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FIDES SPECIAL FEATURE

THE NAMES OF PASTORAL WORKERS, KILLED IN THE YEAR 2016

Jesus Christ is the first martyr, “the first One Who gives his life for us. And from this mystery of Christ, begins the whole history of Christian martyrdom, from the early centuries until today”

*Pope Francis, homily of 14 September, 2016
feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross*

VATICAN - PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED IN 2016

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - In the year 2016, 28 Catholic pastoral care workers were killed worldwide. For the eighth consecutive year, the place most affected, with an extremely elevated number of pastoral care workers killed is AMERICA, 9 in 2016, more than double the number compared to 2015.

According to information gathered by Agenzia Fides, **in 2016 14 priests, 9 religious women, one seminarian, 4 lay people** died violently. In America 12 pastoral care workers were killed (9 priests and 3 religious sisters); in Africa 8 pastoral care workers were killed (3 priests, 2 nuns, one seminarian, 2 lay people); in Asia 7 pastoral care workers were killed (1 priest, 4 nuns, 2 lay people); in Europe one priest was killed.

Once again the majority of the pastoral care workers in 2016 were killed in attempted robbery, and in some cases violently attacked, a sign of the climate of moral decline, economic and cultural poverty, which generates violence and disregard for human life.

In these situations, the priests, religious sisters and lay people who were killed, were among those who loudly denounced injustice, corruption, poverty, in the name of the Gospel. Fr. José Luis Sánchez Ruiz, of the Diocese of San Andres Tuxtla (Veracruz, Mexico) was one of the victims who was kidnapped and then released with "obvious signs of torture", according to a statement from the diocese. In the days before the kidnapping he had received threats, surely for his harsh criticism against corruption and rampant crime (*see Fides 14/11/2016*). As Pope Francis recalled on the feast of the protomartyr St. Stephen, "the world hates Christians for the same reason it hated Jesus because He brought the light of God and the world prefers the darkness to hide its wicked works". (*Angelus 26/12/2016*).

They all lived in these human and social contexts, administering the sacraments, helping the poor, taking care of orphans and drug addicts, following development projects or simply opening the door of their home to anyone. And some were murdered by the same people who they helped. Hardly any investigations conducted by the local authorities lead to

identifying the perpetrators and the instigators of these killings or the reasons why they were carried out.

There is still much concern regarding the fate of other pastoral care workers kidnapped or have disappeared, of whom we have not had any news.

As it has been for some time, Fides' list does not only include missionaries ad gentes in the strict sense, but all pastoral care workers who died violent deaths. We do not propose to use the term "martyrs", if not in its etymological meaning of "witnesses" since it is up to the Church to judge their possible merits and also because of the scarcity of available information in most cases, with regard to their life and even the circumstances of their death.

The provisional list compiled annually by Agenzia Fides, must therefore be added to the long list of many of whom there may never be news, who in every corner of the world suffer and even pay with their lives for their faith in Christ. Pope Francis often reminds us that "Today there are Christians who are murdered, tortured, imprisoned, slaughtered because they do not deny Jesus Christ" ... "the martyrs of today are more numerous than those of the first centuries".

This year's list does not include **father Juan Heraldo Viroche**, priest at Ntra Sra. Del Valle de La Florida, in Tucuman, Argentina, found dead in his house on October 5. The priest was well known for the fight against drug trafficking and had received several threats for his work. This is why the local Church community were shocked and asked the authorities, even with public demonstrations, to deepen the investigation to clarify the facts (*see Fides 06/10/2016*).

Among the victims of the earthquake that hit the coast of Ecuador on Saturday, April 16, causing hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries, there was also a religious sister and five postulants of the Sisters of the "Siervas the Hogar de la Madre" community in Playa Prieta: the missionary was **Sister Clare Crocket**, Irish, for 15 years in Ecuador (*see Fides 18/04/2016*).

A heroic gesture cost the life of a seminarian of the American Diocese of Wichita, **Brian Bergkamp**, who on July 9 saved a woman who fell in the Arkansas River and was drowning, and he himself was carried away by the water (*see Fides 14/07/2016; 06/08/2016*).

