

December 30, 2022

***FIDES SPECIAL FEATURE***

**MISSIONARIES KILLED**

**IN THE YEAR**

**2022**

"... the true witness is the “martyr”, the one who gives his or her life for Christ, reciprocating the gift that He has made to us of Himself"

*Pope Francis, Message for World Mission Day, 2022*

**MISSIONARIES KILLED IN 2022**

**Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) –** According to information gathered by Agenzia Fides, 18 missionaries were killed in the world in 2022: 12 priests, 1 religious man, 3 religious women, 1 seminarian,1 lay person. This year the highest number of missionaries killed is registered in Africa, where 9 missionaries were killed (7 priests and 2 religious women), followed by Latin America, where 8 missionaries were killed (4 priests, 1 religious man, 1 religious woman, 1 seminarian,1 lay person). In Asia 1 priest was killed. In the last years, Africa and America have alternated in first place in this tragic ranking: America for 8 years from 2011 to 2021 and Africa for 3 years (2018, 2019, 2021). From 2001 to 2021, according to data in our possession, 526 missionaries have been killed in the world.

As it has been for some time, 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.  
We use 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" (EG 120).

The little information on the life and circumstances that caused the violent deaths of these 18 men and women missionaries offer us images of daily life, even if in particularly difficult contexts, marked by violence, poverty, lack of justice and respect for human life. Other people who were with them often shared the same fate as the missionaries. Priests killed while they were going to celebrate Mass with the community they led, to break that bread and consecrate that wine that would have been food and life for so many faithful. A religious woman doctor killed at the diocese health center, ready to save the lives of other people, and who knows how many she had already saved in the past. A missionary killed during an assault on the mission: instead of thinking about saving her own life, she was concerned about the safety of the girls housed in the dormitory. Another layman, a pastoral worker, killed on his way to the church to lead a liturgy of the Word for the faithful of that area, who did not have a resident priest.

Witnesses and missionaries of life, with their lives, which they offered up to the end, out of gratitude. As Pope Francis wrote in his Message for World Mission Day 2022, "the disciples are urged to live their personal lives in a missionary key: they are sent by Jesus to the world not only to carry out, but also and above all to live the mission entrusted to them; not only to bear witness, but also and above all to be witnesses of Christ. The essence of the mission is to bear witness to Christ, that is, to his life, passion, death and resurrection for the love of the Father and of humanity".

It was undoubtedly "for the love of the Father and of humanity" that Sister Maria de Coppi spent almost sixty years of her life in Mozambique, and Sister Luisa Dell'Orto twenty years in Haiti, where she arrived after having lived her vocation in Cameroon and Madagascar. Thus the two octogenarian Jesuits Javier Campos and Joaquín Mora spent their entire priestly life in Sierra Tarahumara, the most dangerous area of Mexico due to violence linked to drug trafficking. These are accompanied by the sacrifice of younger men and women missionaries, who shared the same spirit and the same commitment to proclaiming the Gospel in everyday gestures and actions. "Missionaries of Christ are not sent to communicate themselves, to exhibit their persuasive qualities and abilities or their managerial skills. Instead, theirs is the supreme honour of presenting Christ in words and deeds, proclaiming to everyone the Good News of his salvation, as the first apostles did, with joy and boldness. In the final analysis, then, the true witness is the “martyr”, the one who gives his or her life for Christ, reciprocating the gift that He has made to us of Himself" (ib).

Of the 18 missionaries killed in 2022, mostly priests, only three were born in countries other than those where they died, all three belonging to missionary religious institutes. The others bathed with their blood the same earth that had seen them born, grow, give themselves totally to the Lord in the consecration. If in the past the so-called "mission" territories were considered at risk for the lives of missionaries, where the proclamation of the Kingdom of God, of justice, of truth and of the dignity of every human created in the image of the Father, today in every corner of the world whoever proclaims Christ knows what this announcement entails.

