

MOTHERS' UNION - WAVE OF PRAYER LINK
IJESHA NORTH DIOCESE,
IBADAN PROVINCE - CHURCH OF NIGERIA

Bishop - The Rt Rev Isaac I. Oluyamo and Mama Margaret

Ijesha North Diocese is based in Ijebu-Jesa Town and is in Osun State which was created in August 1991 with Osogho as its Capital.

Osun State = 55% Christian
40% Muslim 5% Traditional



Geographically the state is divided between the Nigerian Lowland Forests which is in most of the state and the drier Guinean forest-savanna mosaic which is in the north.

Economically Osun State is mainly Agricultural, growing Cocoa, Cassava, Millet, Maize, Yam, and Potato crops plus Cattle Herding. State named after its main River, the Osun, which also has two tributaries, the Erinie and the Oba.

Each August is held the very popular Osun-Osogbo Festival. A celebration festival held in the memory of their river goddess; a two week celebration that involves making sacrifices to appease the gods and other traditional rites. It is a celebration showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the Osun People and it is celebrated at the Osun Grove, named as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005. The Festival has evolved from just being a cultural event celebrated by Yoruba peoples of Osogbo to being a renowned international celebration that keeps attracting new participants yearly, tourists and visitors from all round the world.

The Yoruba People are a West African ethnic group who inhabit SW & Central Nigeria, Benin and Togo. Yoruba, with Hausa in the north and Igbo in the south east, are the three largest original ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Fulani people are now also strong in the north.

A PRAYER SUGGESTION FOR OUR MU MEMBERS IN NIGERIA

The persecution facing Christians in Nigeria is extreme and often brutally violent, as Islamic militants and armed bandits attack with increasing impunity.

This mostly affects believers living in the Muslim-majority north and middle belt, but it's also spreading to the south. Although all civilians are subject to threats and violence, Christians are often specifically targeted because of their faith. Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP), for example, want to eliminate the presence of Christianity in Nigeria. More Christians are killed for their faith in Nigeria than in the rest of the world combined - 14 every day on average.

Men and boys are often specifically targeted by extremist groups, with the aim of destroying livelihoods and stifling Christian population growth. Christian women and girls in Northern Nigeria, and increasingly further south, are vulnerable to persecution for their faith and gender - they are frequently targeted for abduction, sexual assault and forced marriages by armed groups. Christians are dispossessed of their land and their means of livelihood, and many live as internally displaced people or refugees.

In northern states that operate under Sharia (Islamic Law) Christians can be treated as second-class citizens, whilst Christians who convert from Islam are also at risk of pressure and persecution, Christians from a Muslim background also face rejection from their own families, pressure to give up their faith, and often physical violence.

PLEASE PRAY - Father God, the violence and brutality across Nigeria is unimaginable. Please intervene to stop these evil attacks and work in the hearts of the militants to turn them from hatred to your love. Heal your people who are traumatised by attacks. Give them fresh hope for the future and the means to support themselves financially and socially. Bring about change in the government to protect Christians, and help the president and state governors to work transparently to find lasting solutions to the deepening security crisis in Nigeria. In Jesus name, **Amen**