

Gunmen invade church, kill pastor's aide, abduct 2

GUNMEN, on Saturday, invaded a church, God's Doing Healing and Deliverance Ministry, in Orodo, Mbaitoli Local Government Area of Imo State, and left one youth leader, Samuel Ogonna, dead.

Until his death, Ogonna was the proprietor of Feel at Home, a restaurant/bar located within the environment, and a close aide to the general overseer of the church, Evang. Maduabuchi Ernest, popularly known as "Dibia Ekpere or Father MEMC".

A source who pleaded anonymity said the gunmen who numbered about eight, arrived at the church in two cars, a red Highlander and a black Lexus Salon car around 4 pm during an ongoing church programme.

The gunmen were said to have demanded to see the general overseer but were told that he had not arrived, which infuriated them. They immediately ordered the congregation to lie face down on the floor.

He said, "I have never seen anything like this before. The gunmen upon arrival at the church and couldn't see the Pastor, ordered us all to lie face down on the floor during which they collected all our personal belongings like phones, bags, and cash before they zoomed off.

"While driving out of the church compound, we heard several gunshots followed by a loud shout, which we later learnt was from one of us, Elder Ogonna.

He was returning to the church to rejoin us in the

ongoing programme after he had left to run errands but on seeing them, he had run into a nearby bush but they pursued him and shot him severally there. After driving a few kilometres, they released those two members they had earlier kidnapped.

"Just before driving out, they abducted two members, a man, and a nursing mother, though they later released them along the Owerri-Orlu expressway. They also made away with the church owner's car", the source said.

According to him, the incident had thrown the area into apprehension as everyone was scared for their safety, even as some people had left Orodo for their safety while the church had been locked up.