But it is not about naivety, lack of experience or, on the contrary, exaltation. Missionaries and all Christians, especially in certain places, when they serve in dangerous situations and circumstances, do so "for the Father and for humanity", which overcomes all fear and hesitation. From the Cross planted on Golgotha two thousand years ago, the blood of Christ continues to flow, who gave his life for us: His blood bathes all continents, also through the free offering of many brothers and sisters who thus make entire communities grow, in the certainty that their life has not been lost, but has been given. "Christ, indeed Christ risen from the dead, is the One to whom we must testify and whose life we must share" (ib).

**OVERVIEW OF CONTINENTS**

**AFRICA**

**In Africa, 9 missionaries were killed: 7 priests, 2 religious women.**

**Nigeria (4)** - Father Joseph Aketeh Bako, parish priest of St. John's Church in Kudenda, in the local government area of Kaduna South, Kaduna State, was kidnapped by armed men who had attacked the rectory; he died while in the hands of his captors, between April 18 and 20, 2022. Father Vitus Borogo, was killed on Saturday, June 25, 2022 in Kaduna Prison Farm during a raid by armed men. Father Christopher Odia Ogedebbe was kidnapped and killed during the armed confrontation between police and kidnappers, on Sunday, June 26, 2022, as he was preparing to celebrate mass at the St. Michael Catholic Church Ikabigbo, Edo State, where he was parish priest. Father John Mark Cheitnum was kidnapped on July 15, 2022 from the rectory of Christ the King church in the city of Lere, Kaduna State, diocese of Kafanchan, and was brutally killed on the same day of the kidnapping.

**D.R. Congo (3)** - Father Richard Masivi Kasereka, a Congolese religious of the "Caracciolini", was killed on February 2, 2022 in eastern D.R. Congo, by armed men, as he was returning to his parish after celebrating the World Day of Consecrated Life. Father Godefroid Pembele Mandon, was shot and killed in the night between August 6 and 7, 2022, in the parish of St. Joseph Mukasa, in Kikwit, by armed bandits who had attacked the church. Sister Marie-Sylvie Kavuke Vakatsuraki, of the Congregation of the Petites Soeurs de la Présentation de Notre Dame au Temple of Butembo, was killed along with other people, during an assault that took place in the night between October, 19 and 20, 2022 in the village of Maboya, in North Kivu province.

**Tanzania (1)** - Father Michael Mawelera Samson, of the Missionaries of Africa, originally from Malawi, disappeared on June 10, 2022 from the youth center of the church in Mbeya, Tanzania, where he worked. His body was found on the bed of the Meta river, in Sabasaba, on the morning of June 11.

**Mozambique (1)** - Sister Maria De Coppi, an Italian Comboni missionary, was killed in the assault on the mission of Chipene, in the province of Nampula, diocese of Nacala, in the night between September, 6 and 7, 2022. The attackers destroyed the mission facilities, and Sister Maria was shot in the head and died immediately.

**AMERICA**

**In America, 7 missionaries were killed: 4 priests, 1 religious man, 1 religious woman, 1 seminarian, 1 layman.**

**Mexico (4)** - The body of Father Jose Guadalupe Rivas, of the Archdiocese of Tijuana, was found on May 16, 2022 on a ranch in Tecate, where he used to spend some time to rest. And he was killed together with another person, their bodies showed traces of violence. Jesuit fathers Javier Campos and Joaquín Mora were killed by armed people, on the afternoon of June 20, 2022, in the church of San Francisco Xavier in Cerocahui, in the Tarahumara region of Chihuahua. Seminarian José Dorian Piña Hernández, of the diocese of Zacatecas, was killed on the night of December 27 during an attempted armed robbery.

**Honduras (2)** - Pablo Isabel Hernández, layman, leader of the Lenca indigenous group, in western Honduras. Delegate of the Word of God, pastoral worker, was killed on Sunday, January 9, 2022 by unknown men who shot him in the back as he went to lead a celebration. Father Enrique Vasquez's body was found north of San Pedro Sula, on the night of Wednesday, March 2, 2022, in his car, in a suburban area of Santa Cruz de Yojoa, where he had gone to visit his parents, but without arriving at destination.

