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**FIDES SPECIAL FEATURE**

## **MISSIONARIES KILLED IN THE YEAR 2023**

"Martyrs should not be seen as “heroes” who acted individually like flowers sprouting in a desert, but as mature and excellent fruits of the Lord’s vineyard, which is the Church"

*Pope Francis, General Audience, April 19, 2023*

## MISSIONARIES KILLED IN 2023

*Dossier edited by Stefano Lodigiani*

**Vatican City (Agenzia Fides)** – According to information gathered by Agenzia Fides, 20 missionaries were killed in the world in 2023: 1 Bishop, 8 priests, 2 non-religious men, 1 seminarian, 1 novice and 7 laypersons.

Although the lists compiled by Fides are always open to updates and corrections, there were 2 more missionaries killed compared to the previous year. This year the highest number of missionaries killed is again registered in Africa, where 9 missionaries were killed: 5 priests, 2 religious men, 1 seminarian, 1 novice. In America, 6 missionaries were murdered: 1 Bishop, 3 priests, 2 lay women. In Asia, 4 lay men and women died, killed by violence. Finally, a layman was killed in Europe.

As it has been for some time, Fides uses the term "missionary" for all the baptized, aware that "in virtue of their Baptism, all the members of the People of God have become missionary disciples. All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization" (Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 120). Moreover, the annual list of Fides does not look only to Missionaries *ad gentes* in the strict sense, but tries to record all baptized engaged in the life of the Church who died in a violent way, not only "in hatred of the faith". For this reason, we prefer not to use the term "martyrs", if not in its etymological meaning of "witness", in order not to enter into the question of the judgment that the Church might eventually deliver upon some of them, after careful consideration, for beatification or canonization.

One of the distinctive traits that most of the pastoral workers murdered in 2023 have in common is undoubtedly their normal life: that is, they did not carry out any sensational actions or out-of-the-ordinary deeds that could have attracted attention and put them in someone's crosshairs. Scrolling through the few notes on the circumstances of their violent deaths, we find priests who were on their way to celebrate Mass or to carry out pastoral activities in some distant community; armed assaults perpetrated along busy roads; assaults on rectories and convents where they were engaged in evangelization, charity, human promotion. They found themselves, through no fault of their own, victims of kidnappings, acts of terrorism, involved in shootings or violence of various kinds.

In this 'normal' life lived in contexts of economic and cultural poverty, moral and environmental degradation, where there is no respect for life and human rights, but often only oppression and violence is the norm, they were also united by another 'normality', that of living the faith by offering their simple evangelical witness as pastors, catechists, health workers, animators of the liturgy, of charity.... They could have gone elsewhere, moved to safer places, or desisted from their Christian commitments, perhaps reducing them, but they did not do so, even though they were aware of the situation and the dangers they faced every day. Naive, in the eyes of the world. But the Church, and ultimately the world itself, moves forward thanks to them, who "are not flowers sprouting in a desert", and to the many who, like them, testify their gratitude for the love of Christ by translating it into daily acts of fraternity and hope.

During the Angelus on the feast of Saint Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian community, Pope Francis recalled: "There are still those – and there are many of them – who suffer and die to bear witness to Jesus, just as there are those who are penalized at various levels for the fact of acting in a way consistent with the Gospel, and those who strive every day to be faithful, without ado, to their good duties, while the world jeers and preaches otherwise. These brothers and sisters may also seem

to be failures, but today we see that it is not the case. Now as then, in fact, the seed of their sacrifices, which seems to die, germinates and bears fruit, because God, through them, continues to work miracles (cf. *Acts* 18:9-10), changing hearts and saving men and women" (*Angelus, December 26, 2023*).

## OVERVIEW OF CONTINENTS

In **AFRICA** 9 missionaries were killed: 5 priests, 2 religious men, 1 seminarian, 1 novice.

