**Katsina, Nigeria.**

We pray for the Diocesan President and all Mothers’ Union members in Katsina.

Katsina is in the north of Nigeria, near the [Niger](http://www.britannica.com/place/Niger) border and has a hot semi-arid climate. The city walls surrounding it are about 13 miles in length. Katsina is believed to have been founded around 1100AD. In 1903, the Emir accepted British rule, which continued until Nigerian independence from Britain in 1960.

The city's history of western-style education dates back to the early 1950s, when the first middle school in all of northern Nigeria was established. There are now several institutions of higher learning, including two universities. You may recall the kidnapping of over 300 schoolboys from a boarding school in Katsina on 17th December. This was later claimed to have been carried out by the Islamist group Boko Haram, which name loosely translates as “western education is forbidden”.

Nigeria is a mainly Muslim country and the relationship between Christian and Muslims in mainly Muslim areas is very important. There is also a divide between the urban areas and remote rural areas. Mothers’ Union members ensure that the benefits and support they provide reach right out to the most remote areas.

Cultural practices, especially against women and girls, also presents a major challenge to the Mothers’ Union all over Nigeria. Many of these practices are considered normal or are hidden within communities, such as marriage at a very young age, no or limited access to education, and lack of rights for widows.

Mothers’ Union members are at the heart of local churches, supporting couples as they get married, upholding the couple in prayer and providing pre-marital support and counseling. This moves through the generations as members continue to support and celebrate the marriages of their children and, in turn, their grandchildren.

Members are very active and always willing to be part of all activities, serving both inside and outside the church. Their work in terms of community development is innovative and driven by a passion for those they serve.

**Lord, We pray for the members in Katsina and the work they carry out in very challenging and difficult circumstances. We also pray for their safety and for the safety of all Christians there. Amen**

**Kericho, Kenya.**

We pray for the Diocesan President and all the Mothers’ Union members in Kericho.

Kericho is located within the highlands west of the [Kenyan Rift Valley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenyan_Rift_Valley). It is home to [Kenya](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kenya)'s biggest water catchment area, the [Mau Forest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mau_Forest). Kericho is three hours ahead of GMT and it will have got dark at around 7 o’clock pm their time.

Kericho is a very green area with a high altitude and virtually daily rains. It is the centre of Kenya's large [tea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tea) industry and the hills are covered with fragrant tea bushes. Kenya is the world’s third largest tea producer after India and Sri Lanka. Kenyan tea is known for the texture of the fragrant leaves, its brightness, attractive colour and flavour. Much of the tea is exported, with the UK being the largest market.

Kenya is in Mothers’ Union Zone D along with Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Jerusalem and the Middle East. MULOA has had a big impact in Zone D. Mindsets have been changed and members have learnt to listen to one another, understanding people’s challenges and then acting wisely and positively. Communities have been helped as a whole rather than just as individuals. Mothers’ Union is reaching out to children and youths through schools, giving talks on hygiene and relationships. They are also counseling parents in the community, especially on issues such as early child marriage.

The Mothers’ Union in Kericho is very active in promoting family life and in particular the spiritual life of women. Members are active in projects that support the economic empowerment of women; environmental protection; fighting crime, alcoholism and drug abuse; feeding the hungry; visiting the sick in hospital; visiting those in prison; and outreach to single mothers and widows. In many dioceses in Kenya, there is an emphasis on helping those whose life has faced adversity. In Kericho, frequent visits are organised to community members where food and other household items are taken and shared.

**Lord, we thank you for all the good works being carried out by Mothers’ Union in Kericho and for the commitment of the members there. We pray for positive outcomes to all the hard work they are putting in. Amen**

**Kumasi, Ghana.**

We pray for the Diocesan President and all Mothers’ Union members in Kumasi.

Kumasi is located in south-central [Ghana](http://www.britannica.com/place/Ghana). It shares GMT with us and at 6.00pm it would have been dark there. Kumasi was carved out of a dense rainforest belt among hills rising to 1,000 feet and has a humid, wet climate although January is in the dry season with daytime temperatures between 69 and 89 Fahrenheit.

[Osei Tutu](http://www.britannica.com/biography/Osei-Tutu), a 17th-century [Asante](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Asante) king, chose the site for his capital and conducted land negotiations under a kum tree, whence came the town’s name. Located on north-south trade routes, Kumasi became a major commercial centre. After defeating the [Asante Empire](http://www.britannica.com/place/Asante-empire) in 1874, the [British](http://www.britannica.com/place/British-Empire) opened new trade routes in the region.

In the early 1900s, the British took control; cacao cultivation was introduced, and the railroad from Sekondi was built. A rapid population increase led to the city’s expansion and to the drainage of swamps, the installation of a sewage system, and modern city planning. English is the official language of Ghana and is universally used in schools in addition to nine other local languages.

The wealth of Kumasi is derived from its location at the junction of Ghana’s main roads and from cacao farming in the hinterland. Trade and mining contribute to the local economy. Handicrafts, such as traditional kente cloth, are significant sources of income.

Christianity accounts for 70% of the total population and includes Roman Catholics, Baptist, Protestants, etc. The Muslim population (17.6 percent of the total) is located chiefly in the northern part of the country.

