



Galatians 6:9

**THE RT. REV'D.  
INNOCENT U. ORDU, JP**  
*BISHOP, DIOCESE OF EVO/  
PRESIDENT OF SYNOD*





# Presidential Address/Bishop's Charge

## DIOCESAN ANTHEM

1. O praise our Lord Creator of Evo Diocese,  
Come brethren, let us love, teach, and preach the gospel;  
Lord, grant us grace and wisdom, the strength to spread Thy Word,  
And teach us how to pray aright,  
God bless our Diocese.
2. O God our Father, bind us in brotherhood and faith,  
Thy will on Diocese of Evo be accomplished;  
The gains of perfection is our desire, Lord we pray,  
To know Thee more and more O Lord,  
God bless our Diocese.

## SYNOD PRAYER

All praise to You, O our Most gracious Father, who in Your mercies have vouchsafed to bring us to yet another Synod of our Diocese despite the times of stress and adversity brought upon us in this nation by the overwhelming challenges of insecurity and collapsing economy as well as our continuing battle with the dreaded Covid-19 pandemic and other global issues of our present day.

Grant, we beseech You, O Most Holy Father, that in the face of these travails we may not faint or be weary in doing that which is good in Your sight; and just as You anointed Your Son, Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost and with power, that He went about doing good, give us grace by that same Spirit to follow after His perfect example.

Take from us, we pray You, the spirit of selfishness, and deepen within us the spirit of well doing; thinking less of our own interests and more of the needs of Your church and others.

Enable us to spend and be spent in Your service and those of others; using the talents You have entrusted to us, to Your glory and the advancement of Your kingdom, so that as we rise from this synod, we shall remain steadfast, immovable and always abounding in Your work, keeping in view our reward which must surely come and at the last we may hear that most joyful voice "well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"; through the same our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

*Blessing and Honour, Thanksgiving and Praise,  
more than we can utter, be unto our Most  
adorable Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, by all angels,  
all men, all creatures forever and ever – Amen.*

## **PROTOCOLS AND GREETINGS**

Your Excellency, The Executive Governor of Rivers State, Chief Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON, GSSRS, PoS (Africa),  
Your Grace, the Archbishop of the Province of Niger Delta and Bishop, Diocese of Ikwerre, The Most Rev. Dr. Blessing Enyindah, JP,  
My Lord, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Johnson Ekwe, Bishop, Diocese of Niger West, our Synod Guest Speaker,  
My Lord, The Rt. Rev. Sunday T. Adewole, Bishop, Diocese of Kwara and our Synod Bible Study Leader,  
Your Graces and my Lords – other Archbishops and Bishops/heads of denominations here present or represented,  
Members of the National and State Assemblies here present,  
The newly elected Executive Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Hon. Barr. George Chituru Ariolu and members of your Executive Council,  
Other Government functionaries including Judicial Officers and Guests of Honour here present, or represented,  
The Diocesan Chancellor, Sir Barr. Nlerum S. Amadi & all other Legal Officers of the Diocese,  
The President of the Diocesan Women and Girls' Ministries and wife of the Bishop (Mama Evo), Mrs. Chinyere U. Ordu, JP, FCAI,  
Venerable Archdeacons, heads of Diocesan Administrative Blocs and wives,  
Our brethren of the House of Clergy and wives,  
Co-Chairmen – Sir Ike B. S. Chinwo and Ven. Chidi S. Worgu and members of the Diocesan Synod Planning Committee,  
Sir Engr. Okechukwu Amadi and members of the Local (Cathedral) Synod Planning Committee,  
Our special Nominees to the Synod,  
Our highly revered Royal Fathers, Community Chiefs and Elders here present, especially HRH, Eze Sir S. O. Worlu – Nyerisi Mbam, Oro-Esara; Your Highnesses, Ezes, Chiefs and Elders of Rumuokwurusu Town,  
The Diocesan Presidents of the Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF), Council of Knights/Ladies, Lay Readers Association; and the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF), our Chief Launcher for this year's Synod Address,  
Synod delegates from our various Administrative Blocs and churches  
Other members of the Diocesan Community,  
Distinguished Members of the Fourth Estate of the Realm;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.



In the name of God, We welcome every one of you to this **Third Session of The Fourth Synod** of our Diocese of Evo holding here in the All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi.

We are grateful to you for making out time out of your very crowded schedules to be present with us in this year's Synod in your various capacities as delegates, specially invited guests, friends of the Diocese or observers and more especially, for your highly esteemed presence at this presentation of our Synod Address/Charge. Your presence is a great encouragement to us and we greatly appreciate it.

### **OUR GRATITUDE**

We thank God, our Father for all His goodness to us as a Diocese; for the strength He has given us to serve Him and for the daily revelation of Himself in diverse ways, particularly in the lives of the Clergy and the Laity; and for the tasks to which He has called us all.