**Bolivia (1)** - Friar Wilberth Daza Rodas OFM, was killed in the night between Holy Saturday, April 16, 2022, and Sunday 17, Easter, by thieves who entered the church of San Francisco, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

**Haiti (1)** - Sister Luisa Dell'Orto, Little Sister of the Gospel of Charles de Foucauld, was killed on June 25, 2022 in Port-au-Prince, most likely the victim of an attempted robbery. Sister Luisa was committed above all to the service of street children for twenty years.

**ASIA**

**In Asia, 1 priest was killed.**

**Vietnam (1)** - Father Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh, a Vietnamese Dominican priest (OP), was stabbed to death while listening to confessions in the parish of Dak Mót, diocese of Kon Tum, by a mentally unstable man.

**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*

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**Pablo Isabel Hernández**, layman, authoritative figure of the Lenca indigenous group, in western Honduras. Delegate of the Word of God, recognized pastoral worker of the Catholic Church of Honduras, was killed on Sunday, January 9, 2022 by unknown men who shot him in the back. The murder took place in the municipality of San Marcos de Caiquín, department of Lempira, as Pablo was on his way to the community to lead a celebration of the Word of God. "Pablo was a man of God - recalls the statement of the Presidents of Celam and Remam - who loved his family, loved his people, respected and committed to the Common Home". He was director of Radio Tenán, the Lenca indigenous voice, president of the Network of Agroecologists of the Cacique Lempira Biosphere, sponsor of the University of Indigenous and Peoples and Mayor of La Auxiliaría de La Vara Alta de Caiquín, in the department of Lempira. The network "Iglesias y Minería" also condemned "the killing of the human rights defender and communicator" with "force and pain".

(Agenzia Fides, 12/1/2022)

**Father Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh**, a Vietnamese Dominican priest (OP), 41, was killed while listening to confessions in the parish of Dak Mót, diocese of Kon Tum. The attack took place on January 29, 2022, shortly before the celebration of the Vespers Mass on Saturday evening. Father Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh was in the confessional when he was attacked with a knife by a mentally unstable man. Another Dominican religious, who rushed to the scene, was wounded with a knife when he tried to stop the attacker. Father Tran, who was injured, received initial treatment, but was unable to recover and died at 11:30 p.m. (local time) the same day.

The local police arrested the attacker, considered a "mentally ill" person.

Father Joseph Thanh was born on August 10, 1981 in Saigon and made his religious profession in the Order of Preachers on August 13, 2010. He was ordained a priest on August 4, 2018.

He had recently taken up his duties in the parish of Dak Mót,

(Agenzia Fides, 31/1/2022)

**Father Richard Masivi Kasereka**, 34, a Congolese religious of the Order of the Clerics Regular Minor (Caracciolini) was assassinated on February 2, 2022 in a town in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The priest, parish priest of St. Michael the Archangel parish in Kaseghe, was assassinated by armed men in Vusesa, between Kirumba and Mighobwe, in the territory of Lubero (North Kivu), as he was returning to his parish, after having celebrated the World Day of Consecrated Life, in Kanyaboyonga.

Father Richard was assassinated three days before his 35th birthday. He had been ordained a priest on February 21, 2019 and was in charge of Kaseghe parish since October 31, 2021. He was preparing a new pastoral plan, and everyone was waiting for a renewal and a relaunch. The provinces in the east of the DRC, in particular North Kivu and neighboring Ituri, have been living in a state of permanent insecurity for decades due to the presence of dozens of armed groups. At the end of the general audience on February 16, Pope Francis recalled the death of Father Richard, "a victim of unjustifiable and despicable violence", with the hope that this mournful event "does not discourage his relatives, his religious family and the entire Christian community of that nation, to announce and witness goodness and fraternity despite the difficulties, by imitating the example of Jesus, the Good Shepherd".

(Agenzia Fides, 5/2/2022; 16/2/2022)

**Father Enrique Vasquez**, 48, was found dead in the north of San Pedro Sula, in Honduras. The priest's body was found on the night of Wednesday, March 2, in his car, in Santa Cruz de Yojoa, where he had gone to visit his parents, but did not arrive at his destination. He had no documents with him, he was transported to the institute of forensic medicine. The next day, the diocese reported his disappearance, unaware of the discovery of the body. The Bishop, Msgr. Ángel Garachana Pérez went to identify him and communicated that Fr. Enrique had been shot in different parts of his body.

