

## 21 Incidents : Caste Discrimination Among Christians (2008 to 2025)


### “Who says there is equality in Christianity?”




This report has compiled **21 incidents** from 2008 to 2025 that highlight **discrimination** faced by **Dalit Christians** within the **Christian community**.







➤ On **September 13, 2025**, Karnataka Chief Minister **Siddaramaiah** remarked that people often convert out of **Hinduism** because equality and equal opportunity are lacking within the Hindu community. Siddaramaiah had said, **'They convert because of our system. If there were equality in Hinduism, why would anyone convert?'**




❖ **Within this context, let us consider these incidents:**




- ◆ **India's Supreme Court to hear landmark case on caste discrimination in Catholic parish.**
- ◆ **Dalit Christians in Tamil Nadu village allege church discrimination.**
- ◆ **Dalit Christians not allowed to attend Church festivals.**
- ◆ **Dalit' Christian employee of Loyola College alleges caste discrimination.**
- ◆ **DCLM protest against caste atrocity in Catholic Church.**



S.No	Incidents	Visual & Source
1.	<p><b>India's Supreme Court to hear landmark case on caste discrimination in Catholic parish.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 21/02/2025</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Catholic Christian</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> St. Mary Magdalene parish</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> The Supreme Court had agreed to examine a petition filed by Dalit Christians, from the district of Trichy, Tamil Nadu, against caste-based forms of discrimination in the Catholic parish in Kottapalayam, a village in the Diocese of Kumbakonam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In the petition, village residents argued that the local community administration is still excluding Dalits from annual celebrations and practise segregation in burials. Unlike other Catholics, the remains of Dalit Catholics are not allowed inside the church for the funeral Mass or prayers.</li> <li>● A bench of Justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra issued notices to the Tamil Nadu government and church authorities and sought their responses by April 15.</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Live Law</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Catholicvote</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">The News Minute</a></p> </div>




<p>2.</p>	<p><b>Dalit Christians in Tamil Nadu village allege church discrimination.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 30/08/2023</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians of Kottapalayam village</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Kumbakonam Catholic diocese</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> A section of Dalit Christians of Kottapalayam village, St Mary Magdalene Church parish in the village belongs to Kumbakonam Catholic diocese had alleged blatant caste discrimination in the village church. The Dalit Christians had alleged that they were not allowed to participate in church activities as only people from the influential community were allowed to become members of the church. Dalits Christians are not allowed to give any financial contribution or church subscription.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Justice news</a></p>
<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Dalit Christians not allowed to attend Church festivals.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 26/02/2023</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians of Ayyampatti</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> St. Mary Magdalene church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> A section of Dalit Christians had alleged caste discrimination at the local St. Mary Magdalene church in Ayyampatti near Thiruverumbur, in Trichy District</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It was learnt from Dalit Christians that they were not allowed to take part in the annual festival or use the common community hall for conducting marriages or other family functions. It is alleged that only families belonging to the dominant community are considered members of the parish.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="#">Organiser</a></p> <p><a href="#">Times of India</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Dalit' Christian employee of Loyola College alleges caste discrimination.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 15/07/2022</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Chennai )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Lawrence D'Cruz</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Loyola College run by the Society of Jesus</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Lawrence D'Cruz, a former student of Loyola College, started working at the university in October 2013. On the 23rd of April 2022, Lawrence was terminated by the college for reasons, that he says are fabricated. According to Lawrence, he was constantly discriminated against, made to do menial jobs, abused for being a "Dalit" and sexually harassed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Several individuals had come forward to claim that their employment was terminated simply because they were 'Dalit Christians' and the college discriminated against them due to their caste.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="#">Op India</a></p>