Their sacrifice must not be forgotten

Thousands of faithful from all over Argentina gathered in Neuquén to attend Mass celebrated 40 years after the killing of the Bishop of La Rioja, **His Exc. Mgr. Enrique Angelelli**, on August 4, 1976. Mgr. Angelelli (1923-1976), Bishop of the diocese of La Rioja, was one of the most famous Bishops of the Country, contrary to dictatorship. He died in a car crash, shortly after the establishment of the military dictatorship. After 38 years, on July 4, 2014, two senior officers were sentenced to life imprisonment for the murder of the Bishop. For decades the authorities had claimed that his death was accidental. In 2015 the diocesan phase for the cause of beatification was opened (*see Fides 29/07/2016; 02/08/2016*).

Even in Africa the anniversary of another Bishop killed was celebrated: the Archdiocese of Bukavu, capital of South Kivu, in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, recalled on October 29, 20 years after the killing of its Archbishop, **His Exc. Mgr. Christophe Munzehirwa** today Servant of God. Mgr. Munzehirwa drew international attention to the plight of refugees from neighboring Rwanda and had launched several appeals for a path of peace for the Great Lakes region. "His voice tore the ears of the biggest rulers in the world and had become an embarrassing witness. It was necessary to eliminate him", said the statement of the Archdiocese of Bukavu. "But Mgr. Munzehirwa is not dead. His life continues to challenge our conscience anesthetized by corruption, hatred, fear and the search for selfish interests" (*see Fides 29/10/2016*).

Even in Africa, 20 years ago, on the night between 26 and 27 March 1996, **seven Trappist monks** were abducted from the monastery of Notre Dame de l'Atlas, in Algeria and were then killed by the Gia Islamist terrorists. The anniversary was remembered without major events, but in prayer and silence, while the flow of those, including Muslims, continued in recent years to gather in meditation on their graves.

In Rome, several initiatives were held on the tenth anniversary of the death of **Fr. Andrea Santoro**, who was parish priest and then Fidei donum priest of the diocese of Rome, was killed in Trabzon (Turkey) on February 5, 2006 while he was praying in the Sancta Maria Kilisesi church, which he had been entrusted. The 26-year-old Turkish Oguzhan Ayudin, sentenced in 2006 to 18 years and 10 months in prison as a self-confessed murderer of the priest, was released with more than 10 years ahead of the expiry of the sentence, along with tens of thousands of prisoners freed to make way for thousands of people arrested after the failed coup. (*See Fides 30/08/2016, 28/11/2016*)

Martyrs recognized by the Church

On December 2, 2016 Pope Francis recognized the martyrdom of missionary **Father Stanley Rother**, of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, making him the first martyr born in the United States of America.

He had arrived in Guatemala in 1968 as a missionary, took root in the region, learned Spanish and Tzutuhil, and was invited to be part of the brotherhood of these indigenous peoples. In addition to his pastoral duties as parish priest, he translated the New Testament in Tzutuhil and began celebrating Mass in that language. Forced to leave the country due to the armed conflict, shortly after he returned to support his parishioners. He was killed on July 28, 1981, one of 10 priests murdered in Guatemala that year (*see Fides 03/12/2016*). The diocesan rogatory process for the cause of beatification of the Servant of God **Father Ezekiel Ramin** began on April 9 in Padua, a Paduan Comboni missionary (MCCJ), killed on July 24, 1985 in Cacoal, Brazil, because of his commitment in favor of small farmers and Surui Indians, in their struggle against local landowners.

The study on the reputation of sanctity, was officially launched on 1 April 2016 by the Diocese of Ji-Parana, in Brazil, where the missionary died. He was described by Pope John Paul II as a "martyr of charity". On January 6, on the feast of the Epiphany, the diocesan phase for the beatification process of the Italian Jesuit missionary **Father Francesco Palliola** (1612-1648), killed on January 29 1648, opened at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Cathedral in Dipolog, on the island of Mindanao, in the Philippines. He was the first European to learn the language of the tribe of subanos, who lived in the north-east coast of Mindanao, this is why their evangelization was entrusted to him, but some of them did not tolerate his work and prevented it. He refused to have a body guard, father Palliola was stabbed to death.

On December 11 the Catholic Church in Laos celebrated, in the Cathedral of the capital Vientiane, the solemn liturgy of beatification of **17 missionary martyrs and lay Laotians**. We are talking about a group formed by foreign missionaries and local catechists killed between 1954 and 1970 by communist guerrillas.

Five of them belong to the congregation of the Paris Foreign Missions (MEP); six are Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), and among these there is the Italian Mario Borzaga, a young missionary, who died in 1960 at the age of 27, along with the local catechist Paul Thoj Xyooj.

