



Written by [James Heiser](#) on May 19, 2011

## Media Whitewashes Islamic Attacks on Egyptian Christians

Islamic atrocities continue to be perpetrated against the Egyptian Christians, but the Western media often misreport such crimes as if they were the result of “communal clashes.” One of the most recent incidents in the persecution of the churches of Egypt was the attack on churches in Imbaba, a suburb of Cairo. According to an Agenzia Fides news article, the violence was allegedly perpetrated by members of the Salafi movement (“Salafi” meaning “following the forefathers of Islam”), and involved attacks on Roman Catholic and Coptic churches:



Twelve deaths and a hundred wounded is the toll of the assault carried out by groups of Salafis against some churches in the district of Imbaba, in the north-west of Cairo, the capital of Egypt. “A Catholic church was also attacked, along with some Coptic Orthodoxes,” Fr. Luciano Verdoscia, a Comboni missionary who has been working in Cairo for several years, says to Fides. “A group of Salafis came shooting in the church and killed the father of one of our postulants, who is in Uganda. The man was hit by several shots to the chest,” Fr. Luciano tells Fides.

As bad as conditions were for Christians [under the Mubarak regime](#), their plight has [grown steadily worse](#) since the revolution which drove the old government from power. But church burnings and bombings seem to draw little press coverage in the West. And, according to Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW), the problem is made worse by the propensity of reporters to downplay the religious nature of such attacks when the perpetrators are Muslims. [Christian Today-Australia](#) reports that, according to CSW, such anti-Christian violence is often packaged as a secular squabble or “sectarian” violence:

With regards to the inaccurate reporting of the attacks on Christians by both local and international media, the letter [a statement released by experts and faith leaders “with an interest in Egypt, religious freedom and human rights”] states, “Both local and international media reporting of the attacks have been deeply problematic. Mainstream Egyptian media describes such incidents as communal clashes, with at times, inaccurate reports that they are incited by Coptic Christians. Some Islamic media uses [a] harsher and more dangerous tone, with frequent calls to “punish” and ostracize the 10 million strong Coptic community.

The international media is reporting the attacks as “sectarian clashes.” However, these events are not clashes between two sects, such as Sunni and Shiite clashes in Iraq; they constitute a disturbing pattern of escalating attacks and violence against a minority community. Erroneous wording in media reports enable[s] radical groups to continue their aggression, and the Egyptian authorities to remain oblivious and insensitive towards a vulnerable minority.



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For those Christians who have first-hand knowledge of events in Egypt, there is a recognition that the situation faced by Egyptian Christians is bleak. Efforts by Copts and other Christians to protest the violence which is being unleashed on them is apparently seen by both the Muslim authorities and the violent rabble in the street as an opportunity to further brutalize the long-suffering minority. [A story at CatholicCulture.org](#) summarizes the ongoing phenomena with the example of one of the most recent incidents:

Coptic Christians in Cairo who were protesting recent attacks on churches were themselves attacked by a mob as riot police watched, according to press reports. The mob threw gasoline bombs and rocks at the Christian protestors. “The Christians are under organized attack by Muslim extremists, who have been emboldened since the fall of President Mubarak,” said Car Moeller, president of Open Doors USA. “And the army and security forces have been slow to respond to the attacks.”

U.S. and European intervention in the Muslim world has done essentially nothing to help Christians who are bearing the brunt of Jihadist violence; frankly, their “intervention” appears chaotic and reactive, with little sign of a coherent governing policy or strategy. It is most certainly not the mandate or the intention of the western governments to aid Christians, or impose Christianity on the Islamic nations. It would be of benefit to the surviving Christians in Egypt, Iraq, and elsewhere, if the West would stop making things worse for them.

*Photo: Egyptian Christians carry a coffin of one of the victims of attacks by Muslims in the streets of Imbaba, western Cairo, Egypt: AP Images*



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