

PRAYING FOR THE WORLD

WEEK 17, APRIL 26 - MAY 2

African Initiated Churches



© "Benin – baptism ceremony in Cotonou" by Ferdinand Reus / CC BY 2.0

African Initiated Churches (AICs) either broke off from, or developed independently of, mainline churches and denominations. They are a powerful and growing force in Africa. Out of 600 million African Christians in 2018, at least 100 million Africans are affiliated to AICs.

Christians in AICs understand prophecies, dreams, visions and healings as a normal part of the Christian faith. They expect the power and authority of Christ to overcome the demonic and occult – not just in theory, but in daily life.

AICs also represent a Christian-inspired cultural renaissance because of the importance they give to music, dance and symbol. In many ways AICs are reclaiming African culture and putting it under the Lordship of Christ, while at the same reclaiming church culture from a modernist worldview that is very sceptical of the supernatural.

The strengths of AICs are their spiritual fervour, their passion for evangelism, and the way they answer African spiritual thirst with

New Testament teaching and practice.

Their weaknesses can include: personality cults around a single leader; abuse of power; too much emphasis on witchcraft or on the African spirit world, rather than on Christ; and a subordination of Biblical truth to African cultural dynamics, all of which have led at times to great harm.

🙏 Praise God for the powerful work of the Spirit that has found expression in the African Initiated Churches. Pray that this extraordinary and significant movement may keep the best of African culture while integrating it with Biblical theology and practice.

🙏 Pray that the AICs' recovery of spiritual power will always be exercised through Christian love and Biblical truth.

🙏 Pray that the AICs will enrich the whole body of Christ.

THE NATIONS

COLOMBIA



In the past few years, this South American country of 48 million people has seen guerrillas give up their weapons, kidnap and murder rates fall, and the rule of law become better established. Perhaps this marks the start of a long-awaited healing in a nation with a history of violence and persecution.

Colombia still faces problems. One smaller rebel group has not joined the peace process. The drug trade still empowers criminality. Up to six million people remain displaced after the conflict, having fled to the cities from the countryside. Inequality and poverty restrict the lives of many.

Evangelical and Pentecostal churches are growing strongly, as is the charismatic movement within Catholicism.

- 🙏 Pray for the continuing growth of Bible-believing, Spirit-led Christianity in Colombia!
- 🙏 Pray for the churches to play a full part in establishing peace, stability and social justice.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO



The Democratic Republic of Congo (Africa's second largest country by area and with a population of 84 million) faces every form of human and spiritual need. Mismanagement, violence, corruption and theft of natural resources combined with spiritual forces of evil have afflicted Congo for generations. Congo supplies most of the cobalt for the world's mobile phones, but its people don't benefit and thousands of its children work the mines. Armed militias still kidnap and rob, particularly in the East. Congo's suffering over the last 130 years has been of heart-breaking proportions.

Nearly all Congolese are affiliated to Christianity, half of them to Catholicism. The Church is the only national social structure to endure and work for the people, and yet it needs revival and purifying from false teaching.

- 🙏 How to rebuild such a broken land? Pray for an effective national government that will rule with honesty, justice, and concern for the people.
- 🙏 Pray for God to raise up Christian leaders of spiritual maturity and moral integrity to serve the Church and society.

Praying for the World is a free weekly prayer guide to inspire and inform the whole church to pray for the whole world. Visit www.lausanne.org/pray to start any week. Created through the partnership of Operation World and the Lausanne Movement.