



Jos Jottings, April 2023
Thank you for your generosity!!!

St Paul wrote to the infant church in Philippi, “I thank my God every time I remember you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.” (Philippians 1:3-4). And in the final chapter of that letter, Paul makes clear that the “sharing in the gospel” for which he is thankful very much includes their financial giving for gospel mission and the church. So this monthly update starts with a warm and genuine “THANK YOU” to all who have started generously sharing in the gospel by supporting our sisters and brothers in Jos Diocese in Nigeria. As of mid-April, your generosity has resulted in donations of over \$50,000 to:

- the training and equipping work of the Christian Institute in Jos (\$10,000);
- the support of the care of orphans and underprivileged children at the Zambiri School and its new Pankshin campus (\$35,000); and,
- long-term emergency relief to persecuted village communities (\$5,500).

Bishop Kwashi sends his personal thanks to you all! My visit to Jos this coming week allow me to get some first-hand reports and videos of the wonderful way in which your generous gifts are proving to be “fragrant” in giving life and hope to many!

If you haven’t yet had an opportunity to consider how you or your parish might be a part of this lovely growing partnership, there will be many new ideas after this visit on how you might work to raise a contribution towards a specific target in one of our project areas. And if I haven’t yet visited your parish or school to tell your community more about the needs in Jos and the opportunities we have to radically improve the situation and empower the gospel works mission of our sisters and brothers in Jos, do drop me a line!

Politics and security

The political and security situation in Nigeria is still unsettled following last month’s presidential and state governors’ elections, and ahead of the presidential inauguration scheduled for 29 May.

Unfortunately, persecution and religiously-motivated attacks on Christians continue:

- on **26 March** at about 11pm Fulani herdsmen and other terrorists reportedly broke into the North Jos, Plateau State, home of Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) Pastor Micah Gochin, killing him and kidnapping his son;
- on **17 April**, Anglican Bishop Jacob Kwashi of Zonkwa Diocese (and Bishop Ben’s brother) presided over the burial of 33 Christians (mainly women and children) killed by

ethnic Fulani herdsmen and other terrorists in an attack Saturday night/Sunday morning (**15-16 April**) in Runji village, in Zangon Kataf County, Kaduna State, due west of Jos. Many others were injured, and 40 homes reported burned, said a government spokesman;



Burial of 33 Christians in Ruji village, Kaduna state, Nigeria, on Monday 17 April, 2023. (Morning Star News screenshot)

- this attack followed the reported killing of 2 Christians on **13 April** in that same village, and of 17 Christians that were killed on **11 April** in nearby Atak Njei village;
- meanwhile, Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed at least 7 Christians on Saturday **1 April** in Benue State (south of the capital Abuja, and well south of Plateau State), bringing the total to more than 60 villagers reportedly killed in the past month in that state. Assailants killed a Christian, wounded 5 worshippers, and kidnapped the pastor and 4 others, in an attack on a worship meeting Saturday night 1 April in Logo County. This was after at least six Christians in Ikobi village, Apa County, were reportedly killed earlier in the day, with houses burned and families driven from their farms.

For prayer:

- In the wake of this seemingly unending violence and inaction by Nigerian Government authorities, please pray fervently for God's protection, and the Spirit's comfort, of our Christian sisters and brothers in Jos Diocese, and Nigeria at large, and that we will instead see the persecutors coming to know and love our Lord Jesus.
- Give thanks to God for the way his Spirit has stirred us in Australia to be generous in support for our sisters and brothers in need, and pray for further growth of our partnership with Jos and deepening generosity of heart amongst us.
- For a productive and safe 25 April – 1 May liaison visit by myself to Jos for meetings with Bishop Ben and his team and for project visits and reporting.
- Wisdom and energy for Bishop Ben as, looking towards retirement, he puts in place succession arrangements, and focusses on ongoing ministries, especially to orphans and the wider Anglican communion.

To make a tax-deductible donation to projects under our Diocesan partnership to support our persecuted fellow-Christians in Jos and Plateau State in Nigeria, go to <https://anglicanaid.org.au/locations/Nigeria> . To book a presentation on the situation in Nigeria and our partnership with Jos Diocese for your church or fellowship group, contact Rev Canon Patrick Cole on pandncole@bigpond.com .