

Pray for Nigeria

**26 September -
2 October 2021**



Rebecca Sharibu holds a photo of her daughter Leah

Nigeria is being torn apart increasingly by an alarming crisis of insecurity and violence which has claimed hundreds of lives over the past few months. Abductions for ransom are also rising sharply, especially targeting schoolchildren. Distraught parents are begging the government for help, and in one case kidnappers killed five students after their excessive ransom demands were not met in time. Kaduna state has become an epicentre for abductions by armed militia of Fulani ethnicity, despite being the headquarters of 11 military installations.

Find out more at csw.org.uk/nigeria

On 5 May 29 students abducted from the Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation on the outskirts of the state capital were finally released, after their parents held a protest in the capital city, Abuja. Ten others had been released in April.

Leah Sharibu is one of the highest profile abduction cases in recent years. The Christian schoolgirl was among 110 students abducted in February 2018 from their school in Dapchi, Yobe State, by an offshoot of Boko Haram, and was the only one not to return following government negotiations. She had refused to renounce her faith in exchange for freedom. 110 girls abducted by the original faction of the terrorist group from their school in Chibok in 2014 also remain in captivity.

Elsewhere, in Nigeria's shari'a states, underage Christian schoolgirls are regularly abducted by local men and forced to convert and marry without parental consent. Muslim traditional leaders or institutions are often complicit, and law enforcement agencies are generally reluctant to help, either due to complicity or fear.

At the time of writing 15-year-old Aisha Mani from Katsina state is one of several girls who remain in the hands of their abductors, and who have been forcibly converted and 'married' without parental consent, with the alleged complicity of a local traditional ruler.

Throughout this week, use the prayer points below and ask the Holy Spirit to guide your prayers for Nigeria.

- Pray for the immediate and safe release of all who have been abducted for ransom, especially students, that they would be able to return to their families and resume their education.
- Lift up Leah Sharibu, Alice Ngaddah, Grace Taku, the remaining Chibok girls and all who have been abducted by terrorist factions to God in prayer, petitioning for their release.
- Pray that the government of Nigeria would take swift and decisive action to bring an end to every source of violence and terror. Pray that the authorities would also implement the Safe Schools Initiative which aims to protect the right to an education, including by protecting students throughout the country from the threat of abduction.
- Pray that those who have been relying on violence and abductions for an income would find other ways to provide for themselves and their families.
- Pray for an end to the abductions of non-Muslim women and girls in Shari'a states, that all would be returned to their families, and perpetrators would face justice.

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free to believe**

CSW is a human rights organisation advocating for freedom of religion or belief, and as Christians we stand with everyone facing injustice because of their religion or belief.