In **Nigeria** (4) **Fr. Isaac Achi** died, killed by flames during an attack on his parish, in the State of Niger, perpetrated by an armed group; **Fr. Charles Onomhoale Igechi**, attacked by armed men, along Agbor Road, in Edo State; the seminarian **Na'aman Danlami**, was burned alive in the attack by some bandits on the parish where he served in the State of Kaduna; the **Benedictine novice Godwin Eze**, kidnapped from the monastery in Eruku, Kwara State, and then murdered by the kidnapers.

In **Burkina Faso** (2) **Fr. Jacques Yaro Zerbo** lost his life in a violent manner, murdered by unidentified armed men, in the Boucle du Mouhoun region, while on his way to carry out pastoral activities, and **Brother Moses Simukonde Sens**, killed by a stray bullet near a military checkpoint in the capital, Ouagadougou.

In **Tanzania** (1) **Fr. Pamphili Nada** died while being taken to hospital after suffering an attack in his parish, in the Arusha region.

In **Cameroon** (1) **Brother Cyprian Ngeh** was attacked and stabbed to death in the street in Bamenda.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo** (1) **Fr. Léopold Feyen** was stabbed to death in the area of Kinshasa, while he was in his room, at the parish where he carried out his pastoral service.

In **AMERICA** 6 missionaries were killed: 1 Bishop, 3 priests, 2 lay women.

In **Mexico** (4) **Fr. Juan Angulo Fonseca** was shot dead in the state of Jalisco; **Father Javier García Villafaña** was killed on the road that connects the municipalities of Cuitzeo and Huandacareo, while he was on his way to celebrate Mass; **Gertrudis Cruz de Jesús** and **Gliserina Cruz Merino**, young catechists, were killed during an ambush while on their way to a Eucharistic procession in the state of Oaxaca.

In the **United States of America** (2) **Monsignor David O'Connell**, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, was killed by the husband of the bishop's housekeeper who was then arrested and confessed the crime; **Fr. Stephen Gutsell** died following a knife attack that occurred in the rectory of the church in Fort Cahloun, a small community in Nebraska that he had led for 11 years.

In **ASIA** 4 lay people were killed. In the **Philippines** (2) two Catholic students and volunteers from the university chaplaincy community, engaged in liturgical animation: **Junrey Barbante** and **Janine Arenas** were among the victims of the bomb detonated during the Eucharistic celebration in the State University of Mindanao, in the province of Lanao del Sur.

In **Palestine** (2) **Samar Kamal Anton**, and her mother, **Nahida Khalil Anton**, were killed by snipers as they were walking to the Convent of the Sisters of Mother Theresa, in Gaza. One was killed as she tried to carry the other to safety. Both belonged to a group of women, Catholic and Orthodox, engaged in a journey of faith and apostolate especially in favor of the poor and the disabled.

In **EUROPE** 1 lay person was killed.

In **Spain (1) Diego Valencia**, layman, sacristan of the parish of Nuestra Senora de La Palma, in Algeciras, in the province of Cadiz, was killed by a young Moroccan armed with a machete, who injured other people besides him.

## **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*

**Father Jacques Yaro Zerbo**, 67 years old, was assassinated in Burkina Faso by unidentified armed men on Monday, January 2, 2023. The priest was murdered in the village of Soro, in the Boucle du Mouhoun region, in north-western Burkina Faso.

Father Jacques Yaro Zerbo was born on December 28, 1956 in Kolongo, in present-day Mali and was ordained a priest on July 19, 1986 in Dédougou.

He was stopped and murdered while going to the town of Gassan to carry out pastoral activities. The armed men then drove away in the priest's car. Father Jacques Yaro Zerbo had founded a youth re-education centre, and was in charge of the diocesan commission for the opening of the cause of beatification of the first lay catechist in the Country, Dii Alfred Diban.

