

100,000 Christians Killed Each Year for Faith, Vatican Says

An astounding 100,000 Christians are killed each year because of their faith, the Vatican reports.

“Credible research has reached the shocking conclusion that an estimate of more than 100,000 Christians are violently killed because of some relation to their faith every year,” Vatican spokesman Monsieur Silvano Maria Tomassi said Tuesday in a radio address to the United Nations Human Rights Council.

“Other Christians and other believers are subjected to forced displacement, to the destruction of their places of worship, to rape and to the abduction of their leaders, as it recently happened in the case of Bishops Yohanna Ibrahim and Boulos Yaziji, in Aleppo [Syria],” he added.

Several human rights groups also claim anti-Christian violence is on the rise in countries like Pakistan, Nigeria and Egypt. Though these groups have not confirmed the Vatican’s number, some, like , say persecution of Christians has been climbing in places like Africa and the Middle East over the last 10 years.

The group’s president, Jeff King, told , “Two hundred million Christians currently live under persecution. It’s absolutely on the rise.

“It’s easing in the old Communist world, and it’s rising in the Islamic world,” he said, pointing particularly to countries like Egypt, Pakistan and Nigeria. King also claimed that 10,000 Christians were murdered in Indonesia alone between 1998 and 2003.

Nigeria continues to own the shameful title of being the deadliest place to be a Christian. In 2012, 70 percent of Christians murdered due to persecution were killed in Nigeria. The Rev. Faye Pama Musa was recently killed, being followed home by suspected Boko Haram militants and then shot. News of the murder spread hours after Nigeria's President Goodluck Jonathan declared a state of emergency in three of Nigeria's northern states most affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.

Dinah Pokempner, general counsel for the Human Rights Watch, could not confirm the Vatican's number, but said, "I think there's little doubt that every week, every day, someone in the world is being persecuted—even to the point of losing their life—based on their religion.

"Persecution is a daily event on the basis of religion," she added. "This persecution affects Christians just as it does Muslims, Jews, Bahá'ís and people of other faiths."