Among the Laotians beatified there is also on the priest, Joseph Thao Tien, the first Laotian priest, killed in 1954, and four other indigenous catechists (*see Fides 12/12/2016*).
(SL) (Agenzia Fides 30/12/2016)

OVERVIEW OF CONTINENTS

AMERICA

In America 12 pastoral care workers were killed (9 priests and 3 nuns): 3 priests in Brazil, 1 priest and 2 nuns in the USA, 3 priests in Mexico, 1 nun in Haiti, 1 priest in Venezuela, 1 priest in Colombia.

In **the USA** Father Rene Robert Wayne was found dead after he had been missing for a few days; two nuns, Sister Margaret Held, of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (SCN), and Sister Paula Merrill, of the School Sisters of St. Francis (SSSF), were killed with knives in their home. In **Brazil** Friar Antonio Moser, OFM; Father Francisco Carlos Barbosa Tenorio and father João Paulo Nolli were all killed during a robbery. In **Mexico** Fr. Alejo Nabor Jiménez Juárez and Fr. José Alfredo Suárez de la Cruz were kidnapped and their dead bodies were found on the morning of the following day; even Fr. José Alfredo Lopez Guillen was kidnapped and found dead.

In **Haiti** Sister Isa Solá Matas was killed during a robbery.

In Venezuela Fr. Darwin Antonio Zambrano Gamez was killed during the night.

In **Colombia** Fr. José Fortunato Bedoya Franco died following an attack in the street.

AFRICA

In Africa 8 pastoral care workers were killed (3 priests, 2 nuns, 1 seminarian,

2 lay persons): 2 priests, 1 nun and 2 lay persons in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 1 nun in South Sudan, 1 priest and 1 seminarian in Nigeria.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, Fr. Vincent Machozi, Assumptionist priest, and Fr. Joseph Mulimbi Nguli were killed in an ambush; Sister Clara Agano Kahambu, of the Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King School, was killed while she was in her office. Two Caritas workers were killed during a street robbery.

In **South Sudan** Sister Veronica Rackova, of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit died due to the consequences of a road ambush.

In **Nigeria** the body of Fr. John Adeyi, Vicar General of the Diocese of Otukpo, was found two months after his abduction. Seminarian Lazarus Nwafor was killed during an attack by a group of Fulani nomads.

ASIA

In Asia, 7 pastoral care workers were killed (1 priest, 4 nuns, 2 lay persons): 4 nuns in Yemen, 1 lay volunteer in Syria, 1 priest in the Philippines, 1 catechist in Indonesia.

In **Yemen** four Missionary Sisters of Charity were attacked and killed: Sister Marguerite and Sister Reginette from Rwanda, Sister Anselm from India and Sister Judith from Kenya.

In **Syria** Elias Abiad, a young volunteer of Caritas Syria was killed during the bombing on Aleppo.

In the **Philippines** father Marcelino Biliran was found dead in his home.

In **Indonesia** catechist Esra Patatang was killed with a bullet to his head.

EUROPE

In Europe 1 priest was killed.

In **France**: Fr. Jacques Hamel was killed while celebrating Mass.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH

Fides News Agency welcomes any extra information or correction to this year's list or to those of previous years

Elias Abiad, 22, a young volunteer of Caritas Syria, was killed by mortar shells in Aleppo on Saturday, February 13, 2016 which fell in the area of Sulaymaniyah. The Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis, Michel Roy, in a message of condolence to Elias' family emphasized that also the sacrifice of the young volunteer "reminds us of the continuing daily tragedy of Syria, and the urgent need of cease fire and peace". Elias was engaged in assistance projects carried out by Caritas Syria in Aleppo since September 2014. (See Fides 16/02/2016)

Four Missionary Sisters of Charity, two Rwandans (Sister Marguerite and Sister Reginette), an Indian (Sister Anselm) and the fourth from Kenya (Sister Judith), were shot dead by gunmen on March 4, 2016 in an attack on the structure in the Yemenite city of Aden where they assisted elderly and disabled persons. Besides the Sisters, the driver and at least two community helpers were killed whereas the Sister Superior was unhurt. Among the casualties, also old and disabled persons assisted by the community. The Indian Salesian priest Fr Tom Uzhunnalil, who had been staying at the sisters house since the church where he lived was sacked and torched by unidentified gunmen, was kidnapped.

