



Guest Editorial

Another Priest Killed: the Assyrian Genocide Continues in Iraq

Rosie Malek-Yonan

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Los Angeles (AINA) -- The latest victim of the Assyrian Genocide unfolding in Iraq is 40 year-old Father Youssef Adel, the parish priest at Saint Peter and Paul Orthodox Church in central Baghdad.

According to reports from AP and Reuters, just a few hours ago at approximately 11:30 a.m. on Saturday 5 April 2008, Father Adel was gunned down at the gates of his own home near the church in Karrada neighborhood. After the shooting, the assailants sped away by car. Father Adel's body was taken to Ibn Nafis Hospital in central Baghdad.

Father Adel was an engineer by trait, when six years ago he became a priest and served at a church in Dora, south of Baghdad. When the predominantly Sunni neighborhood became too violent for the Assyrians, Father Adel transferred to Karradah where he continued to serve his people. Now he leaves behind a young widow.

Assyrian news media outlets, writers and activists have been [consistently reporting](#) on crimes committed against their nation since the beginning of the Iraq War in 2003. When the news of this latest murder of a member of my nation came early this Saturday morning, I wondered how many ways would I write the same article time and time again? It's the same scenario. Only the names change. And despite our pleas, no one is moved enough within the U.S. Government to take serious action to protect the Assyrians in Iraq.

Has the human race become so desensitized, that these atrocities no longer phase anyone?

The Assyrian nation has been on a rapid decline since the beginning of the war when the population of the Christians was about 1.4 million while today less than one third remains in Iraq.

Thousands have lost their lives in the Iraq War including Shi'a, Sunni, Kurds and Americans. However, the Assyrians have become the subject of an ethnic cleansing that will potentially wipe out that nation completely while the others will continue to survive when this war will eventually come to a long and exhaustive end.

The Assyrian Genocide in Iraq is the untold tragedy of the Iraq War. As the indigenous people of that region, many Assyrians refuse to leave the land of their ancestors especially when they recently celebrated the 6578th Assyrian New Year. However, many Assyrians have fled to neighboring Syria, Jordan and Lebanon where they are now stranded with no hope of ever going back or moving forward. A few have been fortunate enough to make it to the relative safety of western countries. But for those Assyrians who don't have the means to leave the killing fields in Iraq, life is just a game of Russian roulette.



Fr. Youssef Adel

Rosie Malek-Yonan is an Assyrian actor, director and author of [The Crimson Field](#). She is an outspoken advocate of issues concerning Assyrians, in particular bringing attention to the Assyrian Genocide and the plight of today's Assyrians in Iraq since the U.S. lead invasion of Iraq in 2003. On June 30, 2006, she was invited to [testify](#) on Capitol Hill regarding the genocide and persecution of Assyrians in Iraq. She is on the Board of Advisors at Seyfo Center in Europe that exclusively deals with the Assyrian Genocide and is an Ambassador for the Swedish based Assyrians Without Borders. She has worked with many of Hollywood's leading actors and directors. She played the role of Nuru Il-Ebrahimi, opposite Reese Witherspoon in New Line Cinema's "Rendition." To schedule an interview with Rosie Malek-Yonan, please send your request to contact@thecrimsonfield.com.

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