On the occasion of this annual convocation of the leadership team and others in our Diocese, we wish to express our gratitude to the Chancellor of our Diocese, Sir Barr. Nlerum Amadi, other Legal Officers of the Diocese, the Clerical Synod Secretary, The Rev. Canon Gospel E. Onuchuku, and all Diocesan officials; our Diocesan Office staff, the Clergy and Church teachers, their wives, Synod delegates, members of the various Boards, Church Councils and Steering Committees of Archdeaconries, Deaneries, Parishes and Station churches; the leaders of the various Diocesan Activity Groups, ministries and units, our respected Royal fathers and heads of our various communities in Evo and other friends of our Diocese for your sacrificial support and encouragement **to us particularly in the last one year.**

I thank very specially my wife, Mama Evo, Mrs. Chinyere Uchenna Ordu, JP, for standing prayerfully strong with me in all our tasks as Bishop of this Diocese.

Our equally special gratitude goes to the Co-Chairmen, Sir Chief Ike B.S. Chinwo and The Venerable Chidi S. Worgu, Sub-Committees' Chairmen and members of the Diocesan Synod Planning Committee; the Archdeacon, The Venerable Thompson Onyewuotu, the Priests and their wives, the Chairman, Sir Engr. Okechukwu Amadi and members of the Cathedral Local Organizing Committee for the hosting of this Synod, members of the Cathedral Standing Committee (CSC) and all members of the Cathedral Church, for your enormous open and behind the scene labours for the success of this Synod.

We thank the Cathedral Church for offering to feed all Synod delegates all through the days of our stay here (in fact from the One Day Synod held on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2021) at no cost to anyone.

We pray for everyone: may the Lord bless you all and continually strengthen you with His heavenly grace and vision. May He constantly reward your labours which you have carried out with unwearied zeal for the extension of His kingdom in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## OUR SYNOD HOST

### **BRIEF HISTORY OF ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL, RUMUOKWURUSI**

The advent of Christianity in Rumuokwurusi can be associated with the establishment of the Colonial Warrant Court here in Rumuokwurusi by the colonial masters. The Colonial Warrant Court here in Rumuokwurusi which was under the Degema Division way back in 1904, existed at the former site of the Ministry of Works premises (PWD yard) which has now been replaced by the new Model Primary Health Care Centre, Rumuokwurusi, adjacent the All Saints Cathedral Church premises. At that time, one Amakiri Iyalla from Degema had attended court sessions here at Rumuokwurusi during which he purchased some yams on credit from Chief Amadi Ikeani of Rumuwokerebe village with a promise to pay him later. On the expiration of the agreed time for payment, the seller, Chief Ikeani dispatched some of his subjects to Degema to demand the payment of the debt from the purchaser/debtor, or from his surety. The persons so sent were Messrs Thomas Amadi (The son of the Chief), John Chuku, (a relation of the Chief) and Joseph Igwe. This historic journey to Degema took place in 1911.

The messengers arrived Degema on a Saturday and were received. These visitors from Rumuokwurusi noticed serious preparations against the following day being Sunday. On Sunday itself, which the Degema people call “Kala Oroni”, the visitors were invited to a gathering of worshippers. This was their first experience of Christian worship. The visitors from Rumuokwurusi were excited and their curiosity for Christian life developed from there. They were greatly impressed and resolved to take the good news of their experience to the people at home.

On their return home, the three men crystallized their resolve to establish a Church in Rumuokwurusi and as such approached Chief Amadi Ikeani for his permission to use his hall (Ibani) as a place of worship on Sundays. The request was granted and thus Christian worship was formally introduced here in Rumuokwurusi in 1911 with an initial congregation of seven (7) worshippers. Many people became interested and joined in the worship, both indigenes and non-indigenes. The congregation grew in strength and number. Among the early converts were Dick Nyemu, Jeremiah Otuonye, John Ezeogwu and Ezekiel Wali. With this gradual numerical growth, the need for a Church teacher arose. Consequently, Dick Nyemu became the teacher. Others who assisted as teachers were Agwu Neribea and Paul Ogudiri, both of whom were court officials. The early converts included women who were equally zealous.

As the number of the worshippers continued to increase, the hall donated by Chief Amadi Ikeani could no longer accommodate them. It became imperative that a Church building should be erected. The Christians then once again appealed to Chief Amadi Ikeani (the Paramount Ruler) for a grant of a parcel of land to build a Church house. Again, Chief Amadi Ikeani granted their request and a parcel of land called “Echi Eli” (Ohia Mkpa) normally used to dump or bury tabooed persons was donated to the Church. Included in the said land were other portions of land which were also donated to the Church by the duo of Worlu Oriji and Ogonna. This constituted the original Church and school premises at the old site.



These parcels of land were cleared through communal effort, particularly of the church members. This was followed by the construction of a semi-permanent church building with bamboo, mud, corrugated iron sheets, sticks and thatches.

Having acquired parcels of land and experienced further rapid growth of the church, the need for another Church building once again arose. A formal application for a Church/School Teacher was sent to the Divisional Officer at Degema who in turn redirected the said letter to the Rev. J. Mar Cole, the Superintendent of Okrika District, resulting in the posting of Mr. Peter Okujagu to Rumuokwurusi sometime in 1911.

