



# agenzia fides

AGENZIA DELLE PONTIFICIE OPERE MISSIONARIE

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## **FIDES SPECIAL FEATURE**

### **THE NAMES OF PASTORAL WORKERS, BISHOPS, PRIESTS, MEN AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS AND LAY CATHOLICS, KILLED IN THE YEAR 2012**

"Believers who are called to bear witness in difficult and dangerous circumstances will not be abandoned and left defenceless"

(Pope Benedict XVI, December 26, 2011)

#### **PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED IN 2012**

Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) - Once again this year, Fides publishes an annual document of all the pastoral workers who lost their lives in a violent manner over the course of the last 12 months.

According to information in our possession, during 2012, 12 pastoral care workers were killed, almost all priests: 10 priests, 1 religious sister, 1 lay person.

For the fourth consecutive year, the place most affected, with an extremely elevated number of pastoral workers killed is AMERICA, bathed with the blood of 6 priests. Following is AFRICA,

where 3 priests and 1 religious sister were killed. ASIA, where 1 priest and 1 religious sister were killed.

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", since it is up to the Church to judge their possible merits and also because of the scarcity of available information in most of cases, with regard to their life and even the circumstances of their death.

The majority of the pastoral care workers in 2012 were killed in attempted robbery: Some discovered there were thieves in their homes and their bodies were found with signs of torture and cruelty. Others were attacked in the street and robbed of what they brought with them or their car. Sister Liliane Mapalayi was stabbed to death while working in a high school run by her Congregation. Fr. David Donis Barrera was attacked and stabbed after a minor car accident, following a dispute with passengers in the other car. Fr. Anastasius Nsherenguzi instead was killed by some young people who he was trying to separate during a fight. The lay Conchita Francisco was shot to death in front of the Cathedral in Bongao, in the southern Phillipines, where tension is high due to the presence of Muslim rebels, pirates, terrorists and criminals.

As written by the Holy Father Benedict XVI in the Motu Proprio "Porta fidei" with which he indicted the Year of Faith that the Church is celebrating, "By faith, men and women have consecrated their lives to Christ, leaving all things behind so as to live obedience, poverty and chastity with Gospel simplicity, concrete signs of waiting for the Lord who came to proclaim deliverance from oppression and a year of favour for all. By faith, across the centuries, men and women of all ages, whose names are written in the Book of Life, have confessed the beauty of following the Lord Jesus wherever they were called to bear witness to the fact that they were Christian: in the family, in the workplace, in public life, in the exercise of charisms and ministries to which they were called." (PF, 13)

The pastoral care workers killed during the year 2012 did not carry out sensational acts, were not brought to the attention of the mass media for their initiatives, but they simply "confessed the beauty of following the Lord Jesus wherever they were called to give witness of their being Christians. " They lived faith in the humility of daily life, in particular in the context of human and spiritual poverty, degradation, violence, where the respect for life and human dignity are values that do not count, trying to bring in these environments their witness of love, that love of the Father that Jesus Christ came to show.

On the day of the liturgical feast of the Martyr Stephen, December 26, Pope Benedict XVI recalled during the Angelus: "the birth of the Son of God inaugurated a new era, that of love. Love breaks down barriers among men. It makes them brothers and sisters... " He then entrusted the persecuted Christians to the intercession of Saint Stephen, with the help of our prayers and invited, following his example, to witness without fear, our faith with courage and determination

The provisional list compiled annually by 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. They are the "cloud of unknown soldiers for the great cause of God" – according to the words of Pope John Paul II.

## OVERVIEW OF CONTINENTS

### AMERICA

In America 6 priests were killed. They were killed in Brazil (2); Mexico (2); Colombia (1); Guatemala (1).

In **Brazil**, a Fidei donum Italian priest Fr. Luigi Plebani was killed in his home: Instead D. Eduardo Teixeira was murdered in the street, in the course of a robbery.

In **Mexico**, Fr. Jenaro Aviña García was killed in his home by some thieves, and Fr. Teodoro Mariscal Rivas, found hand and foot bound, with a bag over his head which caused suffocation.

In **Colombia**, Fr. Pablo Emilio Sanchez Albarracin was killed during a robbery.

In **Guatemala**, Fr. David Donis Barrera was killed, he was attacked and stabbed after a minor car accident.

### AFRICA

In Africa 3 priests and 1 religious sister were killed: The killings took place in the D.R. Congo (1); Mozambique (1); Tanzania (1); Madagascar (1).

In **D.R. Congo**, Sister Liliane Mapalayi, of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary was killed, she was stabbed to death in the school where she worked.

In **Mozambique**, Fr. Valentim Eduardo, a Consolata Missionary (IMC) was brutally murdered during a robbery attempt.

In **Tanzania**, Fr. Anastasius Nsherenguzi was murdered by a group of youngsters who he was trying to separate during a fight.

In **Madagascar**, the Jesuit Fr. Bruno Raharison (SJ) was killed in a street robbery.

