



Jos Jottings, March 2024 Jesus making peace through the cross

Fulani Evangelists bringing the Gospel to the persecutors

While we (rightly) call for worldly justice and action by the Nigerian Government and security forces to protect unjustly persecuted Christian sisters and brothers, Truth Nigeria's recent reporting shows that our Lord Jesus seems to be at work on a far more ambitious scale, making earthly peace by bringing the persecutors to find peace with him through trusting his love for them on the cross.

Truth Nigeria's Senior Editor, Masara Kim, writing from Jos, Plateau State, on 4 April recalls that the Fulani are Africa's best-known herding tribe, numbering over 20 million (over 10 million in Nigeria alone). Often regarded the founding tribe of Islamic Jihad in West Africa, some of Nigeria's most influential figures are Fulani (including immediate past-President Muhammadu Buhari, and Africa's richest man, Aliko Dangote). But also among their number are merciless terrorists, Islamic extremists, kidnappers and warlords. Militants identifying as Fulani have killed thousands of Christians in targeted attacks in recent years, last year alone more than 8,000 people in Nigeria according to some reports, a good proportion of that within Plateau State.

But Masara tells the story of ethnic Fulani Christian evangelist Aliyu Nuhu, formerly a devout Muslim herdsman, who devoted his life to Jesus after 3 years of visions of a "man" calling him to follow Jesus, starting in 2012.

In 2015, Nuhu says he received a life-changing vision from Jesus to evangelize fellow Fulani. After two years of discipleship under an evangelist he claims he was directed to by "Isa" (the Koranic name for Jesus) in a remote village in Plateau State, he began his mission as a rural evangelist, specifically

targeting Fulani communities. He recorded remarkable success, amassing thousands of followers within a short period. In 2022, he founded a non-profit foundation to reach out to Fulani nomads with medical and humanitarian aid, as well as the gospel. He is now a famous Fulani evangelist, with more than 130,000 Facebook followers. Nuhu claims 50 new Fulani converts daily, in one mission alone reporting as many as 800 Fulani Muslims converts to Christ. This has infuriated some Islamic preachers, opening him to threats and attacks from Fulani Muslims, but also from the authorities.

Nuhu is not alone. Another prominent Fulani Christian evangelist, Bello Musa, a close ally of Nuhu, recently endured nine harrowing days in Nigerian Police custody where he allegedly suffered severe torture and threats to his life. Musa has remained in hiding since the incident. His alleged offence was his courageous preaching of Christ in Fulani communities and on social media, alongside Nuhu. Observers say threats to Fulani converts like him are widespread.

More than we could have hoped for, Jesus is making peace by the blood of his cross (Col. 1:19-20)!

Fulani worshippers gather at a gospel rally.



The Security Situation

With the Islamic holy month of Ramadan running 11 March to Tuesday 9 April 2024, it seems Plateau State (unlike some others) was largely spared from a further round of Christmas weekend-style massacres over the Easter period (although threats have been made of more Fulani attacks in Barakin Ladi and Bokkos Local Government Areas immediately after the post-Ramadan Eid al-Fitr/Sallah celebrations 9-10 April). Though the Nigerian Army continues to announce good progress in neutralising terrorist groups in north-east Nigeria, please keep our sisters and brothers in Plateau State in your prayers. Likewise, please pray for those largely-Christian communities in Kaduna State (site of a 7 March kidnapping for ransom of around 270 school children, around half of whom have now been released) Taraba State (assassination of a pastor and his family), and Nasarawa State (pastor and several rural workers killed) on 13 March.

Progress on projects

The hectic workload faced by our friends in Jos Diocese means that some of our expected project reporting – notably on progress with the Pankshin/Tambes campus of Zambiri School is not yet to hand. However, my next liaison visit to Jos – now confirmed for 8-16 May – will enable lots of first-hand updates and photos on the encouraging progress being made in emergency relief, Pankshin/Tambes School and the Christian Institute Jos parts of our Diocesan Missional Partnership! Please be assured that every contribution made is making a huge positive difference to many lives.

For prayer:

- Praise God for his wonderful work in raising up Fulani evangelists to make real, deep and lasting peace through turning thousands of Fulani hearts away from violence, destruction and despair into the wonderful love of our Saviour, the Prince of Peace, just as he did through the work so long ago of St Paul, the former persecutor, to whom he also appeared on the Damascus Road.
- Please pray also for increasingly effective government protection of rural communities in Plateau State by the Nigerian Army and police, in Plateau State and in other affected parts of Nigeria.
- Continue to pray for those Plateau State villages attacked over December/January, that the displaced village communities may feel safe to return home, and that there will be no further attacks on them after the end of Ramadan.
- Keep praying for our ministry training bursary students at the Christian Institute, Jos, to continue to grow strong in their faith in Jesus, and become more and more effective in their evangelism, in opening the Word in their preaching, and in learning community leadership skills.
- Please pray for extraordinary energy and protection for Archdeacon Chimezie Anukam and his team of Jos Diocese relief workers meeting the urgent human needs of the thousands still in IDP camps in Plateau State.
- Pray for continuing good construction progress on the Pankshin/Tambes school for disadvantaged children and orphans.
- Keep praying for the Nigerian Anglican House of Bishops in the ongoing process of selecting a new Bishop for Jos, potentially in September.
- Pray for a safe and effective liaison visit by myself to Jos 8-16 May.

To make a tax-deductible donation to Diocesan partnership projects for training at the Christian Institute, or to support our persecuted fellow-Christians in Plateau State in Nigeria, or ministry to “at risk” children”, go to <https://anglicanaid.org.au/locations/Nigeria> , and select the project of your preference. To book a presentation on the situation in Nigeria and our partnership with Jos Diocese for your church, school or fellowship group, contact Rev Canon Patrick Cole on pandncole@bigpond.com .