The Mothers’ Union in Ghana has around 2,500 members. Along with other members in the region they are more engaged since MULOA and are energized in their relationships with God and each other. Some groups of people who have been excluded in their communities are becoming more self reliant with the help of Mothers’ Union projects and programmes. The biggest challenge is social injustice and Mothers’ Union is working hard to tackle this.

**Lord, We thank you Lord for the success of the projects and programmes and we pray that the members’ work in respect of social injustice will also bear fruit. Amen**

**Mauritius.**

We pray for the Diocesan President and all the members in Mauritius.

Mauritius lies in the Indian Ocean, about 1200 miles off the southeast coast of the African continent, 500 miles east of [Madagascar](http://www.britannica.com/place/Madagascar). It is well known as a holiday island and tourism plays a major part in the island’s economy. The country became an independent state on 12 March 1968, following the adoption of [a new constitution](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitution_of_Mauritius), and became a republic within the [Commonwealth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations) in 1992. The population of the island is about 1.4 million and there are around 250 MU members.

The [people of Mauritius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mauritians) are [multiethnic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiracial), multi-religious, [multicultural](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multiculturalism) and [multilingual](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multilingual). The island's government is closely modelled on the Westminster parliamentary system, and Mauritius is highly ranked for [democracy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index) and for [economic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_economic_freedom) and [political freedom](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_in_the_World).

The Mothers’ Union was founded here in 1924, and works actively in society across its multicultural population. In the Church many members choose to be deacons, lay readers, counselors, facilitators of Alpha courses and more.

Through both national and local initiatives, MU members in Mauritius and Rodrigues continue to support and encourage families – especially those facing adversity. Some branches offer meals to needy families across ethnic and racial boundaries.

Members are motivated to support their communities by visiting old peoples homes, children’s shelters, families in need, those who are sick and prisoners and their families. Members provide individual counseling, praying for families concerned and supporting them.

**Lord, we thank you Lord for all the good work being carried out by Mothers’ Union members in the Diocese of Mauritius. We pray that all they do and all that they plan will contribute to the well being of everyone in those islands.**

**Amen**

**Nandyal, South India**

We pray for the affiliated MU members in Nandyal, South India.

Nandyal is about 900 miles from Delhi. It is surrounded by hills with the Kundu River on its west, the dense forests of [Nallamala Hills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nallamala_Hills) to the east, and granite mines to the south. It is a large town with a population in the region of 270,000. At this time of year the daytime temperature will be about 91 degrees Fahrenheit.

Nandyal is a thriving centre for trade and commerce due to significant water resources and it is a major hub of industry and agriculture. It is also rich in [natural resources](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_resources) like [marble](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marble). There are many [rice mills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rice_mill) and [oil mills](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_mill) and industries which produce [milk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milk), [soft drinks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_drinks), [sugar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sugar) and [PVC pipes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poly-vinyl_chloride).

Members in Nandyal are affiliated members through the South India Women’s Fellowship.

Many significant challenges exist in this zone and it has been agreed that efforts should be concentrated on 4 main areas –

Education for children – many children drop out of school due to lack of finances. With a good education children have better access to jobs.

Women’s livelihoods - men are very often the sole breadwinners in rural villages and the sad consequences can be that they dominate the women and the father neglects the needs of his children. If women are trained in an income giving skill they will give the necessary priority to their family.

Gender based violence - many survivors suffer in silence because of the social stigma and lack of shelters.

Climate change - Mothers’ Union wants to educate its members in how to be a good example to the younger generation in caring for creation.

**Loving Lord, we thank you for all the good work being carried out by these women and pray for the success of the four initiatives**. **Amen**

Winchester.

We pray for our Diocesan President, Stella Roberts.

Here at home we give thanks for Stella, our Diocesan President, and for all those on the Trustee board.

This year has been an especially challenging one due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. That has restricted most of our activities, along with those of Mothers’ Union members throughout the world.

Nevertheless members have been both imaginative and inventive and some of our work has been able to continue, albeit in a changed way and sometimes with the aid of modern technologies. The break in our usual activities has given us time to take a step back and reflect and reassess; for this Lord we thank you.

We thank you also Lord that some of our meetings have been able to continue by Zoom, that our cathedral prayer services have been able to continue on YouTube and Facebook, that our members have been able to reach out in their communities and assist those in need locally in many and various ways,

that their craft abilities have come to the fore with members knitting and crocheting prayer squares, poppies, Christmas tree angels, seamen’s hats and items for premature babies,

that our Contact Centres have been able to keep separated families in touch by Zoom.

We thank you that our scientists have been able to find vaccines in record time and pray that they can be distributed to all peoples around the world in the coming months. We pray also that Mothers’ Union will be able to pick up the reins once again and carry on its work of improving lives and bringing your Christian love to families and peoples all over the world.

This year elections are due for the next triennial and Stella and some of our current trustees will step down at the end of the year. We thank you Lord for all the good things that Stella and the trustees have achieved and we pray that members will come forward to fill the roles of trustees and Diocesan President.

**Amen**