(Agenzia Fides 3/1/2023; 5/1/2023)

A Nigerian priest, **Father Isaac Achi**, 61 years old, was killed by flames during an attack on his parish, which took place at 3 in the morning on Sunday, January 15, 2023. An armed group tried to enter the parish residence of Father Isaac Achi, of the Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, in Kaffin Koro, in the diocese of Minna, Niger State, in north central Nigeria.

Apparently, the murderers tried to enter the house and, failing to do so, they set fire to the house, burning the priest alive. Even before setting fire to the house, the bandits fired indiscriminately. In the shooting, another priest was wounded as he was fleeing the parish house, Father Collins Omeh, who was then hospitalized.

Father Isaac Achi had previously been parish priest of Saint Theresa Madalla church, also in Niger State, which was bombed by Boko Haram militiamen on December 25, 2011.

Furthermore, Father Achi had been kidnapped by bandits and freed by the police near Abuja, in February 2013.

At the general Audience on January 18, 2023, Pope Francis remembered the priest with these words: "I ask all of you to join me in praying for Father Isaac Achi, of the Diocese of Minna in northern Nigeria, who was killed last Sunday in an attack on his rectory. So many Christians continue to be the target of violence: let us remember them in our prayers!" (Agenzia Fides 16/1/2023)

**Diego Valencia**, layman, 65 years old, sacristan of the parish of Nuestra Senora de La Palma for 8 years, in Algeciras, in the southern province of Cadiz (Spain), diocese of Cadiz y Ceuta, was killed on January 25, 2023 after being struck with a machete wielded by a young Moroccan national, then arrested by the police. Previously the assailant had broken into the nearby church of San Isidro, before the start of the 7 p.m. mass and assaulted the parish priest, who was seriously injured. He then went to the church of Nuestra Senora de La Palma, where he injured three people and the sacristan, who

had intervened to stop him. Diego Valencia managed to drag himself out of the church after being hit in the abdomen, but was chased by the assailant who caught up with him and killed him. “He died to defend the faith, the church and the faithful within the church”, commented one of the priests of Our Lady of La Palma church. Diego Valencia was married and was a father of two children and had two grandchildren.

**Father Juan Angulo Fonseca**, 53 years old, parish priest of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe, in the Valle de Guadalupe, was killed by gunfire on February 10, 2023 in the municipality of Atotonilco El Alto, in the western Mexican state of Jalisco, diocese of San Juan de los Lagos. The alleged murderer fled on a motorcycle after the crime. The priest was originally from San José de Gracia, municipality of Tepatitlán de Morelos, where he was born on January 24, 1970. He was ordained a priest on May 2, 1998. He had carried out his ministry in various parish communities, before arriving in the parish of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe in 2017.

**Monsignor David O'Connell**, 69 years old, Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles, was killed by the husband of the bishop's housekeeper who was then arrested and confessed the crime. The Bishop lived in Hacienda Heights, a suburb 30 kilometers east of Los Angeles, in southern California (United States of America). The Bishop's body was found at one in the morning on February 18, 2023 in his home, with a gunshot wound that was fatal.

Monsignor O'Connell was of Irish origin and was born in Cork on August 16, 1953. On June 10, 1979 he was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He carried out his pastoral ministry in various communities and was loved and respected for being a peacemaker.

On July 21, 2015 he was appointed auxiliary Bishop in Los Angeles. He received his episcopal ordination on September 8, 2015 in the Los Angeles Cathedral. During the years of his priesthood and episcopacy he was known for his work supporting immigrants, the poor, and victims of gun violence. He was the founder and President of the Interdiocesan SoCal Immigration Task Force, which helped many children who entered the United States unaccompanied. “Deeply saddened to learn of the untimely and tragic death of Auxiliary Bishop David O’Connell,” Pope Francis wrote in a telegram, “I send heartfelt condolences and the assurance of spiritual closeness” to the clergy, religious, and lay faithful of the Archdiocese. The Pope also prayed that all who honor the memory of the Bishop "will be confirmed in the resolve to reject the ways of violence and overcome evil with good". (Agenzia Fides 20/02/2023; 21/02/2023)

**Brother Moses Simukonde Sens**, 35 years old, originally from Zambia, belonged to the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), was killed by a stray bullet on the evening of March 29, 2023 near a military checkpoint in the capital of Burkina Faso, Ouagadougou.

