

**Brief Reflections on COVID-19**  
**An experience from Nigeria**  
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I believe that it is fair to say that no-one living today has ever experienced anything like we have been going through globally since the COVID-19 invaded our planet at the end of last year. It has disorganized every aspect of life at all levels. My brief reflection is on how it has affected the religious life of our people here in Nigeria.

When the alarming news of heavy mortalities reached us from places like China, Italy, Spain and later even the USA, it was panic everywhere. Our government rolled out very stringent measures, following what was described as “international best practices”. This included massive lockdown of many cities, regular hand washing, social distancing, etc.

But it soon became clear that these measures were not practicable for most of our people. For example, how do you wash hands frequently when you have no water to drink? How can one stay at home without any means of livelihood? In the villages and city slums, people live in crowded small rooms, with no way for any form of distancing. According to the “international best practices”, we should be ready for a massive level of deaths.

In these circumstances, Nigerians refused to give up. Everyone, of all faiths, took refuge in praying to God to deliver us from the pending disaster. As I am writing this, the predicted disaster has not taken place, and we still believe that we shall survive the worst. I know that this is not because of measures taken by our government. I believe, with many Nigerians, that God has shown his mercy and power in our regard.

We have learnt to reach out to God in various ways, even with mosques and churches closed. We have also learnt the wonderful lesson that there is only ONE GOD, who listens to our prayers, whether we are Muslims or Christians. These are lessons that we must not throw away after the crisis is over and the places of worship are once again open. COVID-19 has inflicted on us a lot of distress. This need not, and must not be in vain.

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