Pope Francis described the massacre of Aden as a "senseless and evil act of violence", and in a message released through the Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin prayed that the sacrifice of the sisters and their friends and collaborators "wake up consciences, lead to a change of hearts and inspire all parties to lay down their arms and begin a path of dialogue".

(See Fides 04/03/2016; 05/03/2016; 07/03/2016)

On March 9 2016, during an attempted robbery on the highway Washington Luiz, at the Duque de Caxias (RJ), **Friar Antonio Moser** was killed in Petrópolis, in the state of Rio de Janeiro (Brazil). He was born in Gaspar (Santa Catarina State) 75 years ago, Friar Moser belonged to the Order of Friars Minor (OFM), was director of the publishing house Vozes and had taken part in the recent Synod of Bishops on the family as a collaborator of the Special Secretary. A statement the Episcopal Conference of Brazil (CNBB) reads that "Friar Antônio Moser's life was rich and fruitful" and recalls the commitment of the religious in the CNBB, and mentions his contribution "in the preparation of texts and theological reflection, especially in moral theology". He had written many books and offered a great contribution to the local Church.

(See Fides 10/03/2016)

"Why are you killing me?" are the last words of **Fr. Vincent Machozi**, Assumptionist priest, born in 1965, killed in the night of Sunday, March 20 in the village of Vitungwe-Isale, 15 km from Butembo in the Territory of Beni (North Kivu Province in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo). According to the Vicar General of the Assumptionists, "some soldiers arrived around midnight, knocked down the doors and killed him on the spot". The testimonies gathered agree that the killers were soldiers of the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and stormed the perimeter of the center Mon Beau Village, where traditional Nande leaders had gathered to take part in a reflection on peace.

The soldiers immediately said that they wanted to hit the head Kalemire and Fr. Vincent. Despite the attempt of the onlookers to hide the presence of the two people targeted, the military discovered Fr. Vincent who was outside in the courtyard, and was working on his laptop. The soldiers opened fire and Fr. Vincent shouted: "Why are you killing me?". Fr. Vincent had already been threatened with death, so much so that in 2003 he was forced to exile in the United States. After his return to the DRC he had escaped seven bombings. Fr. Vincent had repeatedly denounced the suffering of the Nande population caused by the presence of different armed groups dedicated to the illegal exploitation of coltan (mineral used in the manufacture of electronic

components for mobile phones) in the Territory of Beni, often with the connivance of the regular army.
(See Fides 22/03/2016)

A Caritas operator was killed in a road ambush near Uvira, in South Kivu (DR Congo), on 25 March 2016. A vehicle of Caritas in Uvira in charge of transporting teachers' salaries in the Fizi Territory, was blocked near Lubumba bridge more than 40 km from Uvira. The robbers forced the driver to get out of the vehicle before killing him with a shot to the head. He died on his way to hospital. Under an agreement signed in 2011 between the Congolese government and Caritas Congo, the latter was appointed to oversee the payment of teachers' salaries paid by the Ministry.
(See Fides 30/3/2016; 12/8/2011)

Fr. Darwin Antonio Zambrano Gamez, a priest of the diocese of San Cristobal in Venezuela, was killed on the night of March 30, 2016. His remains were found in a park in the city of San Cristobal in the morning of March 31 and show signs of violence and stab wounds. The reasons why he was killed are unknown. Fr. Darwin Zambrano Gamez was born on October 24, 1977 and was ordained a priest on July 5, 2010 in the parish of San Agaton of Palmyra. Currently he was assistant pastor in the parish of San José de Bolívar and was known for his spirit of service, humor and constant joy.
(See Fides 01/04/2016)

Father Rene Wayne Robert, a priest of the Diocese of Saint Augustine in Florida (USA), 71, was found dead in Georgia, on Monday, April 18. His body was found in Waynesboro, after the man who was arrested while driving the priest's car, led the police on the spot. Investigators think that Fr. Robert was killed on April 10, when he was last seen. Fr. Robert Rene Wayne carried out his pastoral ministry in prisons since 1980, when he arrived in St. Augustine area along with other Franciscan friars. When several years later the Franciscans were called elsewhere, Fr. Robert chose to remain in order to continue his assistance to prisoners. In 1995, he was incardinated in the Diocese of St. Augustine and continued his commitment in favor of the marginalized. According to the statement of the Diocese of Saint Augustine, Fr. Robert "was a humble and generous servant of the Lord, and he shared his

many gifts to the poor, the community of the deaf, prisoners. He will be remembered for his kindness and his endless love for them".
(See Fides 20/04/2016)

Sr. Veronica Rackova, a member of the Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit (SSPS), was shot and seriously wounded in South Sudan on Monday May 16. Sister Veronica died on May 20 at the Nairobi Hospital in Kenya, where she had been admitted for specialized treatment following the shooting incident.