According to the reconstruction of his brothers, the tragedy occurred around 9 in the evening on March 29, when Brother Moses was passing near the checkpoint set up by the military police. The soldiers fired several times at individuals whom they claimed posed a threat. Unfortunately, one of the shots hit Brother Moses, killing him. Brother Moses was born on June 28, 1988 in Monze, Zambia. After his formation, he began his missionary service in 2016, first in Niger and then in Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso has been experiencing a phase of severe political instability since 2015 due to the violence caused by jihadist groups present in various areas of the country.

(Agenzia Fides, 1/4/2023)

**Father Javier García Villafaña**, Augustinian religious, parish priest of Santa Ana Maya, in the municipality of Capacho – Michoacan, archdiocese of Morelia (Mexico), was murdered on the road that connects the municipalities of Cuitzeo and Huandacareo, on May 22, 2023, around at 7 p.m.

The priest was traveling by car to Jeruco to celebrate Mass when his car was riddled with gunshots. Father Javier García Villafaña was born on May 16, 1963 in San José los Duros (Mexico) and was ordained a priest on April 13, 1989.

A few days before he had assumed the role of first parish priest of the new parish of Capacho. The Mexican Episcopal Conference (Cem) expressed closeness to the archdiocese of Morelia, to the Augustinian order and to the family members of the deceased priest for an "act of violence that has not only taken a life but also threatens peace and justice in our nation. It is a painful reminder of the dire situation we face as a society, in which the presence of organized crime and impunity continue to threaten the lives and safety of so many".

(Agenzia Fides, 23/5/2023)

**Father Charles Onomhoale Igechi**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Benin City, in southern Nigeria, was killed by gunmen along Agbor Road in Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area (Edo State) on June 7, 2023. The Archdiocese informed that the priest was shot dead on his way back to his parish and that his remains were found on Boundary Street in Ikpoba Hill, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area, Edo State.

Father Charles had been ordained a priest on August 13, 2022, and was the Vice Principal of St. Michael College, Ikhueniro.

(Agenzia Fides, 9/6/2023)

**Two young catechists of the Triqui ethnicity, Gertrudis Cruz de Jesús and Gliserina Cruz Merino**, were killed on June 15, 2023 while on their way to a Eucharistic procession in the State of Oaxaca, the scene of violent clashes between armed groups. "We recognize their dedication and sacrifice and we pay tribute to them for the noble work carried out with courage", reads the statement released by the Mexican Episcopate. The two catechists of the parish of San Juan Bautista Copala, in the diocese of Huajuapán de León, were killed by armed men while they were in a military vehicle for safety reasons and to protect their movements, when they were ambushed in the Copala area, the heart of the Triqui community in Oaxaca. The two catechists were part of the Movimiento de Unificación de Lucha Triqui (Mult) and were committed to the recognition of the human rights of their people. (Agenzia Fides, 19/6/2023)

**Father Pamphili Nada**, of the parish of Our Lady Queen of Apostles in Karatu, diocese of Mbulu, Arusha region (Tanzania) died while being taken to hospital after suffering an attack on July 19, 2023. A man entered the church apparently to pray, when at some point he struck Father Nada with a heavy, blunt object, causing the death of the priest. The killer apparently suffered from mental illness and was lynched by the crowd who gathered. "He was a spiritual father, known for his deep faith and great commitment, eager to fulfill his responsibilities with zeal, dedication and courage" declared the Bishop of the diocese of Mbulu, Anthony Gaspar Lagwen, on behalf of the Episcopal Conference. (Agenzia Fides, 21/7/2023)