The then Archdeacon of Egbu-Owerri Archdeaconry, The Ven. Payne paid his maiden official visit to Rumuokwurusi when he was informed that Christianity had reached here. On his visit, The Ven. Payne was greatly impressed by what he saw and as a result, he donated some books including “Azu Ndu” and Igbo Bible for use during school and class meetings.

In reality, Christian life was quite inspiring to the populace and there was a general acceptance of the Faith.

In 1925, this Church founded in 1911 was officially christened **All Saints (Anglican) Church, Rumuokwurusi.**

Within fourteen years or thereabout of the coming of Christianity to Rumuokwurusi, the good news of the gospel spread to all the villages in Evo clan and churches were established. In 1925, 21 years after the arrival of the gospel in Evo land, what seemed to be an amalgamation of the churches in Evo took place and the churches became known as Evo Group of churches with headquarters at Rumuokwurusi. Occasionally, worshippers from the various churches in Evo converged at Rumuokwurusi to hold meetings under the leadership of Mr. Wilfred Akah. The Rumuokwurusi (Evo) Group of churches was under Okrika District.

In 1926, All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi was granted licence to conduct marriages. The same year, she purchased her first church organ with Mr. J.S. Ogan as the first Organist.

As the Church continued to grow in 1948, during the period of Catechist Charles Emelugo (who later became a Deacon), the need for a new church site for a more commodious and permanent church building was identified following the vision of the Catechist Emelugo. An approach was made for the acquisition of a new site for All Saints Church. Chief Amadi Woke of Rumuchukwu and Wachukwu (Egbe) Worlu of Rumuogbuali both in Rumuorianwo were approached by the Parochial Church Committee (P.C.C.). The two families generously donated their parcels of land constituting the present church premises.

In 1959, the idea of building a new Church at the new site was conceived by the P.C.C. and the design of the church building was provided by the then Rev. Y.A. Fubara (now late, who much later became the Bishop of the Niger Delta Diocese). This new Church like the previous ones before it, was built through the communal efforts of all Rumuokwurusi people. Chief Andrew Worgu and Chief J.S. Amadi supported immensely towards the church building project which

foundation stone was laid by The Rt. Rev. R.N. Bara-Hart, JP (now late) who also dedicated it on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> April, 1967.

The Evo Group of churches progressed spiritually and otherwise and in 1952, acquired a new status – “Evo District” which included St. Silas Church, Eneka, a community in Apará Kingdom probably due to its geographical proximity to Rumuokwurusi.

In the 1980s, the era of autonomous Parish status for Evo churches emerged. A good number of the churches, beginning with St. Michael's, Rumuomasi and the rest of them grew to stand on their own as autonomous parishes. Thus in 1991, 87 years after the arrival of the “seed of the gospel”, Evo District was further upgraded to become Evo Archdeaconry with All Saints Anglican Church, Rumuokwurusi District as the Headquarters.

In 1984, as a result of some misunderstandings in the then Port Harcourt Archdeaconry of Niger Delta Diocese, the Synod of the Diocese which was to have been hosted by that Archdeaconry at its Headquarters, St. Paul's, Diobu, was moved to All Saints Anglican Church, Rumuokwurusi, the Headquarters of the then Evo District. The Ven. Alex Enyinda was the District Superintendent at that time.

The same All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi District, this time under Evo Archdeaconry again hosted the Synod of the new Diocese of Niger Delta North (one year after its creation) from Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> to Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1997.

### **All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi in the Diocese of Evo**

With the creation of the Diocese of Evo and its subsequent inauguration on Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2009, this church, All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi District, hitherto the Headquarters of the old Evo Archdeaconry under the Diocese of Niger Delta North, assumed the status of the Cathedral, that is the Principal Church and official Headquarters of the new Diocese and Bishop, because of the presence of the “Bishop's Chair.” It was in this Cathedral Church that We, The Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu on the same day were enthroned as the Pioneer Bishop of this Diocese, having been first consecrated the previous day, Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 at St. Peter's Anglican Church, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State.

Members of the All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi led by the Cathedral Standing Committee, basking in the excitement and euphoria of assuming a Cathedral status with the birth of the new Diocese of Evo gladly surrendered much of the existing facilities of the church for use by the Diocese. The new Cathedral Church, realising the importance of its strategic position as the number one church of the Diocese, very willingly accepted to host most of the initial meetings of the leadership and various groups of the young Diocese in the early years of her existence. Among such historical meetings hosted by this Cathedral during the early days and months of the new Diocese of Evo were:

1. Meeting with all Cathedral, Archdeaconry, Deanery, Parish and Station churches' Boards and Councils on Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2009 (4 days after the



inauguration of the new Diocese) where We presented the proposal for the restructuring of the Administrative Blocs of the new Diocese to make for easier administration.

