

#REDWEDNESDAY

**WHAT WOULD YOU RISK
FOR YOUR FAITH?**

**BREAK THE
SILENCE**

ON CHRISTIAN PERSECUTION

***NOT SUITABLE
FOR CHILDREN**



A C N

**MARGARET ATTAH
RISKED HER LIFE
TO GO TO MASS**

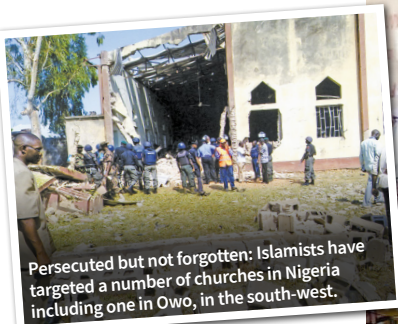
#GO2MASS



In June 2022, anti-Christian militants stormed St Francis Xavier's Church, Owo in south-west Nigeria killing 41 people, including six children. Amongst the 70 people injured, Margaret, a nurse and mother-of-four, lost both her legs and her sight in one eye.

“

**I THANK GOD FOR WHAT
ACN IS DOING. I THANK
GOD I AM ALIVE. I HAVE
SO MANY REASONS TO
BE THANKFUL TO GOD.”**



Persecuted but not forgotten: Islamists have targeted a number of churches in Nigeria including one in Owo, in the south-west.



Margaret lost both legs and an eye when extremists struck during Mass at her church.

MARGARET NEEDS **YOUR HELP** ...

**... AND SO DO THE MILLIONS OF CHRISTIAN AND
OTHER RELIGIOUS MINORITIES DISPLACED IN AFRICA
- DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES BY VIOLENCE OR
ECONOMIC NEED.**

- ACN provides trauma counselling and practical and emergency support to Christian communities across Africa where they have been attacked.
- We support refugees who have been made homeless and destitute due to targeted violence and especially to families where the father and adult sons have been murdered.



Women in Nigeria, widowed by attacks, learn new skills to help them support their families.

PRAYER



**PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS URGENTLY NEED
YOUR SPIRITUAL SUPPORT - PLEASE HELP THEM.**

■ Please **pledge** to **go to an extra Mass or prayer service** for Christians in Africa who are prevented from going due to threats of violence.

■ **Join** our **#RedWednesday Rosary Campaign**

For prayer ideas and parish and school liturgies and to pledge your prayer actions www.acnuk.org/redwednesday

Photo: Ismael Martinez Sanchez

ADVOCACY



In many parts of Africa there has been an explosion of anti-Christian violence, with millions displaced and living in fear.

The UK Government has the ability to create real, meaningful, and long-lasting change for the persecuted and dispossessed across the African continent, by working with their counterparts to drive progress at the legislative and policy levels.

We need your support in reaching out to MPs, to raise awareness about the plight of our African brothers and sisters, and to urge the Government to take action. If you're willing to help, please email daniel.beurthe@acnuk.org, and request to be added to our advocacy mailing list.

ACTION



#TEAMRED

22ND NOVEMBER - MAKE A STAND FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS AND OTHERS!

This **#RedWednesday** please join our **#TeamRed** by wearing an item of red, lighting your building red, or organising red-themed activities. Let's create national and local social media noise to highlight the plight of Margaret and others like her in Africa and around the world.

For ideas and inspiration, your **free #TeamRed Toolkit** and to pledge your ACTION, visit **www.acnuk.org/redwednesday**

For details of our London and Scotland #RedWednesday events and School Livestreams visit **www.acnuk.org/events**

PLEASE JOIN US

#redwednesday #breakthesilence #TeamRed

£100K 'MATCHED' CHALLENGE4AFRICA

Can you help us raise £100k by Christmas?

We are very fortunate to have generous funders who will match your donations and fundraising (up to £100k) – making your contribution go even further. Take part to provide trauma counselling, practical help and emergency aid to help refugees and people like Margaret in ACN priority countries in Africa.

Your gift – whatever you can afford will make a huge difference.

Schools and parishes

Just 200 gifts of £500 will help us unlock the 'match'!

If we raise more than our Challenge total, funds will be used towards other similar projects..

To find out how to donate and how your gift will help, fold out this leaflet for our Africa map.





Make your

#TEAMREDPLEDGE



IT TAKES COURAGE TO BE A CHRISTIAN IN AFRICA.

Africa is a wonderful continent, rich in history and culture and with many African countries thriving economically, with stable governments and educated and ambitious populations. **But in parts of Africa, especially Sub-Saharan Africa, an explosion of terrorism has seen a 70 percent increase in extremist violence against Christians and other faith minorities.** The destruction and displacement of communities, torture, killings and sexual slavery are the reality for millions of people.

There are nearly 685 million Christians in Africa[†] of which 256 million Catholics (18 percent of the population).[†] **Africa is now a priority for Aid to the Church in Need with nine countries in the Emergency category.** We are working across affected areas to provide practical, material and spiritual support along with inter-faith dialogue initiatives. In the first half of 2023 alone, nearly 27 percent of ACN (UK) aid has gone to Africa.

Key: Situation for Christians

- Persecution
- Discrimination
- ⬇️ Worsened
- ⬆️ No change
- ⬆️ Monitoring
- ⬆️ Improved

MALI: FACT For over a decade jihadists have controlled northern Mali, driving out Christians with a campaign of terror and burning down churches. Christians now report *Shari'a* law being imposed: alcohol and pork banned; women forced to cover faces; and children required to learn the *Qur'an* and Islamic prayers.

