

'Little Child Was Cut in Half,' Vicar of Baghdad Reports

Islamic State militants brutally killed the young son of a founding member of Baghdad's Anglican Church during an attack on the Christian town of Qaraqosh last week.

Canon Andrew White—known as the Vicar of Baghdad—told the Anglican Communion News Service that he baptized the 5-year-old boy several years ago, and his parents named the boy Andrew after him.

The boy, whose brother was named George after St. George's Anglican Church in Iraq's capital, was reportedly cut in half by the militants.

"I'm almost in tears because I've just had somebody in my room whose little child was cut in half," White said. "I baptized his child in my church in Baghdad. This little boy, they named him after me—he was called Andrew."

The boy's father helped found the church in 1998 when White first came to Baghdad.

"This man, before he retired north to join his family, was the caretaker of the Anglican Church," the canon said.

"This town of Qaraqosh is a Christian village so they knew everybody there was part of their target group," explained White. "They [the Islamic State] attacked the whole of the town. They bombed it, they shot at people."

The Islamic State, a ruthless offshoot of the al-Qaeda terrorist network, captured the town overnight Wednesday/Thursday last week.

“Sunni militants captured Iraq’s biggest Christian town, Qaraqosh, prompting many residents to flee, fearing they would be subjected to the same demands the Sunni militants made in other captured areas: leave, convert to Islam or face death,” Reuters reported Thursday.

The boy’s family—along with many others—has now fled to Irbil, ACNS said. But according to news reports, that could be the Islamic State’s next target.

As the militants take over parts of Iraq, the United Nations has said the nation could be facing a “humanitarian catastrophe.” White said Anglicans are working hard to provide relief to the Christians who have fled Mosul and Nineveh, as well as other minority groups targeted by the Islamic State.

“Anglicans are literally at the forefront of bringing help in this situation, and there’s no one else,” he said, adding that the church is providing food, water, accommodation and other relief items, thanks to financial support from overseas.