Father Enrique Vasquez, affectionately known as “Quique”, was born in 1974. He was originally from Agua Azul Sierra de Santa Cruz de Yojoa. He was ordained a priest 16 years ago and was currently parish priest of San José, in the Medina district of San Pedro Sula. He was remembered by his confreres and by his faithful for his kindness and for his friendship. In his diocese he also held the office of Diocesan Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS).

(Agenzia Fides, 4/3/2022)

**Friar Wilberth Daza Rodas OFM**, of the Missionary Province of San Antonio in Bolivia, 42 years old, was murdered on the night between Holy Saturday, April 16, and Sunday 17, Easter, by thieves who entered the church after the Easter vigil. They did not hesitate to hit Friar Wilberth with a blunt object and kill him. His body was found on Easter morning by a parish worker. Friar Wilberth was born in Machareti, Sucre, on September 26, 1979. He made his first vows on February 1, 2004, in the Franciscan Minor Order and solemn profession on March 14, 2009. He carried out his missionary work in Sucre, Cochabamba, in Copacabana - La Paz, Machareti, San Javier and in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, in the Convent of the Church of San Francisco. At the time of his death he was bursar of the Convent of San Francisco, in Santa Cruz de la Sierra. The Bolivian police identified the person who killed the priest: a drug addict who frequented the church and knew the environment.

(Agenzia Fides, 20/4/2022)

**Father Joseph Aketeh Bako**, 48, parish priest of St. John, in Kudenda Catholic Church in the local government area of Kaduna South, Kaduna State, Nigeria, kidnapped by armed men who had attacked the rectory on the night of March 8, 2022, died while in the hands of his captors, between April 18 and 20. His brother, who happened to be in the rectory, had also been kidnapped with him. His brother was killed in his presence and as a result of this, his condition (he had been ill for some time) worsened and died. The people who had been kidnapped together with him saw him die and gave testimony of the tragic event.

(Agenzia Fides, 9/3/2022; 12/5/2022)

**The priest Jose Guadalupe Rivas**, 58, of the Archdiocese of Tijuana (Mexico) was killed and his body was found on a ranch in Tecate, where he was spending some time of rest. He was in charge of the Casa del Migrante de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Tecate (Baja California) and was also a member of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement of the Archdiocese of Tijuana. He was known as Father "Pepe Lupe" and was also the parish priest of St. Jude Thaddeus church. Since the priest had been missing from his community and did not answer the phone, on May 16, a group of faithful went to the house, located in the rural area, where he used to spend periods of reflection and rest, and they discovered his body, along with that of another unidentified person. The two bodies showed traces of violence

Fr. José Guadalupe Rivas was born on December 10, 1964 in Torreón, Coahuila, the fourth of ten children. He was ordained a priest on October 29, 1994. He had been parish priest in various communities and had also held other offices. Since July 6, 2021 he was responsible for the migrant shelter in Tecate.

(Agenzia Fides, 19/5/2022)

**Father Michael Mawelera Samson**, 62, of the Missionaries of Africa (known as the "White Fathers"), originally from Malawi, disappeared on June 10, 2022 from the youth center of the Catholic church of Mbeya, in Tanzania, where he worked. His body was found on the bed of the Meta river, in Sabasaba, on the morning of June 11. He was probably hit in the head, maybe he was knocked unconscious, and then the killer or killers set about dissecting his body. According to investigations, the missionary was killed in a different place from where his body was found, wrapped in a sheet so that it could be transported without leaving any trace of blood. Father Michael was born in Mzimba on September 27, 1959 and was ordained a priest on August 1, 1987 in Lilongwe, Malawi. He spent 35 years of missionary life in Uganda, the Philippines, Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania.