### ASIA

In 2012 in Asia the deaths of 2 pastoral care workers were recorded: 1 priest, and a lay person. They died in: Lebanon and the Philippines.

In **Lebanon**, the priest Fr. Elie Gergi al-Makdessi, of the Lebanese Maronite Order was killed along the street during an attempted robbery.

In the **Philippines**, the lay Catholic Conchita Francisco, pastoral care worker, was shot to death by unknown gunmen in front of the Catholic Cathedral in Bongao, where shortly before she had prayed the Rosary and attended 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.

**Fr. David Donis Barrera**, age 70, was the Pastor of the Sagrada Familia Parish in Oratorio, in the diocese of Santa Rosa da Lima, in Guatemala, he was killed on 27 January 2012. Following a minor car accident while on his way to the capital, he was attacked and then stabbed by the passengers in the other car.

See Fides 07/02/2012

**Fr. Jenaro Aviña García**, age 63, Pastor of the Immaculate Conception Parish, in Atizapan de Zaragoza, in the archdiocese of Tlalnepantla (Mexico), was murdered in the early morning hours in his home on January 28, 2012. According to the police report, “the priest was wearing his pyjamas and slippers, and apparently had heard noises and opened the door of the rectory”. “The local Church in Tlalnepantla – stressed the Archbishop’s statement – absolutely condemns all acts of violence that occur, not only against Catholics, but against all persons, regardless of race, language or religion.

See Fides 03/02/2012

**Sister Liliane Mapalayi**, of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary, was stabbed to death by an individual on February 2, 2012 in Kananga, in western Kasai (DRC). The religious sister worked in a high school run by her Congregation. She was attacked around 1 p.m. while she was in her office at school. On hearing the screams, the Director of the school and a nun rushed into Sister Liliane’s office, who passed away in their arms, with a kitchen knife stabbed in her heart.

See Fides 20/02/2012

**Fr. Anastasius Nshereguzi**, a priest of the diocese of Kayunga (Tanzania), age 43, was seriously wounded on April 6, Good Friday and died the next day, April 7, after a few hours of agony without revealing any details about what had happened. Following the reconstruction carried out it seemed that Fr. Nshereguzi was returning home from Bushangaro, the parish area where he had gone for a religious celebration. Along the way, he bumped into some young people who were fighting and he intervened to prevent the dispute from degenerating, but he was hit by one of the youngsters with a large stone which caused him deadly wounds.

See Fides 14/04/2012

**Fr. Luigi Plebani**, age 62, a Fidei Donum Italian missionary of the diocese of Brescia, was killed in Brazil, in Rui Barbosa in the Bahia State. The priest was found hanged in his home with a plaster over his mouth on Sunday April 29, 2012. He was expected for a Mass celebration and not seeing him, some women went to look for him and found the dramatic scene. Most likely it was a robbery which tragically degenerated: the killers then staged a suicide. “Father Luis” as he was known in Brazil, where he had lived since 1980, had previously received death threats from some prisoners who he regularly visited at the local prison, most probably by gangs linked to drug trafficking.

See Fides 30/04/2012; 02/05/2012

**Fr. Valentim Eduardo Camale**, of the Consolata Missionaries (IMC), age 49, was brutally killed on the evening of May 3, 2012, during a robbery at the mission in Liqueleva (Mozambique). Fr. Valentim was attacked by four bandits who probably wanted to take possession of the offerings collected for a nursery school run by the missionaries and reacted by immobilizing one of the bandits, but was brutally beaten to death by the other three. He was found in a pool of blood by a confrere who was returning from his pastoral work, he was rushed to hospital but died during the journey.

See Fides 04/05/2012

**Fr. Pablo Emilio Sanchez Albarracin**, of the diocese of Cucuta (Colombia), was attacked in his home in the parish of Santa Maria de Dios, in the municipality of Los Patios in Cucuta, in the north of Colombia, during a robbery on August 8, 2012. The criminals, probably recognized by the priest, seriously injured him. He was taken to hospital where he died on August 11, after three days of agony.

**Fr. Elie Gergi al-Makdessi, of the Lebanese Maronite Order**, was killed during an attempted robbery. His lifeless body was found on August 25, 2012 on the maritime road in Naameh, 10 km south of Beirut. His death was caused by asphyxiation and drowning. He was born in 1962, he was a monk of the Lebanese Maronite Order and lived in a monastery in the village of Bhersaf.