2. One-Day Synod held on Thursday, 6th August, 2009 convened for the purpose of adopting the constitution of our residual Diocese of Niger Delta North as our working document pending the drafting of that of the new Diocese as well as our announcement of appointees and election of some key Diocesan officers on acting capacity to run the affairs of the Diocese with us.
3. The first major women's programme – Prayer Retreat/One Day Conference was held here in the Cathedral from Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2009 during which 6 pioneer officers of the women's ministries were elected.
4. The first Rededication Service of the Diocese was held here on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.
5. The maiden Diocesan gathering of the Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) took place on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2009 at which 23 pioneer officers were elected.
6. The maiden One-Day Conference of the Diocesan Men's Christian Association tagged “Okwurusi 2009” held on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> November during which 9 pioneer Executive members of the Association were elected.
7. The first Advent Ordination Service of the Diocese took place here on Sunday, December, 13<sup>th</sup>, 2009 during which three deacons (The Rev. Gospel Eziwhuo Onuchuku now Clerical Synod Secretary, The Rev. Ugochukwu Lawrence Nwahaghi, and The Rev. Favour Onyemauche Iroegbulem inherited by us from our residual Diocese were ordained Priests.
8. The maiden (First Session of the First) Synod of the Diocese was also hosted here in the Cathedral Church from Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> July to Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2010 amongst others.

### **This New Cathedral Building**

In the **year 2007**, while still in the Diocese of Niger Delta North, the faithful of this church, **All Saints Anglican Church, Rumuokwurusi** District under The **Ven. Fyनेface Ndubuisi Akah, JP**, as Vicar, by Divine inspiration, thought it necessary to build a new and more befitting edifice for the worship of the Almighty God. The setting out of the new building commenced on December, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2007, under the leadership of Sir Engr. Victor Dania as the Projects and Works Committee Chairman of the church. Four months after, precisely on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2008, the Foundation Stone for the new church building with an initial nominal capacity of 2, 500, basement and a terraced gallery was laid by the Diocesan Bishop, then The Rt. Rev. Ignatius C.O. Kattey, JP, who later became the Archbishop of the Province of Niger Delta and now retired.

With the inception of the new Diocese of Ewo, it became clear that the building under construction was no longer to serve as an ordinary church building but a

Cathedral. Work on the new edifice had reached the Damp Proof Course (DPC) level. With the new Cathedral status of the All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi and in view of the rise in the number of local worshippers and to also make room for members of the new Diocesan community who would from time to time be converging on the Cathedral for Diocesan convocations, it became necessary to review the original seating capacity of the building from 2,500 to now accommodate a minimum of 5,000 worshippers. This was achieved and work on this magnificent edifice was pursued more vigorously by the clergy – The Ven. Azubuiké Ugoha, The Ven. Godwin Chinda, The Ven. Chris Chike Chukwumati and The Rev. Canon Bright Okocha who served here at various times with the successive lay leadership of the Cathedral Church with our active encouragement and supervision as the Dean.

### **New Cathedral Building Completion and Dedication**

With the steady financial support of the Diocese as well as that from members and friends of the Cathedral, the vision of a new Cathedral building was finally realised. Following the completion of work on this edifice and with the church not under any threatened burden of liabilities, financial or otherwise, the new All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi Church building was formally dedicated to the glory of God on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2019, on the exact occasion of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Diocese of Eyo by The Most Rev'd Nicholas D. Okoh, then *Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria*, assisted by us and a host of Archbishops and other Bishops of the Church of Nigeria, the Vicar of the Cathedral at the time, The Rev. Canon Bright Okocha and some leaders of other Christian denominations in attendance.

We acknowledge very specially the following notable parishioners of the All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi among many others **whose much labours and sacrifices contributed in no small way towards the takeoff, continuation, completion and dedication of the new Cathedral Building:**

- Sir Engr. Victor O. Dania
- Sir Engr. Gibson Okeke
- Sir Engr. Sam Uwaezuoke
- Sir Prof. Engr. A.O. Ibe
- Sir Chijioke Tasie
- Dr. Max Ugwu
- Chief O.C. Wali, JP (Sec)
- HRH Eze Amb. Sir S.C. Wokoma
- Sir Eze Ihekwaba
- Eze Sir B.A. Worgu (JP)
- Sir Harold C. Okoye
- Sir Chief Ray Amadi (JP)
- Sir Engr. B.E. Akalonu
- Sir Arch. Zach Ijeoma
- Sir Engr. Tayo Opanubi
- Engr. Zebulon Ibe



- Sir Engr. O.O. Ubani (late)
- Engr. Azubuike Egbonye
- Engr. Obi Onochie
- Mr. Bethram Odazi
- Evang. Emma Umeh
- Sir Iyke Agugua (Sec)
- Arch. C. Okoroafor
- Miss K.C. Worlu
- Sir Chief Nlerum G.C. (JP)
- Engr. Ben Alalibo
- Mr. Odinigwe Mokelu, (late)
- Mr. G. Ikoku
- Surv. Tunde Fakologbon
- Barr. Chimezie Otuonye
- Sir Chief Barr. Emmanuel C. Izuehie
- Engr. Victor Okezuluora
- Engr. Teju Pesu
- Engr. Azubuike Njoku
- Engr. Babs Abinusawa
- Engr. Forster Ezenwelu
- Bldr. Ikechukwu Ezeani
- Bldr. Ken Nduka
- Engr. Kenechukwu Okoli
- Engr. Uzoma Odumodu (Sec)
- Bldr. Eddy Francis
- Mrs. Angelina Orianwo
- Sir Chief. Engr. G. Emeruem (late)
- Sir Rogers Nwachinyere.