(Agenzia Fides, 15/6/2022)

On the afternoon of June 20, 2022, the Jesuit fathers **Javier Campos SJ** (79 years old) and **Joaquín Mora SJ** (80 years old) were murdered by armed people, together with a third person, the tour guide Pedro Palma in the church of San Francisco Xavier in Cerocahui, in the Tarahumara region of Chihuahua (Mexico). The serious bloody act took place in the context of the climate of generalized violence that the Country is experiencing. After the murder in the church, the bodies of the three were taken away by the perpetrators of the crime and were only subsequently recovered. The Sierra Tarahumara area is considered one of the most dangerous areas in Mexico due to violence and armed clashes related to drug trafficking. At the end of the general audience on Wednesday, June 22, Pope Francis expressed his closeness to the tragic events in Chihuahua: "I express my pain and dismay at the murder in Mexico, the day before yesterday, of two Jesuit religious, my brothers, and of a layman How many murders in Mexico! I am close with affection and prayer to the Catholic community affected by this tragedy. Once again, I repeat that violence does not solve problems, but rather increases unnecessary suffering".

**Father Javier Campos Morales S.J**., was born on February 13, 1943 in Mexico City, and entered the Society of Jesus on August 14, 1959, and was ordained a priest on June 8, 1972. A year later he began his mission as local superior, pastoral vicar and episcopal vicar in Sierra Tarahumara. He was Parish priest, Superior of the Jesuit Mission, Vicar of the Indigenous Pastoral Care of the diocese of Tarahumara, and Regional Councilor of the CEB (Basic Ecclesial Communities).

**Father Joaquín César Mora Salazar, SJ**, was born on August 28, 1941 in Monterrey and entered the Society of Jesus on July 30, 1958. He was ordained a priest on May 1, 1971 in his hometown. Since 1976 he had been a missionary in Sierra Tarahumara, holding the office of cooperator Vicar and parish Vicar in different communities.

(Agenzia Fides, 22/6/2022; 24/6/2022)

**Sister Luisa Dell'Orto**, Little Sister of the Gospel of Charles de Foucauld, was killed on June 25, 2022 in Port-au-Prince, capital of Haiti. The Italian missionary was most likely the victim of an attempted robbery. Sister Luisa had been dedicated above all to the service of street children for twenty years. Sister Luisa was the backbone of Kay Chal, "Casa Carlo", which is located in a very poor suburb of Port-au-Prince, which is a safe and welcoming place for hundreds of children who otherwise would live on the streets. On the morning of Saturday, June 25 she was the victim of an armed attack. Seriously injured, she was rushed to the hospital where she died shortly after, two days before her 65th birthday. The news had a very strong impact in Port-au-Prince where "seur Luisa", as they called her, was well known and much loved. After graduating in History and Philosophy, Luisa entered the Congregation of the Little Sisters of the Gospel in Lyon. In 1987 she left for Cameroon, where she lived in Salapombe, in a forest, among the Baka Pygmies, until 1990. In 1994 she obtained a degree in Theology in Switzerland. From 1997 to 2001 she was a missionary in Madagascar, dedicating herself to various pastoral activities. Since 2002 she was a missionary in Haiti.

(Agenzia Fides, 26/6/2022; 25/7/2022)

**Father Vitus Borogo**, 50, was killed on Saturday, June 25, 2022 at the Prison Farm in Kaduna (Nigeria) during a raid by armed men. He was Chaplain of the Kaduna State Polytechnic Catholic Community as well as President of the Nigerian Diocesan Catholic Priests Association.

(Agenzia Fides, 27/6/2022; 1/7/2022)

**Father Christopher Odia Ogedebbe**, 41 years old, was kidnapped and killed on Sunday, June 26 while on his way to celebrate mass at St. Michael Catholic Church Ikabigbo, Edo State (Nigeria), where he was parish priest, as well as Headmaster of St. Philip Catholic Secondary School, in Jattu. A police spokesperson said the kidnappers shot and killed the priest as police came to his rescue. One of the kidnappers was also killed during the rescue operation while other gang members suffered gunshot wounds.

