



# Catholic Diocese of Ondo

Bishop's Residence + Ondo By Pass + P. O. Box 46, Akure + Ondo State + Tel: 07057445300

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June 7, 2022

**To the Catholic Community in Owo**  
**To all Catholics in Ondo Diocese**  
**To the People of Owo Kingdom**  
**To the People of Ondo State**  
**To the General Public**

## **PENTECOST SUNDAY MASSACRE AT ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, OWO: A VIOLATION OF THE SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE & A CALL TO RETRACE OUR STEPS AS A FREE, PEACE-LOVING AND UNITED NATION**

*Turn again O God of hosts; look down from heaven and see, and visit this vine your hand has planted... (Psalm 80:14)*

Greetings to all Christ's faithful and especially to the Catholic Community of St Francis Xavier Parish, Owo, Ondo State- Nigeria. We thank the people of Owo Kingdom and our Governor- Arakunrin Rotimi AKEREDOLU who responded immediately this horrific incident happened. We also thank all the various Federal Government representatives/ agencies who have visited to the victims since the ugly incident on Sunday, June 5, 2022.

As a Church, we are so grieved by this gruesome murder and we condemn this evil meted on our brothers and sisters who have only come to worship God. We confess and preach the sacredness of human lives. We unequivocally ask that those who have been saddled with the safety of life and property should bring the perpetrators of this abominable act to justice, and justice soon. They must be fished out wherever they are. It is quite disheartening and embarrassing that these unnecessary killings, kidnappings and other atrocities are now done with impunity on daily basis.

In response to this callous murder, the bishop has directed that Masses be celebrated for the repose of the souls of those who died and for the quick recovery of those injured for the next nine (9) days, beginning from the 7th to 15th of June, 2022, across the diocese. Within the context of these Novena Masses, a prayer composed by the diocese for the healing of our brothers and sisters and for the repose of those who have died must be prayed during masses.

Plans are underway to give those who died a befitting burial. We are equally reaching out to bereaved families to see all that could be done so that we can heal together. So far, the number of those confirmed dead and deposited at the mortuaries is thirty-eight (38) – four (4) male children, one (1) female child, one (1) male teenager, one (1) female teenager, twelve (12) male and nineteen (19) female adults. Many others are still at the hospitals, both young and old. Those who might have taken charge of the bodies of their loved ones should let us know, so that we can account for everyone at the scene and give them the proper and befitting funeral rites. The funeral date will be announced shortly.

Our words of appreciation and indebtedness cannot be enough to numerous groups and individuals. We appreciate the sacrifices of the First Responders to the scene, those who donated blood both in Akure and Owo to revive the lives of the victims, the health workers at the two (2) hospitals: St. Louis Catholic Hospital and Federal Medical Centre in Owo.



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We are particularly grateful to those who have called, visited Owo and our bishop on account of this ugly incident. Donations or pledges in cash and kind by governments, various international communities, religious leaders, churches and others to facilitate the treatment of those in the hospitals and ease their pains are highly appreciated. We will use these funds accordingly.

While we pray for eternal rest for the dead, speedy recovery for the injured and stability in the country and our dear state, the bishop has advised everyone to remain calm and law abiding. He has also enjoined us to be more alert and security conscious. **Kindly do not spread fake news that can incite both religious and political misunderstandings.**

Other necessary information would be made known as the need arises.

Thank you and God bless you.

Rev. Fr. Augustine IKWU  
Director, Social Communications