**Names of Priests and Workers that have served in this Church from 1911 to date:**

**Under Okrika District From 1911 – 1931**

S/N	NAME	RANK	FROM	TO
1.	Mr. Peter Okujagu	Agent	1911	-
2.	Mr. Andrew Yellowe	Agent	1912	1919
3.	Mr. Konigbo Koko	Agent	1920	1922
4.	Mr. Jonathan Odemele	Agent	1923	1924
5.	Mr. Wilfred I. Akah	Agent	1924	1928
6.	Mr. Isaac Wokoma	Agent	1929	1930
7.	Mr. Nnangigbo D.	Agent	1931	-
8.	Mr. Nath T. Akabo	Catechist	1932	1933

**Under St. Peter's Parish, Port Harcourt from 1934-1950**

S/N	NAME	RANK	FROM	TO
1.	Mr. Lazarus Umeokafor	Catechist	1934	1937
2.	Mr. Samuel Ndebe	Catechist	1938	Died in active service
3.	Mr. Mark Ibe	Catechist	1939	1940
4.	Mr. Jeremiah Iwora	Catechist	1941	-
5.	Mr. Samuel Ochei	Catechist	1942	1943
6.	Mr. Joshua Uguma	Catechist	1944	1945
7.	Mr. Benjamin Obiefuna	Catechist	1946	1947
8.	Mr. Charles Emelugo	Catechist	1948	
9.	Mr. Enoch Mordi	Catechist	1949	1950
10.	The Rev. George Maduakolam	Curate	1950	-

**Under Evo District and Archdeaconry**

S/N	NAME	RANK	FROM	TO
1.	The Rev. F. D. Jaja	Supt./Pastor	1951	-
2.	The Rev. Harry C. Nwachukwu	Supt./Pastor	1952	1953
3.	Mr. A. Abbey-Kalio	Catechist	1952	1953
4.	Rev. J. Buseri	Supt./Pastor	1954	-
5.	Mr. Wakama	Catechist	1954	-
6.	The Rev. Y. A. Fubara	Supt./Pastor	1955	1959
7.	Mr. John Ngwaogu	Catechist	1955	-
8.	Mr. Kalu	Catechist	1955	-
9.	Mr. Enoch Worlu	Catechist	1957	-1963
10.	The Rev. Godwin Asiegbu	Supt./Pastor	1960	1963
11.	Mr. F. O. Onuchukwu	Catechist	1961	
12.	Mr. F. Umezuruike	Catechist	1962	
13.	The Rev. Christopher O. Igwe	Supt./Pastor	1964	1968
14.	Mr. J. J. I. Otamiri	Catechist	1966	-

**Church Workers – 1970 – 2009**

S/N	NAME	RANK	FROM	TO
1.	Mr. Gilbert W.O. Amadi	Catechist	1971	1972
2.	The Rev. Frank Agala-Okor	Supt./Pastor	1971	1972
3.	The Rev. Sunday A. Nyenwe	Supt./Pastor	1973	1978
4.	Mr. Ezekiel Ajuru	Catechist	1973	1974
5.	Mr. John Wali	Catechist	1975	1976
6.	Mr. Dickson Jacob	Catechist	1976	1988
7.	The Rev. Canon Lawson N. Ndu	Supt./Pastor	1979	1984
8.	The Rev. Eugene E. Ngaha	Deacon/Priest (Curate)	1979	1988

9.	The Rev. Edmund C. Ogwo	Supt./Pastor	1984	1986
10.	The Rev. George N.J. Waka	Supt./Pastor	1987	1988
11.	Mr. Jonathan Mbatu	Catechist	1989	1990
12.	The Ven. Edmund C. Ogwo	Archdeacon	1991	1994
13.	The Rev. Can. D.A.T. Hart	Supt./Pastor	1991	1992
14.	The Rev. Can. Innocent W. Wopara	Supt./Pastor	1993	1996
15.	The Ven. F.O. Onuchukwu	Archdeacon	1995	Died in active service
16.	The Rev. Canon Dr. W.O. Wotogbe-Weneka	Vicar	1996	1998
17.	The Ven. Innocent W. Wopara	Archdeacon	1997	1998
18.	The Ven. C. N. Apia	Archdeacon	1998	1999
19.	The Ven. I.C.O. Kattey	Archdeacon	2000	- June, 2000
20.	The Rev. Canon S. Gberegbara	Administrator/ Vicar	2000	2001
21.	The Ven. Isaac Tejevbo	Archdeacon	2001	2002
22.	The Ven. F.N. Akah	Archdeacon	2002	2008
23.	The Rev. Emmanuel Odunze	Curate	2003	2006
24.	The Rev. Nathaniel Wachijem	Priest	2003	2006
25.	The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha	Archdeacon	2008	2009
26.	The Rev. Canon Chuka Opara	Curate	2006	2009
27.	The Rev. Samuel Chujor	Priest	2008	2009
28.	The Rev. Hosanna Naenwi	Priest	2008	2010