Around midnight on May 16, Sr. Veronica received an emergency call from a woman who had complications giving birth, which could not be dealt with at the health center that the sisters run, St Bakhita's Medical Centre in Yei. She used St Bakhita's ambulance to drive the woman to Harvester's Health Center, a more specialized facility for women and children. On the way back, she was allegedly shot by Sudan People Liberation Army (SPLA) soldiers, the former rebel movement that took power after the country's independence in 2011. The nun was alone in the ambulance because the driver had gone home. Sister Veronica was 58 years old. She previously worked in Ghana, before coming to South Sudan where she worked for 6 years.

(See Fides 21/05/2016; 24/05/2016; 02/06/2016)

Father Marcelino Biliran, pastor of St. Peter the Apostle Church in the town of Loboc, in the province of Bohol, Philippines, was found dead in his home on June 27, he did not commit suicide but was killed, for unknown reasons: this is what was said by His Exc. Mgr. Leonardo Medroso, Bishop of the diocese of Tagbilaran, where Fr. Biliran carried out his pastoral service, announcing that the police of Bohol will continue the investigation into the murder. Fr. Biliran was ordained in the Diocese of Tagbilaran and was pastor of St. Peter the Apostle, since 2015.

(See Fides 07/07/2016)

Fr. John Adeyi, Vicar General of the Diocese of Otukpo, in the Nigerian state of Benue, was kidnapped on April 24. His remains were found two months later, on June 22, in the vicinity of the Ogbadibo Local Government Education Authority complex in Otukpa, his hometown. His kidnapers had demanded a ransom to release him. Despite the Vicar's family had handed

over the sum demanded, the priest had not been freed. Then the tragic discovery of his body.
(See Fides 29/04/2016, 07/07/2016)

An elderly priest, **Fr. Jacques Hamel**, aged 84, had his throat cut while he was celebrating mass in the church of Saint Etienne du Rouvray, Normandy (France) on 27 July. Two men entered the church during the celebration, killed the priest and wounded three of the faithful present, leaving one in a serious condition. Two religious Sisters are among the hostages while a third managed to escape and call the police. The murderers were killed by the police.

Father Jacques was a good man of peace, but "was killed like a criminal", said Pope Francis 14 September 2016, indicating a reason for reflection: "amidst the difficult moment he was living, amidst the tragedy that he saw coming, this humble, good man, who worked for fraternity, did not lose the lucidity to accuse and clearly named his assassin. He said clearly: 'Satan, go!'.

He gave his life for us so as not to deny Jesus. He gave his life in the same sacrifice of Jesus in the altar... He is a martyr and martyrs are beatified! The Pope asked the faithful to pray for his intercession, so that he gives us the courage to say the truth: to kill in the name of God is satanic".

(See Fides 26/07/2016; 27/07/2016; 14/09/2016)

An accountant of Caritas in Basankusu, in Equateur province (DRC) was killed on 11 August by two bandits, then arrested, about 50 km from Basankusu, to rob him of salaries for teachers of Befale territory .

Lazarus Nwafor, a 26-year-old seminarian, from Imo state (Nigeria), was killed on August 25 during an attack by a group of members of the Fulani ethnic group against the community of Ndiagu Attakwu, in Nkanu, in the Nigerian state of Enugu, during which other people were injured or killed.

Two nuns, Sister Margaret Held, of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (SCN), and Sister Paula Merrill, of the School Sisters of St. Francis (SSSF), were killed with knives in their home in Durant, in Mississippi, in an area where more than 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty

line. They were probably killed by a robber, who then fled with their car which was found abandoned nearby. The two Sisters, both Americans, aged 68, were serving as nurses at the Lexington Medical Clinic, health center that assists, free of charge, families who cannot afford medical care. On August 25, not seeing them arrive on time as always, colleagues alerted the police, who found signs of forced entry in their home and found their bodies. They were loved and well-liked by everyone for their kindness, their availability in particular towards those in need.