**Fr. Teodoro Mariscal Rivas**, age 45, was found murdered in his home in the suburb of Santa Fe. He had the pastoral care of the church of Santa Cecilia, which is within the parish of Santo Niño de la Salud, in the district of Mochicahu, towards the central part of the Gulf of California, in Mexico. Fr. Rivas was found on the morning of September 20, 2012, his hands and feet were bound, with a bag over his head that caused suffocation. The murder allegedly took place between 18 and 19 September. His car was among the valuable things that were not found.  
See Fides 25/09/2012

**Fr. Bruno Raharison, a Jesuit priest (SJ)**, of Malagasy nationality, treasurer of the John XXIII Congregation in Mahamasina (Madagascar), was killed on Sunday 30 September, 2012, during a robbery in the street. The priest's car was found on September 30, parked along the second state highway from Antananarivo to Tamatave, near the town of Carion. The police were put on state of alert. The following day a young man was arrested who was trying to recover the car and was taken to the police station. After a reconnaissance of the area, Fr. Brunos body was found on October 2, 400 meters from the place where his car was. The priest had wounds to the back, chest and head, caused by a sharp weapon.  
See Fides 04/10/2012

The Lay Catholic **Conchita Francisco, age 62, pastoral care worker**, a widow and mother of two children, was shot to death by unidentified men in front of the Catholic Cathedral of Bongao, in the Philippine province of Tawi-Tawi, in the South of the archipelago on November 13, 2012. The woman had just left the church, where she prayed the Rosary and attended Mass every day. Conchita, called "Ching" was the pillar in the pastoral activities of the small local Church. Ten years ago her husband was killed. He was a high school headmaster within the "Mindanao State University" (MSU) campus in Bongao and, according to local sources the murder could be linked his job.  
See Fides 16/11/2012

**D. Eduardo Teixeira, a Brazilian priest**, age 35, was murdered on the evening of Sunday, December 16, 2012 in the village Novo Hamburgo ( state of Rio Grande do Sul), Brazil, during a robbery. D. Teixeira and another priest were stopped at the traffic lights when two bandits approached them. The two priests were forced to follow the bandits in a park and after handing over their wallet, Fr Eduardo was killed by at least two gunshots while attempting to return to his car. D. Teixeira, a priest for three years, was the pastor of Santa Terezinha de Campo Bom, and had recently been appointed parish priest of the Parish of São Jorge, in the Campina area. (SL)  
See Fides 19/12/2012

## SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2012

N°	Name and Surname	Nationality	Institute or Diocese	Date and place of death
1.	Father David Donis Barrera	Guatemala	Diocesan	Santa Rosa (Guatemala) – 27/1
2.	Father Jenaro Aviña Garcia	Mexico	Diocesan	Atizapan (Mexico) – 28/1
3.	Sister Liliane Mapalayi	D.R. Congo	Sister of the Congr. Of Charity of Jesus and Mary	Kananga (D.R. Congo) – 2/2
4.	Father Anastasius Nsherenguzi	Tanzania	Diocesan	Bushangaro (Tanzania) – 7/4
5.	Father Luigi Plebani	Italy	Fidei Donum	Rui Barbosa (Brazil) – 29/4
6.	Father Valentim Eduardo Camale	Mozambique	Consolata Missionary (IMC)	Liqueleva (Mozambique) – 3/5
7.	Father Pablo Emilio Sanchez Albarracin	Colombia	Diocesan	Cucuta (Colombia) – 11/8
8.	Father Elie Gergi al-Makdessi	Lebanon	Monk of the Lebanese Maronite Order	Naameh (Lebanon) – 25/8
9.	Teodoro Mariscal Rivas	Mexico	Diocesan	Mochicahui (Mexico) – 19/9
10.	Father Bruno Raharison	Madagascar	Jesuit (SJ)	Carion (Madagascar) – 30/9
11.	Conchita Francisco	Phillipine	Lay pastoral care worker	Bongao (Phillipines) – 13/11
12.	Father Eduardo Teixeira	Brazil	Diocesan	Novo Amburgo (Brazil) – 16/12

### Religious Status

Priests	10	( 6 diocesan; 1 SJ; 1 IMC; 1 Lebanese M. Order; 1 Fidei donum)
Women Religious	1	(1 Sister of Charity of Jesus and Mary)
Laity	1	

### Country of Origin

Africa	4	(1 D.R. Congo; 1 Tanzania; 1 Mozambique; 1 Madagascar)
America	5	(2 Mexico; 1 Colombia; 1 Brazil; 1 Guatemala)
Asia	2	(1 Lebanon; 1 Phillipines)
Europe	1	( Italy)

### Place of death

Africa	4	(1 D.R.Congo; 1 Mozambique; 1 Tanzania, 1 Madagascar)
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America	6	(2 Brazil; 2 Mexico; 1 Colombia; 1 Guatemala)
Asia	2	(1 Lebanon, 1 Philippines)

### Pastoral Care workers killed from 1980 al 2011

**Vatican City (Agenzia Fides)** – According to data in Fides’ possession, in the decade from econdo i **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 **2001-2011** the total of the pastoral care workers killed is **281** people.

YEAR	TOT	BISH	PRIE	DEA C	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	

\* = Data referring just to the Rwandan 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](http://www.fides.org)**

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*Fides Special by S.L. – Agenzia Fides 29/12/2012*