

Bandits kill Catholic priest in Ebonyi

IT was a sad and mournful day in Afikpo, Ebonyi State, yesterday, when some unidentified men believed to be robbers, killed a Catholic priest, Rev. Father Chidi Okorie. They inflicted multiple machete cuts on the cleric attached to St. Mary's Catholic Church in the town.

Sources said that Okorie, who was ordained in 2004, was allegedly murdered in the night by some hoodlums in his residence.

*From Leo Sobechi,
Abakaliki*

Though he was rushed by neighbours attracted to scene by the cries from his home to a hospital with blood flowing from the cuts on his body, he reportedly died before doctors could attend to him.

The bandits, *The Guardian* learnt, took away an undisclosed amount of money and other valuables from the victim's house.

Some of his colleagues, who confirmed the incident, expressed shock at his death.

At St Theresa's Cathedral, Abakaliki, some priests, who were contacted on the matter said that it was not yet time to talk. Those who managed to utter a few words amid tears simply said, "he died."

The ever-busy cathedral was enveloped with grief as tales of the murder dominated discussions among

the workers and faithful.

A priest at the Cathedral, Rev. Daniel Agara, lamented the death of the victim. He said Okorie was a promising young priest ordained in June 2004. "I wonder what might have led the hoodlums to the abominable assassination," he said.

According to the church records, the deceased who hailed from Urunnebo Village, Enugwu-Ukwu in Njikoka Local Council of Anambra State was aged 31.