<p>5.</p>	<p><b>DCLM protest against caste atrocity in Catholic Church.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 29/03/2022</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Chennai )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christian Liberation Movement (DCLM)</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Pondicherry-Cuddalore archdiocese</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> The Dalit Christian Liberation Movement (DCLM) had staged a protest near the Collector's Office in Chennai on March 29, 2022, against the appointment of the non-Dalit archbishop Francis Kalist in the Pondicherry-Cuddalore archdiocese. The DCLM leaders was disappointed with the move of the Catholic Church for not heeding attention to the voice of the Dalit Christians in Tamil Nadu, south India.</p>	  <p><b>DCLM protests against caste atrocity in Catholic Church</b></p> <p><a href="http://dalitchristiansdigest.com">dalitchristiansdigest</a></p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Dalit nuns can't talk about caste discrimination.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 12/11/2021</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Delhi</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Sister Helen</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Sister Robency Amal Helen, a 33-year-old member of the Idente Missionaries (Religious Institute of Christ the Redeemer), said former Christians of lower caste or Dalit origin face various forms of discrimination within the Catholic Church.</p>	 <p><b>Dalit nuns can't talk about caste discrimination</b></p>  <p><a href="http://mattersindia.com">mattersindia.com</a></p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>National Council of Dalit Christians write to Pope about rampant caste discrimination in Catholic Churches of TN.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 12/06/2021</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Chennai )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC)</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic Churches of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> On June 12, 2021, the National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC) had written a letter to Pope Francis and other authorities of the Vatican about the rampant practice of untouchability and caste discrimination in the Catholic Churches of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and has urged the Pope to pass an order regarding the same.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Letter states that Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) and Council of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI) authorities and all the 18 Bishops of the Catholic Dioceses of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry was purposefully/wilfully allowing the visible and invisible form of caste discrimination in the Church.</li> </ul>	  <p><b>National Council of Dalit Christians write to Pope about rampant caste discrimination in Catholic Churches of TN</b></p> <p><a href="http://thecommunemag.com">the communemag</a></p>


<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Caste discrimination: Notices issued to Indian bishops, governments.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 25/06/2021  <b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Chennai )  <b>Victim :</b> Gnanapragasam Mathew  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, Conference of Catholic Bishops of India</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> On June 25, 2021, the Madras High Court had issued notices to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India, 18 bishops of Tamil Nadu, ministries under the federal and Tamil Nadu and Puducherry governments for caste-based discrimination among Catholics in Tamil Nadu.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The court had allowed a writ petition filed by Gnanapragasam Mathew, convenor of the Tamil Nadu Dalit Christian Alliance, explaining various practices of caste-based discrimination among Catholics in 151 villages in Tamil Nadu.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="https://www.mattersindia.com">mattersindia.com</a></p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Dalit leaders fume at non-Dalit bishop for Salem.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 31/05/2021  <b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu  <b>Victim :</b> Dalit Catholic groups in Tamil Nadu  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Salem diocese</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Dalit Catholic groups in Tamil Nadu had expressed dismay at the Vatican appointing a non-Dalit as the bishop of a predominantly Dalit diocese in Tamil Nadu.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pope Francis on May 31, 2021 appointed Father Arulselvam Rayappan, a seminary professor from the Vanniyar caste, as the bishop of Salem.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="https://www.mattersindia.com">mattersindia.com</a></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Dalit Christians rally at Villupuram demanding Dalit Archbishop for Pondicherry – Cuddalore.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 13/02/2021  <b>Place :</b> Villupuram, Villupuram  <b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christian Liberation Movement (NCLM)  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Christ the King Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> The Dalit Christians organised a rally on February 13, 2021, to demand the hierarchy of the Catholic Church to appoint a Dalit Archbishop in Pondicherry–Cuddalore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Prof. Mary John, head of the Dalit Christian Liberation Movement (NCLM) in Tamil Nadu, said, "The appointment of bishops should be done with sincerity, if the church fails to meet our demands, we will not allow the bishop to take charge." Dalit Christians in the Archdiocese of Pondicherry-Cuddalore were discriminated against from the very inception of the diocese. They were treated like outcasts in education, employment, becoming priests and the appointment of a Dalit bishop.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="https://dalitchristiansdigest.com">dalitchristiansdigest</a></p>

<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Dalit Christians stage protest march in southern India.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 06/02/2021</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Kumbakonam Diocese</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Dalit Christians in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu had staged a protest march on Feb 6, 2021 in Kumbakonam Diocese against the discrimination faced by Dalits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The protesters from eight Dalit Christian groups had marched submit a memorandum to the bishop and other diocesan officials stating their demand for a Dalit bishop in the diocese.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>UCA News</b></p>
<p>12.</p>	<p><b>Protest in front of the headquarters of the Archdiocese of Pondicherry-Cuddalore.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 03/12/2020</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu (Cuddalore)</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christian Liberation Movement</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Archdiocese of Pondicherry-Cuddalore</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> On December 3, 2020, protests erupted in front of the headquarters of the Archdiocese of Pondicherry-Cuddalore at Puducherry as Dalit Christians demanded justice in the appointment of Dalit priests and total exclusion of Dalit Christians from the management of church affairs.</p>	 <p><b>nijamtoday.com</b></p>
<p>13.</p>	<p><b>Dalit priests protest caste-discrimination in Indian archdiocese.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> Nov 30, 2020</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nssadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Around 30 Dalit priests</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Archbishop of Pondicherry and Cuddalore</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Around 30 Dalit priests had staged a sit-in protest at the archbishop's house from November 30 to December 4, 2020, demanding dialogue to tackle discrimination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Dalit priests had asked the archbishop to make transfers and appointments more equitable, saying no Dalit priest serves in a parish dominated by non-Dalit Catholics.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>cruxnow.com</b></p>

