

Economic Disputes Lead to Religious Tensions in Nigeria

Pray that herders and farmers in Nigeria, whose conflict over access to land and resources has fueled religious tensions, may find the means to compromise and work out their differences in a non-violent manner.

Reflect: The most populous country in Africa, Nigeria has the “resource curse”—having abundant resources which different groups vie to control, leading to violent conflicts, over 2 million people internally displaced, and grinding poverty for the have-nots. Many small ethnic groups feel oppressed and fight for recognition. Violence can stem from economic, political, and social reasons but because the population is almost evenly divided between Christians (in the south) and Muslims (in the north), such violence is interpreted as religious. Boko Haram, an extremist group whose name means “Western education is forbidden,” has fomented Muslim-Christian discord but in fact has attacked and killed more Muslims than Christians. Current fighting between Fulani herdsman (Muslim) and farmers (Christian) has exacerbated religious tension. Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama of Jos called for transcending religious divides and promoting inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony.



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Act: Support Aid to the Church in Need, Catholic Relief Services, USCCB’s Solidarity Fund for Aid to the Church in Africa, and other organizations that are helping the internally displaced, providing livelihood training and healthcare, and offering peacebuilding between those of different faiths.



RELIGIOUS
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