#### **Under All Saints Cathedral in the Diocese of Evo**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>RANK</b>	<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>
1.	The Rev. Canon Godwin B. Chinda	Administrator	2009	2011
2.	The Rev. Canon Charles Mordi	Curate	2009	2011
3.	The Rev. Hosanna Naenwi	Priest	2009	2010
4.	Mr. Maduakona Ezigbo Paul	Church Teacher (Great Shepherd)	2010	2012
5.	The Rev. Canon Chris Chukwumati	Canon Residentiary	2011	2014
6.	The Rev. Canon Leo Nwachukwu	Curate	2011	2014
7.	The Rev. Reginald Chinweze	Priest	2011	2013
8.	The Rev. Samuel Fedigha	Priest (Daystar)	2010	2018
9.	The Rev. Confidence Gura	Priest (Great Shepherd)	2012	2014
10.	Mr. Gift Chukwumati	Church Teacher (Our Saviour)	2012	2016
11.	Mr. Onyeme Anointed Pythias	Church Teacher (Beatitudes)	2012	2016
12.	The Rev. Timothy Otuka	Priest (Great Shepherd)	2014	2015



13.	The Rev. Samuel Ejekwu	Priest (Great Shepherd)	2015	2016
14.	The Ven. Chris Chukwumati	Archdeacon/Vicar	2014	2018
15.	The Rev. Canon Bright Okocha	Curate	2016	2018
16.	Evang. Isaiah Orji	Church Teacher (Great Shepherd)	2016	2018
17.	Mr. Festus U. Amamba	Church Teacher (Beatitudes)	2016	2019
18.	The Rev. Chidi Nwarie	Church Teacher/Deacon/Priest (Saints in Glory)	2016	2020
19.	Mr. Nathaniel Okechukwu	Church Teacher (Our Saviour)	2016	To Date
20.	The Rev. Moses Anyaefena	Priest	2018	2020
21.	The Rev. Canon Bright Okocha	Vicar	2018	2020
22.	The Rev. Canon Cephas Okarefe	Curate	2018	Nov. 2019
23.	The Rev. Nelson Okocha	Priest (Great Shepherd)	2018	2020
24.	The Rev. Canon Bright Welekwe	Priest (Daystar)	2018	To Date
25.	Mr. Elijah Obuikem	Church Teacher (Beatitudes)	2019	2021
26.	The Ven. Thompson Onyewuotu	Archdeacon/Vicar	2020	To Date
27.	The Rev. Canon Olufemi Igbamerun	Canon Residentiary	2020	To Date
28.	The Rev. Canon Hosanna Naenwi	Priest	2020	To Date
29.	The Rev. Canon John Chinda	Priest (Great Shepherd)	2020	To Date
30.	The Rev. Frankincense Chukwuma	Priest	April 2021	To Date

### **Churches planted by the All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi since 2009**

Since assuming the status of the Cathedral, All Saints Church, Rumuokwurusi has planted the following churches:

1. The Great Shepherd Anglican Church, Mgbuesilaru planted on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2010 and christened 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2010. This Church has grown to become a Parish now under the new Okporo/Rumuogba Archdeaconry.
2. Daystar Anglican Youth Church, Rumuokwurusi, planted on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2011. This station is now on the verge of becoming a Parish Church. The Daystar Church has further planted the Anglican Church of the Beatitudes, Harmony Estate, Rumuokwurusi during her first anniversary in 2012.
3. Our Saviour, Christ Anglican Church, Egbelu – Rumunduru was planted on Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> June and Christened Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2012.

4. Saints in Glory Anglican Church, Rumuibekwe planted on 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 was christened on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2017.

It is worthy to note here that the first church ever planted by the All Saints Anglican Church, Rumuokwurusi District (now Cathedral) while still in the Diocese of Niger Delta North was the Anglican Church of the Epiphany, Azumini – Rumuokwurusi. This was on Sunday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2003. Church of the Epiphany is now a Parish under the Trinity Archdeaconry of our Diocese.

Today, we are here assembled in this Cathedral Church for the Third Session of the Fourth Synod of our Diocese. From the history we have recounted this will be the second time this Cathedral Church will be hosting the Synod of our Diocese within the twelve years of her existence and the fourth time as a church when we recall the two previous synods held here under the Dioceses of Niger Delta and Niger Delta North. We as Bishop and Dean of this Cathedral with the Cathedral Archdeacon/Vicar, Priests, members of the Cathedral Standing Committee, Local Synod Organizing Committee and the entire Cathedral Community welcome you most joyfully in Jesus name. Amen.

