

Gunmen kill Edo, Kaduna Catholic priests, two others



• Odia

**Adeyinka Adedipe and
Dayo Oyewo**

GUNMEN have killed the priest in charge of St. Michael Catholic Church, Ikabigbo, in the Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State, Rev. Fr. Christopher Odia.

PUNCH Metro learnt that Odia was abducted from his residence by gunmen while he prepared for the Sunday mass.

A source said the kidnappers shot and injured one of the community boys searching for the reverend father.

"The kidnappers came with sophisticated weapons and took away the reverend father while he was preparing for the morning mass. It was sad. One of the boys who tried to look for the cleric was shot and he is currently in a hospital," the source added.

The traditional ruler of the community, Bramah Alegeh, who confirmed the incident, said the Army, in collaboration with local vigilantes, combed the bush to ensure the release of the cleric.

The Catholic Bishop of Auchi

Diocese, Bishop Gabriel Dunia, described the incident as sad.

He stated that the two local security men who went after the hoodlums were killed.

However, in a statement late on Sunday, the Director of Social Communications, Catholic Diocese of Auchi, Rev. Fr. Peter Egielewa, said the cleric had been killed.

The statement said, "With heavy hearts but with total submission to the will of God, we announce the death of our priest Rev. Fr. Christopher Odia, who was killed by his abductors after being kidnapped this morning, June 26, 2022, around 6.30am in his rectory while coming out to go for Sunday mass at St. Michael Catholic Church Ikabigbo, Uzairue, Edo State."

In a related development, gunmen, suspected to be terrorists, have killed a Kaduna State-based Catholic priest, Rev. Fr. Vitus Borogo.

The incident occurred on Saturday at the Prison Farm, Kujama, along the Kaduna-Kachia Road.

The Chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna, Rev. Fr. Christian Emmanuel, in a statement, said the 50-year-old was the chaplain of the Catholic community in Kaduna State.

"It is with a heavy heart, but with total submission to the will of God that we announce the death of Rev. Fr. Vitus Borogo, which sad event took place today (Saturday), at Prison Farm, Kujama, along Kaduna-Kachia road, after a raid on the farm by terrorists," he added.