

Church holds mass burial for parishioners in Osun auto crash

By Timothy Agbor,
Osogbo

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• Priest dies 40 days after ordination

Five of the six Catholic youths who died on Sunday in a motor accident in Eripa, Boluwaduro Local Government Area of Osun State while returning from an annual Oke Maria pilgrimage in Otan Ayegabju, have been buried.

Bishops, priests, parishioners and relations of the deceased whose bodies were brought to SS Peter & Paul Catholic Church, Lagers, Ile-Ife, could not control their emotions as they sobbed during the funeral mass held in the church.

The deceased were Patrick Ukie, Catherine Oyeyemi, Anthonia Busari, Kehinde Paulina Adebisi and Michael Olasoji. Catherine was a 300-Level student of the Department of Dramatic Arts, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. Body of the sixth victim, Josephine Nwukwe, was taken to Ibadan by her family to be buried there.

The mass was concelebrated by the Bishop of Osogbo Diocese, Most Rev John Oyetola; Arch Bishop of Ibadan Arch Diocese, Most Rev Gabriel Abegunrin and the Bishop of Oyo Catholic Diocese, Most Rev Emmanuel Badejo. In his homily, Bishop Badejo admonished the bereaved to take solace in God and see the sad development as a moment of test of their Christian faith.

He described the deceased as “lucky Christians” because they died few minutes after participating in the pilgrimage organised by the Catholic Diocese of Osogbo. Bishop Badejo prayed for quick recovery of the survivors who are receiving treatments in various hospitals in the state and those at their homes. They were interred a cemetery at Mayfair area Ile-Ife.

Meanwhile, a newly ordained priest in Catholic Diocese of Osogbo, Rev Fr Mathew Arimoro has died. The young priest was also involved in the accident while returning from the Oke-Maria pilgrimage.

Fr Arimoro was the driver of the 18-seater-bus boarded by the Catholic youths of Ile-Ife before the vehicle lost control and veered off the road.

Arimoro had made efforts to avoid crushing a motorcyclist who suddenly crossed to his lane before losing control of the bus, which rammed into a ditch and hit a fence beside the road. The priest had survived the accident and was rushed to Ladoke Akintola University Teaching Hospital (LAUTECH) in Osogbo.

He was reported to have been in coma since Sunday. He regained consciousness briefly yesterday before he later passed on. His death was confirmed by a source in the diocese.

Arimoro was ordained alongside five others on January 3, this year. The Guardian gathered that the pain of priests and Catholic faithful of the diocese who were yet to recover from the shock of the death of six youths, was compounded with Arimoro's death.



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