(See Fides 29/08/2016)

Sister Isa Solá Matas, 51, originally from Barcelona (Spain), missionary in Haiti for many years, was killed on the morning of September 2, 2016, while she was driving her car in a central street of the Haitian capital, Port au Prince . She was hit by a firearm during an attempted robbery, as her purse and other personal items were stolen. The nun, of the Religious of Jesus and Mary (RJM), was committed in helping the humblest and poorest groups in Haiti, with whom she practically lived after the 2010 earthquake: she had helped rebuild homes, she did all she could as a nurse to relieve the sufferings of those who had undergone amputation in the earthquake.

(See Fides 03/09/2016)

Esra Patatang, 27, a Catholic catechist and teacher, was killed on September 12 with a bullet to his head in Puncak Jaya district, in the diocese of Timika, in the southern area of Indonesian Papua. Esra had been teaching at the elementary SDN Kulirik school in Mulia, in Puncak Jaya district for two years. In addition to his work as a teacher, Ezra also drove a motorcycle taxi to earn a bit more money. He was also the Catholic Youth leader of Illaga parish, in Mulia. On the afternoon of September 12 he was carrying a passenger from Kota Baru in Kota Lama, where his home is also located, when he was killed. "It is unclear what or who is behind the execution. Esra is the victim of those who use violence to achieve their ends. Esra remains an example for young Indonesians, for his dedication to serve others with joy in a tense and difficult social situation", said Fr. Antonius Haryanto, Executive Secretary of the Youth Commission of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference.

(See Fides 14/09/2016)

Two priests, Fr. Alejo Nabor Jiménez Juárez and José Alfredo Suárez de la Cruz, of the Mexican diocese of Papantla, were kidnapped on September 18, from the parish of Nuestra Señora de Fatima, in the extreme outskirts of the city of Poza Rica, in the northern part of the Veracruz state. Their lifeless bodies were found on Monday, September 19, at the side of the road that connects Papantla to Poza Rica. A collaborator of the priests, who worked as a sacristan and driver, was also kidnapped, and fortunately was found alive. The area was the scene of violent clashes between drug cartels for years, but it is still not clear why the two priests were killed.

(See Fides 23/09/2016; 26/09/2016)

On Sunday, September 25, during the Mass celebrated in San Rafael de Puruandiro, the Archbishop of Morelia, Cardinal Alberto Suárez Inda, announced the discovery of the lifeless body of the **Fr. José Alfredo Lopez Guillen**, in an area of the municipality, in the state of Michoacan. The priest was kidnapped on Monday, September 19, on the same day when the other two priests in the state of Veracruz were found dead, and that many things were stolen from his home. The body was found in the area known as "La Guayaba" in the municipality of Michoacan, not far from the place where Fr. Lopez Guillen was parish priest in the Holy Trinity church. (See Fides 20/09/2016, 23/09/2016)

Father Francisco Carlos Barbosa Tenorio, 37, was found dead Sunday morning, October 9, along the RJ-081 road, in Nova Iguaçu, in the Baixada Fluminense region, Rio de Janeiro state (Brazil). According to testimonies of friends who recognized the body at the institute of Forensic Medicine, the priest had sharp injuries. The car the priest was driving was not found. Father Francisco was pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes parish in the district of São Benedito in Nova Iguaçu, where he was loved by the faithful and had no enemies. Everything leads to believe that it was a robbery which ended in murder. Father Francisco had gone to visit a family in the neighborhood near the parish of São Simão, but it seems he never returned home. Father Francisco was born in Pernambuco, but lived for about ten years in Rio de Janeiro. He started working in the diocese of Nova Iguaçu in 2008 and was ordained a priest in 2011.

(See Fides 11/10/2016)

Father João Paulo Nolli, of the diocese of Rondonópolis-Guiratinga (Mato Grosso, Brazil), who died on October 8, was found dead on October 11, with clear signs of violence.

Police stopped three alleged murderers while they were trying to sell some objects belonging to the priest, and they confessed the theft which ended in murder. Father João Paulo Nolli, 35, had agreed to give the three young drug addicts aged 17, a lift along a suburban street. They stole his wallet, car and mobile phone.

Father João Paulo was well known: more than 5000 people gathered when he celebrated Masses, he also led a radio and television program entitled "God takes care of me" (Deus cuida de mim).

