

Prayer Diary: Nigeria

27 May-3 June 2023

With instability and insecurity at unprecedented levels, many were hoping that February's general election would be an opportunity for change; an opportunity to elect leaders who would work to contain the decades-long crisis of violence, and protect Nigeria's vulnerable ethnic and religious communities who are intensely targeted.

Unfortunately, the elections were marred by irregularities, with credible reports of rigging, fraud, violence and voter intimidation. At the time of writing, while the results of the presidential election – which, oddly, were declared at 4.00am – are still being disputed in court, arrangements are being made for the inauguration of Bola Ahmad Tinubu, the disputed winner, on Monday 29 May, amid significant discontent and growing protests.

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No matter the outcome, our prayers for Nigeria remain the same: we want to see this nation transformed. Below are two prayers, inspired by Luke 17:5-6.

***'The apostles said to the Lord,
"Increase our faith!"***

Lord Jesus, we also cry out: 'Increase our faith!'

Increase our faith that change is possible in Nigeria. Help us to never lose hope, but to pray persistently for an end to instability, division and violence.

Increase our faith that you will transform Nigeria into a place where everyone would be free to choose, change or practise their religion or belief, without fear.

*Increase our faith as we pray for Nigeria's leaders, that they would be agents of reconciliation, understand the importance of freedom of religion or belief, and promote and protect this human right for all. **Amen.***

[Jesus] replied, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it will obey you."

Almighty God, thank you that it is your power which brings transformation and victory, even if our faith is small.

Uproot the violence targeting specific religious and ethnic communities in particular, which has spread across the country.

Plant seeds of change – especially in the hearts of those in power and those who seek to violate human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Cultivate the work for reconciliation, healing, freedom and justice that is already being done.

*Protect and bless the workers, including the CSW Nigeria team, for your glory and the good of the nation. **Amen.***