We express our profound gratitude to the Vicar of the Cathedral, The Ven. Thompson Onyewuotu, his wife – Nkeiru, other priests and their wives, members of the Cathedral Standing Committee, Sir Engr. Okechukwu Amadi, the Chairman and members of the Local Synod Planning Committee, the entire Cathedral Community, other priests and churches of the Cathedral Bloc for all the preparations and sacrifices they have made towards the hosting of this Synod in this Cathedral. We are also grateful to all their Highnesses, the Ezes, Chiefs and Elders of the communities of Rumuokwurusi: HRH Eze Sir B.A. Worgu, Eze Chiorlu VII, The Paramount Ruler of Rumuchiorlu, HRH Eze Ejike Ikeani, Eze Oha Mgbuori II, Nyenwe Eli Mgbuori, HRH Eze Sir S.C. Wokoma, Eze Oha Rumuorianwo X, The Paramount Ruler of Rumuorianwo, HRH Eze Sir (Hon.) S.O. Worlu, JP, Nyerisi Mbam Oro-Esara IV of Oro-Esara Kingdom for their warm reception and hospitalities accorded us as we paid courtesy visits to them. We are also thanking other notable members of the Cathedral Church: Sir Ray Amadi, 7th President of the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt, Airfield District 9141, Dame Meg Orianwo, Lay Secretary, Church of Nigeria, Sir Engr. Gibson Okeke, Sir Chijioke Tasie, Chairman, Cathedral Chapter of the Council of Knights and Sir Victor Dania, Chairman, Diocesan Education Board who equally received us happily in their homes as we went to them on our pre-Synod Courtesy Visits.

### **The Cathedral Church**

The word 'Cathedral' is a derivative of the Latin word "***Cathedra***", meaning ***Throne or Bishop's Chair/Seat***, from where the Bishop expounds the scriptures.

On this occasion of the hosting of this Synod meeting of our Diocese here, please permit us (as we did at the First Session of the First Synod) 11 years ago, to

educate afresh all members of the Cathedral and indeed everyone present on what we as Bishop and the Cathedral Church represent.

We, the Bishop and this Cathedral represent the unity of the Church of God in Eyo in its mission. The Bishop as the official head of the Cathedral and the Cathedral itself, must be seen as basic to the life and unity of other local congregations in Eyo, a sign and focus of our unity and communions.

The Cathedral is usually the place of learning and a Centre of excellence. Priests, choristers and officers from other congregations should be able to come to the Cathedral Church and draw inspiration. Consequently, those who serve here as ordained ministers and others who minister as well in some other capacities should therefore be ready to offer this much-talked-about inspiration and leadership to the rest of the Diocese.

The Bishop when in the Cathedral, would have the Chief place, dignity and pre-eminence among the brethren of the Clergy and choir.

We are at liberty to hold visitations to this Cathedral or when invited by the clerk in Holy orders to whom we have delegated its day-to-day pastoral and secular administration. May we remind you that at such visitations by us (The Bishop), you as a dignitary and functionary – Priest, officer and stakeholder of the Cathedral Church, are mandatorily required to be present.

We thank the clergy and laity of All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi, for their sacrificial roles played over the past 12 years of our existence as a Diocese. Thank you also for accepting to host this Synod in addition to the other innumerable programmes and activities of the Diocese you have most gladly hosted over these years. May the Lord reward you abundantly.

## **SYNOD SPEAKERS**

### **BRIEF PROFILE OF BISHOP JOHNSON NWAHALAMA EKWE, PhD**

Our Synod Guest Speaker who has so far taken us on the Daily Synod Meditations is The Rt. Rev. Johnson Nwaohamala Ekwe, Bishop, Diocese of Niger West in Anambra State. He hails from Awgu Town in Awgu Local Government Area of Enugu State.

#### **Education**

Bishop Ekwe attended the Nigerian School of Infantry, Jaji, as well as Military School of Chaplaincy, Ampot, United Kingdom. Thereafter he attended the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna (Post Graduate School). Bishop Johnson Ekwe is also an alumnus of the University of Port Harcourt and St. Paul's University College, Awka.

#### **Bishop Ekwe holds the following academic qualifications:**

He holds a Diploma in Religious Studies and Theology (Dip, RS/Th); Bachelor of Theology (B.Th.), Masters in Public Administration (MPA), Masters in Arts (MA), and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph. D).



### **Military Service, Postings & Appointments**

Bishop Johnson N. Ekwe joined the Nigerian Army some 33 years ago. He grew from the ranks to a Captain after 27 years of a meritorious service and voluntarily retired following his election as a Bishop six years ago. Jonson Ekwe has served as a principal staff officer at the Nigerian Army Chaplaincy Corps Headquarters at various times. He was a seasoned instructor in the Nigerian Army School of Chaplaincy, Lagos. Ekwe actively participated in National and International Peace Keeping Operations, e.g. UNAMID Western Darfur Sudan. He was also an Adjunct Lecturer at West African Theological College, Lagos. Johnson Ekwe held the prestigious appointment of a Vicar-General of the Army Headquarters Cathedral, Lagos and was also a Chaplain/Cadets Religious Instructor at the Nigeria Defence Academy, Kaduna. He was Vicar, Our Saviour's Military Church, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna from where he was elected Bishop of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) on the Episcopal Synod at the Ibru Centre, Agbarha-Otor on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2015.