<p>14.</p>	<p><b>Murder of Dalit Christian was a case of 'honour killing' : Kerala court</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 07/11/2018</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Kerala ( Thiruvananthapuram )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Kevin Joseph</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> N/A</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> 24-year-old Dalit Christian Kevin Joseph was found dead in Kollam city on May 28, 2018 just three days after he married Neenu. Joseph was murdered because he married Neenu, an elite Christian girl. The police had arrested the father, brother and three other relatives of the woman. In all, the police had charged 14 people with Joseph's murder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● An Additional Sessions Court in Kerala's Kottayam on Nov 07, 2018 observed that the death of a 24-year-old Dalit Christian was a case of "honour killing".</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="#">Scroll.in</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Hindu</a></p>
<p>15.</p>	<p><b>Dalit Christians Report Untouchability, Widespread Caste Discrimination Within Sivaganga Diocese.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 09/04/2018</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Sivaganga )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians of Sivaganga</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Sivaganga Diocese</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> A report released by the Tamil Nadu Untouchability Eradication Front (TNUEF) had alleged widespread caste based discrimination against Dalit Christians in the Sivaganga district in Tamil Nadu.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The report, titled 'Dalit Christians Crucified', made serious allegations of discriminatory practices in the diocese for Dalit Christians, including untouchability, separate churches and graveyards and denial of priestly appointments to them.</li> <li>● Dalit Christians also faced discrimination in other occupations, with schools, colleges and hospitals operated by the church only recruiting staff from the non-Dalit Christian population. The front also reported festivals being organised separately for the Dalit and non-Dalit Christian populations.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="#">Swaraja</a></p> <p><a href="#">DNA</a></p>

<p>16.</p>	<p><b>Indian Church admits Dalits face discrimination.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 18/03/2017.  <b>Place :</b> Mumbai  <b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Prominent Indian Cardinal Oswald Gracias has said the Catholic Church in the country now acknowledges that Dalit Christians face greater discrimination because of their "untouchable" status.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cardinal Oswald Gracias, the Archbishop of Bombay, made his comments in discussions about their plight and possible solutions during the annual gathering of the National Council of Dalit Christians (NCDC), which took place in Mumbai from March 18-19, 2017.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="http://www.cruxnow.com">Cruxnow.com</a></p>
<p>17.</p>	<p><b>First time, Church says: Dalit Christians face untouchability.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 19/12/2016  <b>Place :</b> India  <b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Indian Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> For the first time in its history, the Indian Catholic Church had officially accepted that Dalit Christians face untouchability and discrimination, and that "their participation in the level of leadership... at the higher levels is almost nil".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● These admissions are contained in a policy document prepared and released on December 19, 2016 by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI).</li> <li>● The 44-page document titled 'Policy for Dalit Empowerment in the Catholic Church in India' asked 171 dioceses to submit long-term and short-term plans within a year to eliminate all forms of discrimination against Dalit Christians.</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="http://www.theindianexpress.com">The Indian Express</a></p>
<p>18.</p>	<p><b>Priests arrested in connection with the attack on Dalit bishop.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 24/08/2016  <b>Place :</b> Cuddappah, Andhra Pradesh  <b>Victim :</b> Bishop Cuddapah Prasad Gallela  <b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> The Catholic Church hierarchy in India had been accused of ignoring an attack on a Dalit bishop Cuddapah Prasad Gallela after three Catholic priests were arrested in connection with the attack.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Cuddapah Prasad Gallela and his driver Vijay Kumar were kidnapped in April 25, 2016, blindfolded and beaten and taken to an undisclosed place where ₹50,000 was demanded in ransom.</li> <li>● Three high-caste [Reddy] priests were among those arrested for the crime. The South India Dalit Catholic Association had condemned the Catholic hierarchy's "silence".</li> </ul>	 <p><a href="http://www.bharatabharati.com">Bharata Bharati</a></p>

