christian – you know what will happen – anonymous complaint, internal ‘investigation’, Christian out...Felix’s case is important because it illuminates the open hostility to the teaching of Christ by our elites and whether we truly live in a ‘free’ society where people can have different views on social issues...Better to eradicate Felix from the system: better to eradicate Christian beliefs from our society than live in the knowledge that someone has different values from you...The threat to our free speech is all the more sinister because, in Britain, we are used to trusting the system. The arguments made all sound so reasonable: why should people’s behavior be disapproved of? Why can’t everyone just be kind to everyone?...The true meaning of the hostile acts against him, at every stage, is simple: the elites don’t like the Christian message. Other faiths, it would

seem, are treated differently, often deferentially, no matter how violent or threatening they are – even to homosexuals...Counsel for the University of Sheffield said that Christian views on sexual morality could never be expressed in a public forum, at a meeting, in a newspaper article or on any social media. She said that the social work profession would need to consider whether such speech may be permissible in a church or Bible study group, but that was a decision for a later date – the implication being that such views will not be permissible even within the walls of a church...Felix's case was also about whether we live in a free society. It shows us to be a society where you are watched: one wrong word on homosexuality or failing to express sufficient zeal for the political ideology of the LGBTIQI movement can end your career. This means we are not free...Christians are monitored, reported, and their livelihoods destroyed in a kangaroo court of academics. We can see the direction that our society is heading in, and Christians and individuals who believe in freedom are clearly facing a new Dark Age")

Date: April 12, 2019

Source: <https://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/the-new-terror-we-are-watching-you-one-wrong-word-and-we-will-remove-you-from-your-job>

Paul Kelley (reported via Twitter "Disgusting vandalism of St Simon's Church, Partick. The shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa was dear to the Polish population that worships there and has been there since the 1940s")

Date: April 29, 2019

Location: Partick, Glasgow, Scotland

Source: <https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/05/01/glasgow-parish-shamefully-vandalized/>



## Venezuela

Fr Jario Clavijo (attempted to stop a National Guard attack on his church as Mass ended)

Bishop Mario del Valle Moronta Rodriguez (**UPDATE:** reported “[Mass was ending] when two [members of] the GNB [the National Guard] entered the church on a motorcycle. The pastor came down from the rectory in order to stop them, in the attempt to dialogue, a horde of 40 GNB arrived trying to enter. The pastor, Fr Jairo Clavijo, stopped them, and after them a general arrived by the last name of Ochoa who started arguing with the pastor, in hardly respectful terms. Not content with the outrage, the GNB threw tear gas canisters inside the church. They were unable to evacuate the sacred precinct where there were a good number of faithful including quite a few elderly people. A nun fainted...This incident is extremely serious and is an attack on the Catholic Church. I blame the aforementioned General Ochoa as well as the military authorities in the region for this despicable incident which by itself speaks of the intentionality of the attackers who don't have the least respect for human dignity and don't even show any fear of God”)

Date: May 1, 2019

Location: Sucre barrio, San Cristobal

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/venezuelan-national-guard-attacks-church-during-mass-89610>

## **Today's Martyrs**

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

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