**A 25-year-old seminarian, Na'aman Danlami**, was burned alive when bandits attacked and vandalized the parish of St. Raphael in Fadan Kamantan, in the diocese of Kafanchan, in Kaduna state, northern Nigeria. The perpetrators broke into the rectory on Thursday evening, September 7, 2023 and set it on fire. While the parish priest and his assistant managed to escape to safety, Na'aman Danlami, who worked as a seminarian in the community, was unable to escape the flames. The objective of the perpetrators, according to what was declared by the Bishop of Kafanchan, Julius Yakubu Kundi, was to kidnap the parish priest, but did not manage to enter the house and therefore set fire to the building. The assault lasted more than an hour but the army did not intervene. (Agenzia Fides, 8/9/2023)

**A Benedictine novice, Godwin Eze**, 31, and two postulants, were kidnapped around one o'clock on the night of October 17, 2023 by an armed group, who attacked the Benedictine monastery of Eruku, in Kwara state, north-central Nigeria. The two postulants, Anthony Eze and Peter Olarewaj, were released on October 21, while the novice Godwin Eze was killed on October 18, the day after the

abduction. According to the testimony of the postulants, after the kidnapping the three were forced to walk barefoot in the forest. At dawn, when they reached the bank of the river, Eze was shot dead and his body thrown into the river. The kidnappers said this was to show their determination and how serious they were.

His confreres describe Eze as a jovial person dedicated entirely to the monastery and prayer. The monastery is in an isolated area, surrounded by fields cultivated by the Benedictines, and has no protective fence.

(Agenzia Fides, 20/10/2023; 25/10/2023; 26/10/2023)

**Brother Cyprian Ngeh**, 40 years old, a religious nurse of the Congregation of the Sons of the Immaculate Conception, was stabbed to death on the evening of November 7, 2023 in the Ndamukong district of Bamenda (Camerun). He was attacked on his way back to the health center of his Congregation where he worked, after accompanying a member of his team home. Brother Cyprian, originally from this area, had served as a nurse and director of the Catholic Medical Center of the Immaculate Conception (CFIC) in Njmafor. He was appreciated for his availability and his service always rendered with great dedication and kindness. The Superior General of the Congregation wrote: "Let us embrace with gratitude our beloved brother Cyprian, who lost his life in such a brutal and sudden way. He lived an exemplary life, fully embodying the charisma of Father Monti and dedicating his life to the care of the sick and suffering." The city of Bamenda is the capital of the north-west region of Camerun, one of the two English-speaking regions, which since 2016 has been in the grip of war by separatists who want division from the rest of the country, with a French-speaking majority. (Agenzia Fides, 8/11/2023)

An explosive device was detonated during the Eucharist celebration on the first Sunday of Advent, December 3, 2023 in a sports hall at Mindanao State University in Marawi, the capital of Lanao del Sur province. The attack claimed four lives and injured at least 50 people. Students, professors, university staff and other faithful participated in the mass. Among the four victims, two were Catholic students and volunteers from the university chaplaincy community, engaged in liturgical animation: **Junrey Barbante**, 24 years old, student at the College of Business Administration and Accountancy, was a recent graduate from the island of Bohol, and **Janine Arenas**, 18 years old, a student originally from Balabagan, in the province of Lanao del Norte. They both assiduously frequented the university chaplaincy community. Pope Francis, after praying the Angelus on the same Sunday, assured his prayers "for the victims of the attack that occurred this morning in the Philippines, where a bomb exploded during Mass. I am close to the families and the people of Mindanao who have already suffered so much."

The attack was attributed to local groups inspired by the Islamic State, who acted in retaliation after the military operations in previous days against their militants. On the island of Mindanao, in the southern part of the archipelago with a Catholic majority, there lives a large Muslim community who have in the past demanded forms of autonomy and independence and - after decades that were also marked by conflicts and armed uprisings - achieved the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, which includes the Islamic-majority provinces.

