

## **LIBYA**

Libya is located on the northern African coast of the Mediterranean Sea between Tunisia and Algeria to the west and Egypt to the east. Italy is due north across the Mediterranean. It is mostly taken up by the Sahara Desert. Only 2% of the land along the coast is suitable for growing crops.

Libya has been ruled by Persians, Egyptians, Greek Egyptians, and Romans, followed by Spanish, and the Ottomans. Libya was an early center of Christianity. During the 7th Century, invasions brought Islam and Arab colonization. In more recent years Muammar Gaddafi took over in a military coup in 1969 and ruled until the revolution of 2011. Since then there has been instability and political violence. Since last August there have been two rival governments one in Tripoli in the west and the other in Tobruk in the east.

The power vacuum left by Gaddafi's removal has led to the rise of Jihadists in Libya. This month 21 Coptic Christian migrant workers from nearby Egypt were murdered by a group claiming affiliation with ISIS. The video labeled them "The people of the cross," and stated that the group plans to conquer Rome. When Egypt responded with air strikes against Islamist militants, this group retaliated with three car bombs on Friday killing 40 and wounding 70.

Prayer needs: Political/religious stability