



What can you do?

Display the enclosed poster in your church building and encourage your congregation to get involved with the campaign.

Feature our 60-second weekly prayer videos for Nigeria in your Sunday services/prayer gatherings for the 12-week duration of the campaign. (Available on our YouTube channel.)

Distribute the enclosed book marks to your church and request more if required.

Invite a Release International speaker to your church to share more about the situation in Nigeria.

Plan a special *Out of these ashes* prayer and/or fundraising event to support Release International projects in Nigeria.

Take up a special church offering during the campaign to support Release International projects in Nigeria.

Join our online *Out of these ashes* event on Tuesday 4th April and our online and in-person *Day of the Christian Martyr* events from Thursday 22nd to Thursday 29th June. Registration is through EventBrite.

Request weekly updates about the campaign and a free copy of Archbishop Ben Kwashi's autobiography *Neither Bomb Nor Bullet* by completing the enclosed card or emailing info@releaseinternational.org

Visit www.releaseinternational.org/nigeria to find out more.



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RELEASE INTERNATIONAL
voice
of Persecuted Christians

CHRISTIAN
PERSECUTION
IN NIGERIA
**“OUT OF
THESE ASHES”**



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“OUT OF THESE ASHES”

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION IN NIGERIA

For the past two decades Christians in northern and central Nigeria have endured violent persecution.

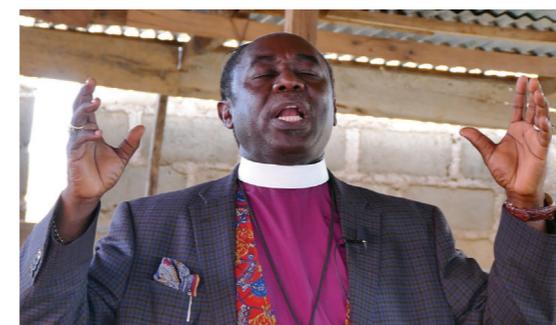
During that time thousands of Christians have been brutally killed and many, many more forced to flee homes and communities, ending up as refugees in their own country. Predominantly Christian villages have been overrun, church buildings destroyed and gospel-preaching pastors targeted for killing.

More recently kidnapping has become a further weapon, with many churches and Christian communities being forced to pay hefty ransoms for loved ones and fellow church members. This serves only to subjugate and impoverish those Christian communities.

In 1999 Zamfara State became the first state in the predominantly Muslim north to impose Sharia Law. Others followed suit – and violence against Christians followed.

In the north-eastern Borno State Boko Haram called for a jihad and began its campaign of terrorism and violence. Across Nigeria’s central belt radical and well-armed Fulani extremists continue to ravage Christian communities.

The Nigerian government has been criticised in recent years for not doing enough to defend Christians, who make up roughly half of the country’s populace. In the West secular politicians have often preferred



to see the situation in Nigeria as one of ‘ethnic division’ – rather than the clear and deliberate targeting and persecution of Christians by radical Islamists.

Out of these ashes is a three-month long campaign being run by RELEASE INTERNATIONAL to raise awareness of this on-going tragedy and to call Christians in the UK and Northern Ireland to commit to praying for the country of Nigeria and its Christian population.

Release International partners with organisations in Nigeria responding to the on-going persecution of Christians in a variety of ways.

One of our partners has, for a number of years, sought to respond to attacks on Christian communities in practical ways: providing life essentials to those who have been left with nothing. This partner has also developed an effective, biblically based programme to counsel those who have lived through the trauma of seeing loved ones slaughtered; helping them to respond to hatred with genuine Christian love and forgiveness.

Another partner is seeking to mobilize, train and resource pastors and evangelists, to strategically take the gospel back to those places decimated by Islamist extremists. It has been encouraging to hear reports of people coming to faith in Christ as a result of this work.

We encourage you and your church to identify with and be part of this campaign. Will you promote it, support it, use the resources we are providing and encourage your church to pray for those who have suffered and continue to suffer for Christ and the gospel?