(Agenzia Fides, 3/12/2023; 4/12/2023; 11/12/2023)

**Father Stephen Gutsell**, 65 years old, was stabbed to death during a burglary on Sunday, December 10, 2023, in the rectory of the parish of St. John the Baptist in Fort Cahloun, a small community in Nebraska (USA).

According to local media reports, the police received a call in the early hours of Sunday reporting an attempted break-in at the church. When officers arrived at the rectory, they found the injured Gutsell and the suspected attacker inside, who was arrested. The priest was taken by ambulance to Nebraska Medical Center, where he died from his injuries. (Agenzia Fides, 11/12/2023)

**The Salesian priest Léopold Feyen**, 82 years old, was stabbed to death by an unidentified attacker on December 12, 2023 in Kinshasa, capital of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The priest was killed in his room, in the parish of Saint Mary Help of Christians, in the municipality of Masina. He was born on August 19, 1941 in Hechtel, Belgium, Léopold Feyen entered the Salesian Society of Saint John Bosco (SDB), made his solemn profession on August 25, 1961 and was ordained a priest on 13 September 1967. He had resided in Congo since 1961. During his long years of missionary work in the country, he was also involved in the work of the "Youth City" in Lubumbashi, one of the best vocational schools in Katanga, which offers carpentry courses, auto mechanics, construction, welding, mechanics and agriculture, and which includes a boarding school for 60 boys. Father Léopold, whom everyone knew as "Koko Pol", was elderly and had health problems. He no longer held demanding positions within the local community, but he continued to oversee the management of the gardens grown to produce fruit and vegetables for the schools. (Agenzia Fides, 14/12/2023)

**Samar Kamal Anton**, a laywoman and a cook employed in the House of the Sisters of Mother Teresa in Gaza, was killed around 12pm on Saturday, December 16, 2023 by an Israeli army sniper in the Catholic parish of Gaza, dedicated to the Holy Family. Her mother, **Nahida Khalil Anton**, was also killed. The two women were killed as they were walking to the Sister's Convent. One was killed as she tried to carry the other to safety. On the same day - reported the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem - "Seven more people were shot and wounded by Israeli military snipers as they tried to protect others inside the church compound".

The Patriarchate's report emphasized that the two women were killed "in cold blood inside the parish premises", where there were no belligerents, within the parish complex, which is used as a place of worship, prayer and a refuge for defenseless and needy people, where during the last military offensive by the Israeli army, the majority of Christian families have taken refuge since the start of the war. At the time of the last Israeli military intervention in the Gaza Strip, there were 54 people with disabilities at the Convent of the Sisters of Mother Theresa.

Samar was among the animators of the Sant'Anna Group (a confraternity that brings together Catholic and Orthodox Christian women in Gaza involved in a journey of faith with weekly prayer and catechesis meetings), and took charge of the apostolate works animated by the parish community of the Sacred Family, especially in favor of the poor and the disabled. Even her mother Nahida, who shared the same fate as her, took part in the initiatives of the Sant'Anna Group. On Sunday, December 17, after reciting the Angelus, addressed to the multitude gathered in St. Peter's Square, Pope Francis underlined that Samar and Nahida "were killed, and other people wounded by snipers as they were going to the bathroom" within the parish complex of the Holy Family in Gaza, "where there are no terrorists, but families, children, people who are sick and have disabilities, sisters". "Some - added the Pontiff - "say: 'this is terrorism and war". Yes, it is war, it is terrorism. This is why Scripture says that "God makes wars cease... he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear". Let us pray to the Lord for peace". (Agenzia Fides, 16/12/2023)

## SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2023

N°	Name and surname	Nationality	Institute or Diocese	Date and place of death
1.	<b>Fr. Jacques Yaro Zerbo</b>	Mali	Diocesan	2/1 – Soro (Burkina Faso)
2.	<b>Fr. Isaac Achi</b>	Nigeria	Diocesan	15/1 – Kaffin Koro (Nigeria)
3.	<b>Diego Valencia</b>	Spain	Layman	25/1 – Algeciras (Spain)
4	<b>Fr. Juan Angulo Fonseca</b>	Mexico	Diocesan	10/2 – Atotonilco El Alto (Mexico)



5.	<b>Msgr. David O'Connell</b>	Ireland	Aux. Bishop Los Angeles	18/2 – Hacienda Heights (USA)
6.	<b>Br. Moses Simukonde Sens</b>	Zambia	Missionaries of Africa	29/3 – Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso)
7.	<b>Fr. Javier Garcia Villafaña</b>	Mexico	Augustinian religious	22/5 – Capacho (Mexico)
8.	<b>Fr. Charles Onomhoale Igechi</b>	Nigeria	Diocesan	7/6 – Ikpoba Hill (Nigeria)
9.	<b>Gertrudis Cruz de Jesús</b>	Mexico	Lay catechist	15/6 - Copala (Mexico)
10.	<b>Gliserina Cruz Merino</b>	Mexico	Lay catechist	15/6 - Copala (Mexico)
11.	<b>Fr. Pamphili Nada</b>	Tanzania	Diocesan	19/7 – Arusha (Tanzania)
12.	<b>Na'aman Danlami</b>	Nigeria	Diocesan seminarian	7/9 – Fadan Kamantan (Nigeria)
13.	<b>Godwin Eze</b>	Nigeria	Benedictine novice	18/10 – Nigeria
14.	<b>Br. Cyprian Ngeh</b>	Camerun	Sons of the Immaculate Conception	7/11 – Bamenda (Camerun)
15.	<b>Junrey Barbante</b>	Philippines	Layman	3/12 – Mindanao (Philippines)
16.	<b>Janine Arenas</b>	Philippines	Laywoman	3/12 – Mindanao (Philippines)
17.	<b>Fr. Stephen Gutzsell</b>	USA	Diocesan	10/12 – Fort Cahloun (USA)
18.	<b>Fr. Léopold Feyen</b>	Belgium	Salesian (SDB)	12/12 – Kinshasa (D.R.Congo)
19.	<b>Samar Kamal Anton</b>	Palestine	Laywoman	16/12 – Gaza (Palestine)
20.	<b>Nahida Khalil Anton</b>	Palestine	Laywoman	16/12 – Gaza (Palestine)

Religious Status	Total	Religious belonging
Bishop	1	Diocesan
Priest	8	6 Diocesan; 1 Augustinian; 1 Salesian
Religious	2	1 Missionary of Africa; 1 Conceptionist
Seminarian/Novice	2	1 Diocesan; 1 Benedictine
Lay persons	7	

Continent of origin	Total	Country
Africa	8	4 Nigeria; 1 Mali; 1 Zambia; 1 Tanzania; 1 Camerun
Asia	4	2 Philippines; 2 Palestine
America	5	4 Mexico; 1 USA
Europe	3	1 Ireland; 1 Spain; 1 Belgium

Place of death	Total	Country
Africa	9	4 Nigeria; 2 Burkina Faso; 1 Tanzania; 1 Camerun; 1 D.R. Congo
Asia	4	2 Philippines; 2 Palestine
America	6	4 Mexico; 2 USA
Europe	1	1 Spain

## PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED FROM 1980 TO 2022

**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**. The number is significantly higher than the previous decade, however, one

must also consider the following factor: the genocide in Rwanda (1994) that caused at least 248 victims among all church personnel. During the years **2001-2022** the total of the pastoral care workers killed is **544**.

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	
2016	28		14			9	1			4	
2017	23		13		1	1				8	
2018	40		35				1			4	
2019	29		18	1	2	2				6	
2020	20		8		1	3	2			6	
2021	21		12		1	2				6	
2022	18		12		1	3	1			1	

\* = 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: catechumen.

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