(See Fides 13/10/2016)

Fr. Joseph Mulimbi Nguli, 52, vicar of the parish of San Martino in the municipality of Katuba, Lubumbashi, capital of Upper Katanga Province was killed by unknown persons in the southern Democratic Republic of Congo in the night between 21 and October 22 2016. The worsening of security conditions in large parts of the Country was denounced by the Congolese Bishops, who also denounce "attacks in parishes and religious communities, in particular in Kinshasa, Kananga and Bukavu".

(See Fides 24/10/2016)

The 91-year-old missionary, **Fr. José Bedoya Fortunato Franco**, died on the afternoon of October 25, in Rionegro (Antioquia, Colombia). He was found on a public road, and was taken to hospital in San Juan de Dios. According to the testimonies of passers-by, the missionary had been attacked in the street by a person with a syringe in his hand, probably during a robbery attempt. He had been injected with poison.

According to data from the Diocese of Sonsón y Rionegro, Fr. José Fortunato, was born on October 13, 1925 in Santo Domingo (Antioquia), he was ordained a priest on June 29, 1952 in the Diocese of Santa Rosa de Osos, in the north of Antioquia. He belonged to the Misioneros Javerianos de Yarumal. (See Fides 26/10/2016)

A Congolese religious of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King School, **Sister Clara Agano Kahambu** was killed in the early afternoon of 29 November, at the Mater Dei parish in Bukavu, capital of South Kivu in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Sister Clara was in her office with a student, when a man went up to the guardian saying he had to enroll his daughter at the religious school. Once the man entered he threw himself against the nun killing her with a knife in her neck. The man was captured but the religious died before reaching hospital. Sister Clara Agano was born on July 3, 1976 in Luofu parish, Diocese of Butembo-Beni.

On 16 November 2000 in Bukavu she became part of the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King School, and she began her novitiate on August 25, 2002 and professed her perpetual vows on August 2, 2010. She taught psychology, pedagogy and catechesis. She was Headmaster of "Marie Madeleine" School in Bukavu and of the "Mater Dei" pastoral center where she taught poor girls to read and write.

(See Fides 02/12/2016)

SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2016

N°	Name and Surname	Nationality	Institute o Diocese	Date and place of death
1.	Elias Abiad	Syria	Volunteer Caritas	Aleppo (Syria) – 13/2
2.	Sister Margarita	Rwanda	Missionary of Charity	Aden (Yemen) – 4/3
3.	Sister Reginette	Rwanda	Missionary of Charity	Aden (Yemen) – 4/3
4	Sister Annselna	India	Missionary of Charity	Aden (Yemen) – 4/3
5.	Sister Judith	Kenya	Missionary of Charity	Aden (Yemen) – 4/3
6.	Friar Antonio Moser	Brazil	Friar Minor (OFM)	Petropolis (Brazil) – 9/3
7	Fr. Vincent Machozi	DRC	Assumptionist	Butembo (DRC) – 20/3
8	Fr. Darwin Antonio Zambrano Gamez	Venezuela	Diocesan	S.Cristobal (Venezuela) – 30/3
9.	Fr. Rene Wayne Robert	USA	Diocesan	Waynesboro (USA) – 18/4
10.	Sister Veronica Rackova	Slovakia	Missionaries of the Holy Spirit (SSP)	Yei (South Sudan) – 20/5
11.	Fr. Marcelino Biliran	Philippines	Diocesan	Loboc (Philippines) – 27/6
12.	Fr. John Adeyi	Nigeria	Diocesan	Otukpa (Nigeria) – 24/4 (?)

