

Christian communities devastated in post-election violence in Nigeria

Country/Region: Nigeria, Africa

Please continue to help our brothers and sisters

Watch Video

A pastor who lost his wife and three children in a brutal assault by Muslim extremists on a Nigerian village says he "will never forsake Christ".

Pastor James Musa Rike comforted his wife, Dune James Rike (35), with the hope of the Gospel as she lay dying after being shot and slashed with a machete during the assault on Kurum village, near Bogoro, Bauchi state, on 4 May. The Muslim assailants also killed three of the couple's five children, Sum, Faith and baby Fyali.

He said:

I knew my wife would not last long, and the only thing I did was to encourage her to hold on to her faith in Jesus.



A charred cross lies in the ruins of a Women's Fellowship Store

The attackers killed 12 other Christians in the village and set more than 20 houses ablaze. This was just one in a series of attacks on Christian communities following the re-election of Christian President Goodluck Jonathan, who defeated Muhammadu Buhari, a Muslim candidate from the North, in the 16 April poll. The latter's supporters went on the rampage, claiming that the poll was rigged, though international observers called this election the fairest in decades.

Details about the extent of the damage are still coming in, but so far it has been confirmed by our partners in the country that 194 churches have been burnt or destroyed, over 1,200 houses have been destroyed and 15,000 people have been displaced.

Barnabas Fund is grateful for the donations of our supporters that have enabled us to send relief to Christian victims of the violence in Nigeria.

One of our local partners visited the northern town of Malumfashi, Katsina state, and took these photos of churches, school buildings, homes, vehicles, businesses and shops belonging to Christians that were ransacked and torched.



This primary school in Malumfashi was torched by rioters



Onlookers survey the damage to this church in Malumfashi

Another local partner said:

I was shocked by what I saw... It seems it was assumed that any Christians would have supported Goodluck Jonathan and therefore any Christian property was considered a target. It seems it was highly organised with several different teams attacking various locations.

Nobody was killed in Malumfashi, though hundreds of people lost their lives in the post-election violence elsewhere in Nigeria. Our partner said:

We are grateful that no-one was killed [in Malumfashi] although several people ... were injured while protecting some young women who were threatened but fortunately not attacked. We talked with all these people and sought to encourage them.

Dr Patrick Sookhdeo, International Director of Barnabas Fund, said:

Christian communities in Nigeria have, once again, been devastated by co-ordinated and calculated attacks by Muslim rioters. Many have lost loved ones, homes and businesses; they will need our continued support and prayers as they attempt to rebuild their lives.

Give Today

If you would like to help Christian victims of the violence in Nigeria, please send your donation to **00-345** (Victims of Violence). Please click to donate online using our secure server.

If you prefer to telephone, dial: **0800 587 4006** from within the UK or **+44 1672 565031** from outside the UK. Please quote project reference **00-345** (Victims of Violence).

If you prefer to send a cheque by post: [Click this link](#) for the address of our regional office. Please quote project reference **00-345** (Victims of Violence).

For a quick donation of £3.00 by SMS ([see terms and conditions here](#)) text **Barnabas/345** to **70007** (Please note: This facility is presently only available to UK supporters).

Please Pray:

- That there will be peace between Nigeria's Muslim and Christian communities.
- For Pastor James and all those Christians who lost loved ones and/or property in the post-election violence; that they will be comforted and provided with all they need to rebuild their lives.
- That President Jonathan will govern with justice and righteousness, and that he will come to be regarded by all Nigerians as a unifying rather than a divisive figure.