<p>19.</p>	<p><b>Discrimination within the Church.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 06/06/2016</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Protestant and Catholic Church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Thadam Thedi , a pilot report published on the status of Dalit Christians in Catholic Church, says though Dalits account for 22,40,726 of the total population of 39,64,360 Catholics, they had not been given any important posts in Church administration. Of the 18 Archbishops in Tamil Nadu, only two are Dalits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● G. Mathew, one of members of the committee that prepared the report, said in many churches, Dalits have separate cemetery and funeral carts and are not allowed to use the common road leading to the church. In some churches, the body of Dalits are not allowed for rituals.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>THE HINDU</b></p> <h3>Discrimination within the Church</h3> <p>Though Dalits account for more than 50% of total population of Catholics, they have not been given any important posts in Church administration.</p> <p><small>Updated - November 17, 2021 01:41 am IST - CHENNAI:</small></p> <p>Conversion from Hinduism to other religions, it is generally argued, is to escape the untouchability and caste-based discrimination inherent in Hinduism. Christianity, however, is not able to eradicate untouchability, and casteism continues to dominate both the Protestant and Catholic Church even though Dalits form the majority of the Christian population in Tamil Nadu.</p> <p><a href="#">The Hindu</a></p>
<p>20.</p>	<p><b>Eraiyr church festival car procession discrimination.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 28/05/2016</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Tamil Nadu ( Chennai )</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians of Eraiyr church</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Eraiyr church</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Our Lady of Rosary Church is situated in Eraiyr near Ulundurpet. The Vanniyar Christians in the locality had refused to allow Dalit Christians to enter the church using the main entrance in Eraiyr church festival car procession.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Dalits had been fight to get the car procession to pass through their streets, a move opposed by the Vanniyars. In 2010, the latter boycotted the festival, since the car procession was to be taken through the Dalit streets also, as per an order from the Madras High Court.</li> <li>● In this Case Madras High Court had ordered the RDO to conduct a peace meeting and issue an order to to permit the Eraiyr church festival car procession to be taken out through public roads.</li> </ul>	 <p><b>THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS</b></p> <h3>Madras HC orders peace meeting to ease Eraiyr Church situation</h3> <p><small>Since the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) refused to permit the Eraiyr church festival car procession to be taken out.</small></p> <p><small>Published: 28th May 2016 09:18 AM   Last Updated: 28th May 2016 09:18 AM</small></p> <p><small>By Bagalevan Perier B   Express News Service</small></p> <p><small>VILLUPURAM: Since the Revenue Divisional Officer (RDO) refused to permit the Eraiyr church festival car procession to be taken out through public roads pointing to caste-based issues in the past, the Madras High Court ordered the RDO to conduct a peace meeting and issue an order to effect on Saturday.</small></p> <p><small>Our Lady of Rosary Church is situated in Eraiyr near Ulundurpet. According to sources, the Vanniyar Christians in the locality refused to allow Dalit Christians to enter the church using the main entrance, irking the latter. Since 2009, Dalits have been fighting to get the car procession to pass through their streets, a move opposed by the Vanniyars. In 2010, the latter boycotted the festival, since the car procession was to be taken through the Dalit streets also, as per an order from the Madras High Court.</small></p> <p><small>The tension created by the festival prompted the implementation of Criminal Procedure Code 144 last year, prohibiting the movement of the car procession</small></p> <p><a href="#">The New Indian Express</a></p>

<p><b>21.</b></p>	<p><b>Eraiyr Christian caste clash.</b></p> <p><b>Date :</b> 09/03/2008</p> <p><b>Place :</b> Villupuram, Tamil Nadu</p> <p><b>Victim :</b> Dalit Christians At Eraiyu</p> <p><b>Church Denomination :</b> Catholic churches</p> <p><b>Incident :</b> Two persons was killed and three others injured in riot between Vanniyar Christian and Dalit Christian communities in Villupuram district of Tamil Nadu on March 9, 2008. Tension had been mounted in Erayur village, when some Dalit Christians began an indefinite fast against discrimination in the parish by the Vanniyars.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">  <p><b>Eraiyr echo: Churches in Cuddalore, Villupuram locked</b></p> <p><small>Published: Monday, March 17, 2008, 20:08 (IST)</small></p> <p>Villupuram, Tamil Nadu, Mar 17 (UNI) Expressing solidarity with the Dalit Christians of Eraiyur village in the district, many Catholic churches here and in neighbouring Cuddalore district have been closed down, even as churches across the world were preparing to observe holy week and celebrate Easter.</p> <p>The trouble that broke out at the Eraiyur village on March 9 last, resulting in the death of two people from the Vanniyar Christian community, seems to be far from over, with Dalits from Catholic churches in the vicinity supporting their cause.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">One India</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#">Times og India</a></p> </div>
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