(Agenzia Fides, 27/6/2022; 1/7/2022)

**Father John Mark Cheitnum** was kidnapped along with another priest, on the afternoon of July 15, 2022, from the rectory of Christ the King Catholic Church in the city of Lere, in the northern state of Kaduna, diocese of Kafanchan, Nigeria. While the other priest managed to escape from the kidnappers, Father John Mark was brutally killed on the same day of his abduction, July 15th. His body was later discovered already decomposing on July 19, in the forest not far from the place of the kidnapping. Father John Mark was parish priest, director of communications of the diocese, chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

(Agenzia Fides, 20/7/2022)

**Father Godefroid Pembele Mandon**, was shot dead by gunmen during a raid on the church in the parish of St. Joseph Mukasa in Kikwit on the night of August 6-7, 2022. He was taken to Kinshasa and died there on August 7, 2022, in hospital. Also during the night, from August 6 to 7, 2022, another parish in Kikwit, the parish of Saint Murumba, was attacked by gunmen who robbed women who were preparing for the first Mass of a new priest and a catechist.

(Agenzia Fides, 10/8/2022)

**Sister Maria De Coppi**, 84, an Italian Comboni missionary, who had been in Mozambique since 1963, was killed in the assault on the mission of Chipene, in the province of Nampula, diocese of Nacala, in northern Mozambique, on the night between September 6 and 7, 2022. The attackers destroyed the mission structures, including the church, the hospital and the primary and secondary school. Sister Maria was hit by a bullet in the head as she tried to reach the dormitory where the few remaining students were. The other two Comboni missionaries and the two missionaries of the diocese of Concordia-Pordenone managed to reach safety. The province of Nampula, together with that of Cabo Delgado, is the victim of the instability caused by the presence of terrorist groups that refer to the Islamic State. According to information released by her religious congregation, Sister Maria was well aware of the risks of remaining together with the Mozambican people, with whom she had been involved for a long time, and she never stopped denouncing the injustices suffered by the population. Msgr. Sithembele Sipuka, President of the Symposium of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC), in a message of condolences underlined that "Sister Maria joins so many innocent lives that were brutally cut short ... hers was the death of a martyr, because she did not abandon the poor even in these difficult times". At the Angelus on Sunday, September 11, Pope Francis said: "In this moment of prayer, it is dear to me to remember Sister Maria de Coppi, Comboni missionary, killed in Chipene, Mozambique, where she served with love for almost 60 years. May her witness give strength and courage to Christians and all the people of Mozambique".

(Agenzia Fides, 7/9/2022)

**Sister Marie-Sylvie Kavuke Vakatsuraki**, of the Congregation of the Petites Soeurs del la Presentation de Notre Dame au Temple in Butembo, was killed along with other people, during an assault that took place in the night between October 19 and 20, 2022 in the village of Maboya, in North Kivu province in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition to looting and burning several homes, the attackers destroyed the health Centre run by the diocese of Butembo-Beni, where Sister Marie-Sylvie Kavuke Vakatsuraki worked as a doctor. They shot Sister Marie-Sylvie, who was preparing to operate a woman, then set the health center on fire and only her charred bones were found. According to the testimony of the inhabitants, the aggressors belong to the ADF (Allied Democratic Forces), a group of Ugandan origin that in recent years has joined the Islamic State under the name of ISCAP (Islamic State Central African Province).

"We look on in horror at the events that continue to stain the Democratic Republic of the Congo with blood - said Pope Francis at the general audience on October 26, 2022 -. I strongly deplore the unacceptable assault that has taken place in recent days in Maboya, North Kivu Province, where defenceless people, including a religious sister engaged in health care, were killed. Let us pray for the victims and their families, as well as for the Christian community and the inhabitants of that region who have been exhausted by violence for too long".

(Agenzia Fides, 21/10/2022; 10/11/2022)

**Seminarian José Dorian Piña Hernández**, of the diocese of Zacatecas, 25 years old, in his third year of theology, was killed on the night of December 27, 2022 during an attempted armed robbery. According to the statement from the diocese, "on the night of December 27, a family was the victim of violent acts in a small community in the parish of Noria de Ángeles, unfortunately two members of this family died, one of whom was a seminarian from our diocesan seminary". Inviting to pray for the eternal rest of the seminarian, for his family members and for the seminarians and formators, the diocese concludes the statement with this exhortation: "in this climate of darkness that we suffer, we can be a light of hope for the brothers who suffer". The young seminarian is described as "a true witness of the Lord Jesus".

# SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR 2022

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **N°** | **Name and surname** | **Nationality** | **Institute or Diocese** | **Date and place of death** |
| 1. | **Pablo Isabel Hernández** | Honduras | Layman, pastoral worker | 9/1 – S. Marcos (Honduras) |
| 2. | **Fr. Joseph Tran Ngoc Thanh** | Vietnam | Dominican (OP) | 29/1 – Kon Tum (Vietnam) |
| 3. | **Fr. Richard Masivi Kasereka** | D.R. Congo | Clerics Regular Minor | 2/2 – Vusesa (D.R. Congo) |
| 4 | **Fr. Enrique Vasquez** | Honduras | Diocesan | 2/3 – Santa Cruz de Yojoa (Honduras) |
| 5. | **Friar Wilberth Daza Rodas** | Bolivia | Religious OFM | 16/4 – Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia) |
| 6. | **Fr. Joseph Aketeh Bako** | Nigeria | Diocesan | 18-20/4 – Kaduna (Nigeria) |
| 7. | **Fr. Jose Guadalupe Rivas** | Mexico | Diocesan | 16/5 – Tecate (Mexico) |
| 8. | **Fr. Michael Mawelera Samson** | Malawi | Missionaries of Africa | 11/6 – Sabasaba (Tanzania) |
| 9. | **Fr. Javier Campos** | Mexico | Jesuit | 20/6 - Cerocahui (Mexico) |
| 10. | **Fr. Joaquín Mora** | Nigeria | Jesuit | 20/6 - Cerocahui (Mexico) |
| 11. | **Sr. Luisa Dell’Orto** | Italy | Little Sisters of the Gospel in Lyon | 25/6 – Port au Prince (Haiti) |
| 12. | **Fr. Vitus Borogo** | Nigeria | Diocesan | 25/6 – Kaduna (Nigeria) |
| 13. | **Fr. Christopher Odia Ogedegbe** | Nigeria | Diocesan | 26/6 – Edo State (Nigeria) |
| 14. | **Fr. John Mark Cheitnum** | Nigeria | Diocesan | 15/7 – Lere (Nigeria) |
| 15. | **Fr. Godefroid Pembele Mandon** | D.R. Congo | Diocesan | 7/8 – Kinshasa (D.R. Congo) |
| 16. | **Sister Maria De Coppi** | Italy | Comboni missionaries | 6/7-9 Chipene (Mozambique) |
| 17. | **Sister Marie-Sylvie Kavuke Vakatsuraki** | D.R. Congo | Petites Soeurs del la Presentation de Notre Dame | 19/20 – 10 Maboya (D.R. Congo) |
| 18. | **José Dorian Piña Hernández** | Mexico | Seminarian | 27/12 – Noria de Angeles (Mexico) |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Religious Status** | **Total** | **Religious belonging** |
| Priests | 12 | 7 diocesan, 1 Dominican, 1 Caracciolino, 1 Missionary of Africa |
| Men Religious | 1 | OFM |
| Women Religious | 3 | Little Sisters of the Gospel, Comboni missionaries, Petites Soeurs del la Presentation |
| Seminarian | 1 | Diocesan |
| Lay persons | 1 | Pastoral worker |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Continent of origin** | **Total** | **Country** |
| Africa | 8 | 4 Nigeria, 3 D.R. Congo, 1 Malawi |
| America | 7 | 4 Mexico, 2 Honduras, 1 Bolivia |
| Asia | 1 | 1 Vietnam |
| Europe | 2 | 2 Italy |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Place of death** | **Total** | **Country** |
| Africa | 9 | 4 Nigeria, 3 D.R. Congo, 1 Tanzania, 1 Mozambique |
| America | 8 | 4 Mexico, 2 Honduras, 1 Bolivia, 1 Haiti |
| Asia | 1 | 1 Vietnam |

**PASTORAL CARE WORKERS KILLED FROM 1980 TO 2021**

**Vatican City (Agenzia Fides) –** According to data inFides’ 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 **2001-2021** the total of the pastoral care workers killed is **526.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 |  |

\* = 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.

*Fides Special S.L. – Agenzia Fides 30/12/2022*

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PREVIOUS YEARS:** [**www.fides.org**](http://www.fides.org/)