NIGER: FACT A July 2023 coup has destabilised this country further – already suffering from armed conflict, food insecurity, ethnic disputes, competition for resources and jihadist attacks. In 2022 there was a 43 percent spike in violence.

CHAD: FACT Chad is a huge, sparsely populated country and one of the least developed in the world. Fifty eight priests minister to the 220,000 Catholics in the country (population 1.6 million), yet despite the threat of increasing extremism, 48 young men are being supported by ACN in their journey to the priesthood.

ERITREA: FACT Christians face arrest, unlawful detention and maltreatment. While this mostly affects unregistered religious groups, members of the four permitted religions – Eritrean Orthodox, Sunni Muslim, Catholicism and Evangelical Lutheranism – have also been targeted.

BURKINA FASO: FACT The country's religious harmony was shattered in 2015 as jihadist groups made bids to seize control – 40 percent of the country is now under their command. In August 2023 Father Pierre Rouamba told ACN, extremists were forcing Christians to either convert or leave and that many had been "beheaded, raped or reduced to sexual slavery."

LIBERIA - 2024

'TWINNING' PARTNERSHIP:

In 2024, ACN will enter into a **unique partnership** with the Catholic community in Liberia – some 166,000 people (5.8 percent of the population). With their own history of civil war and conflict long behind them, would you or your parish, school or other groups like to join us in linking to and supporting this vibrant community of faith? Find out more at www.acnuk.org/liberia2024



NIGERIA: FACT

Over the last 13 years around 45,000 Christians have been killed through terrorist activity and other violence and 4 million people (including flood victims), are now living as refugees in urgent need of basic help and trauma counselling to help them deal with the emotional and psychological impact of what they have endured.

- Leah Sharibou, aged 14, was one of more than 100 teenage girls kidnapped from their school by Islamic militants in 2018. She alone refused to convert to Islam – the condition of release. She is alive, but still captive.
- In Sokoto, 22-year-old Christian, **Deborah Samuel Yakubu** was stoned to death and set on fire for blasphemy by classmates for a WhatsApp message she sent complaining about the forced introduction of Islam into an academic study group.
- Boko Haram captured **Catherine Ibrahim** and her two children and murdered her husband in front of her. She has been living with other bereaved IDPs in church-run camps. With ACN support, Maiduguri Diocese provides trauma counselling and courses to learn new skills to make those who escaped Boko Haram self-sufficient.

CAMEROON: FACT In addition to strife between English and French-speaking communities, there is growing extremism in some areas. Boko Haram and other groups are responsible for kidnaps, attacks and violence against Christians – the most targeted group – with Christian women and girls living in fear.



DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO: FACT

Competition for mineral resources has resulted in ferocious violence and horrific human rights abuses. Estimates indicate up to 122 armed groups are active in DRC who, amongst others, target religious leaders as a form of coercive control and to spread fear. More than 5.6 million people have fled their homes and need help.

MOZAMBIQUE: FACT Jihadist attacks, including the targeting of Christian parishes and communities, have increased by 29 percent, including brutal 'on the spot' executions for people who refuse to convert and the capture of people, especially women, as slaves. Currently more than one million people are displaced.

For film testimonies



To find out more, and for stories of people affected go to www.acnuk.org/redwednesday

JOIN #TEAMRED'S £100,000 'MATCHED' CHALLENGE4AFRICA

Can you help us raise £100,000 before Christmas to provide emergency aid, support for displaced families and trauma counselling for people whose lives and families have been destroyed?

We have a small number of generous benefactors who will match donations (up to £100,000) – so the more we raise, the more we can provide practical, material and spiritual help to our brothers and sisters in Christ who are in desperate need. Your gift will heal broken lives.

THANK YOU



#REDWEDNESDAY
BREAK THE SILENCE

- £25** will help provide trauma counselling for children and adults emotionally scarred by what they have lived through.
- £45** will help a Sister to provide care and spiritual support for families in huge distress.
- £100** will help with emergency relief – food, water and shelter – for those escaping violence.
- £500** will support young men who willingly defy persecution to become priests.
- £1000** will help keep Christ present by re-building Churches destroyed by violence.

To donate and to check our Challenge total, go to our #TeamRed 'Break the Silence' Justgiving Page

WAYS TO DONATE:

www.justgiving.com/campaign/teamred

www.acnuk.org/redwednesday

0345 646 0110

FACT MILITANT ISLAMIST VIOLENCE IN AFRICA IS AT RECORD LEVELS †



Modern-day martyr: Father Isaac Achi (inset) was burned alive in January 2023 when extremists set fire to his home.



RedWednesday – 22nd November

This November will you help us:

- Raise £100K for Christians in Africa who are in urgent need?
- Pledge your prayers and support?
- Break the Silence on Christian and religious persecution in Africa and worldwide?

YOUR ACTION COUNTS!





#RED WEDNESDAY

**BREAK THE
SILENCE**

**ON CHRISTIAN
PERSECUTION
IN AFRICA**

**WARNING: INCLUDES
DISTURBING CONTENT
NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN.**



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN

www.acnuk.org

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Aid to the Church in Need is a Pontifical Foundation of the Catholic Church and a registered charity in England and Wales (1097984) and Scotland (SC040748)