13.	Fr. Jacques Hamel	France	Diocesan	St Etienne (France) – 27/7
14.	Sister Margaret Held	USA	Sisters of Charity of Nazareth (SCN)	Durant (USA) – 25/8
15.	Sister Paula Merrill	USA	School Sisters of St. Francis (SSSF)	Durant (USA) – 25/8
16.	Sister Isa Solá Matas	Spain	Religious of Jesus-Mary (RJM)	Port au Prince (Haiti) – 2/9
17.	Esra Patatang	Indonesia	Lay catechist	Puncak Jaya (Indonesia) – 12/9
18.	Fr. Alejo Jiménez Juárez	Mexico	Diocesan	Poza Rica (Mexico) – 18/19-9
19.	Fr. José Suárez de la Cruz	Mexico	Diocesan	Poza Rica (Mexico) – 18/19-9
20.	Fr. José A. Lopez Guillen	Mexico	Diocesan	Morelia (Mexico) – 19/9 (?)
21.	Fr. Francisco C. Barbosa Tenorio	Brazil	Diocesan	Nova Iguaçu (Brazil) – 9/10
22.	Fr. João Paulo Nolli	Brazil	Diocesan	Rondonópolis (Brazil) – 8/10 (?)
23.	Fr. Joseph Mulimbi Nguli	DRC	Diocesan	Lubumbashi (DRC) – 21/22-10
24.	Fr. José F. Bedoya Franco	Colombia	Missionary of Yarumal	Rionegro (Colombia) – 25/10
25.	Sister Clara Agano Kahambu	DRC	Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King School	Bukavu (DRC) – 29/11

Religious Status

Priests	14	11 diocesans; 1 OFM, 1 Assumptionist, 1 Miss. of Yarumal
Women Religious	9	4 Missionaries of Charity, 1 Sister of Charity of Nazareth (SCN), School Sisters of St. Francis (SSSF), Religious of Jesus-Mary (RJM), Missionary Sisters of the Holy Spirit, Franciscan Sisters of Christ the King School
Seminarian	1	
Laity	4	

Country of Origin

Africa	10	5 DRC, 2 Rwanda, 2 Nigeria, 1 Kenya
America	11	3 Brazil, 3 Mexico, 3 USA, 1 Venezuela, 1 Colombia
Asia	4	1 Syria, 1 India, 1 Indonesia, 1 Philippines
Europe	3	1 Spain, 1 France, 1 Slovakia

Place of death

Africa	8	5 DRC, 2 Nigeria, 1 South Sudan.
America	12	3 USA, 3 Brazil, 3 Mexico, 1 Venezuela, 1 Haiti, 1 Colombia
Asia	7	4 Yemen, 1 Syria, 1 Indonesia, 1 Philippines
Europe	1	(France).

PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED FROM 1980 TO 2015

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) – According to data in Fides’ possession, in the decade from **1980-1989** **115 missionaries** lost their lives in violent manners. This number, however, is doubtful, based only upon the cases which made news.

The collective summary from **1990-2000** presents a total of **604 missionaries killed**, still according to our information. The number is significantly higher than the previous decade, however, one must also consider the following factors: the genocide in Rwanda (1994) that caused at least 248 victims among church personnel; the increased speed of the mass media in disseminating the news even from most remote places; the total does not include only the missionaries *ad gentes* in the strictest sense, but all church personnel killed in a violent manner, or who sacrificed their lives aware of the risks they ran, while not abandoning the people in their care.

During the years **2001-2015** the total of the pastoral care workers killed is **365**.

YEAR	TOT	BISH	PRIE	DEA	BRO	REL	SEM	ICL	CAT	LAI	VOL
1990	17		10			7					
1991	19	1	14		1	3					
1992	21		6		2	13					
1993	21	1C+1	13			4	1	1			
1994	26		20		1	4	1				
1994*	248	3	103		47	65		30			
1995	33		18	1	3	9				2	
1996	48	3	19		8	13	1	2	1	1(ct)	
1997	68	1	19		1	7	40				
1998	40	1	13		5	17	4				
1999	32		17			9	4		2		
2000	31		19			7	3	1			1
2001	33		25			5	1	1		1	
2002	25	1	18		1	2	2	1			
2003	29	1	20		1		3			2	2
2004	16		12			1				3	
2005	25	1	18		2	3				1	
2006	24		17		1	3				2	1
2007	21		15	3	1	1	1				
2008	20	1	16		1					2	
2009	37		30			2	2			3	
2010	25	1	17		1	1	2			3	
2011	26		18			4				4	
2012	13		11			1				1	
2013	23		20			1				2	
2014	26		17		1	6	1			1	
2015	22		13			4				5	

* = Data referring just to the Rwanda genocide.

BIS: Bishops; C: Cardinals; PRIE: diocesan and religious priests; DEAC: deacons; BRO: religious brothers; REL: religious sisters; SEM: seminarians; ICL: members of institutes of consecrated life; CAT: catechists; LAI: laity; VOL: volunteers; ct: catecumeno.

DATA, COMMENTS AND REFLECTIONS ON THE PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED IN RECENT YEARS MAY BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE: www.fides.org

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