**Medals and Awards:** He holds the following medals: FIAMN, MMI, DFCM, GJM, CM, DCRL, as well as Commissioner for High Praise, Church of Nigeria.

### **Marital Status:**

Bishop Johnson Ekwe is happily married to Mrs. Ngozika Ijeoma Ekwe, Nnechizitere, Mama Niger-West and they are blessed with five children: Two girls and three boys including a set of twins, after 15 years of waiting upon the Lord for children. To God be the glory. Amen.

Bishop Ekwe enjoys dancing and offering praise to God. His ministry in these areas has greatly added colour to the proceedings of our annual Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON) which holds in Abuja. It was on the basis of this that the former Primate, The Most Rev. Nicholas D. Okoh declared him "Commissioner of High Praise" of the Church of Nigeria.

We welcome His Lordship, The Rt. Rev. Johnson Ekwe to the Diocese of Ewo and thank him for accepting our invitation to come and minister in this Synod. Bishop Ekwe will be concluding with us tomorrow during the Synod Thanksgiving Service.

### **BRIEF PROFILE OF THE RT. REV. SUNDAY T.G. ADEWOLE**

The Rt. Rev. Sunday T.G. Adewole started his ministerial career in the Diocese of Kwara as a Deacon in the year 1996 and was ordained a Priest a year later, in the year 1997. He was preferred Canon and made the Canon-in Residence of the Cathedral Church of St. Barnabas, Ilorin, in the Diocese of Kwara in 2003. Thereafter, he was elected, consecrated and enthroned as the Pioneer Bishop of the Diocese of Jebba in 2008. The Rt. Rev. Sunday T.G. Adewole worked for Eleven (11) years in the Diocese of Jebba and was translated and enthroned as the Fourth Bishop of the Diocese of Kwara on 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2019.

He had his ministerial and theological training at Immanuel College of Theology and Christian Education, Samonda, Ibadan. He proceeded to the Prestigious University of Ibadan where he bagged a B.A. (Hons) in History. He proceeded to

University of Ilorin to acquire a Master of Arts degree in the field of History, specialising in Church History.

In addition to his academic qualifications, The Rt. Rev. Sunday T.G. Adewole had other trainings both in Theology and Mission/Evangelism within and outside Nigeria as follows:

- Advance Training in Theology, Cliff College Manchester, United Kingdom, 2010-2012
- Training of Agricultural Research: Israel, 2011
- Mission Training, International School of Theology (ISOT), Jos, 1998-1999.

His relentless zeal and passion has led him to occupy the following posts:

- Vice Chairman, Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kwara State Chapter- Till date
- National President, Anglican Children's Ministry (ACM)- Till date
- National Chaplain, Business Breakthrough Fellowship (BBF)- Till date
- Member, Spirituality Committee, Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion- Till date.
- Member, Investment Committee, Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion- Till date.
- General Secretary, Students' Body, Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan- 2005

The Rt. Rev. Sunday Adewole is a passionate Missioner, a practical Evangelist, a Seasoned Teacher of the Word and an ardent Children's Ministry Teacher. He has been severally invited as Conference Speaker both within and outside Nigeria. He is happily married to Mrs. Grace O. Adewole and the union is blessed with godly Children.

### **BRIEF PROFILE OF THE REV. CANON TIMOTHY OLONADE**

Timothy O. Olonade is the Founding Executive Director/Team Leader of El-Rehoboth Global Leadership Foundation, a world mission enterprise established in 2011 to accelerate the fulfilment of the Great Commission. In January 2012, he Co-founded the M2414 Initiative for Final Harvest to provide networking platform for mobilising and mentoring the younger generation to actualise the Matthew 24:14 command of our Lord Jesus Christ while also caring for the poor through its SMILE Initiative.

Timothy Olonade believes in, and for over four decades has championed, the global cause of Christ in the local church by raising mighty army of believers who will participate in God's global redemptive plan. Timothy Olonade is an expository Bible Teacher, an ordained Minister of Foursquare Gospel Church and a Canon in the Anglican Communion.

Timothy's missionary work and leadership influence include over a decade of ministry as the Pioneer Chief Executive Secretary of Nigeria Evangelical

Missions Association (NEMA) – an umbrella national body he groomed from 42 members to 140+ mission agencies and churches with 6500+ missionaries serving in 60+ countries worldwide. Prior to this time, Timothy had served as a missionary and member of the leadership team of an indigenous church planting group, CAPRO, from where he took early retirement to concentrate on mentoring, training and leadership development.

Timothy Olonade serves on the board of some national and international Christian organisations as member of Mentor Link Round Table Fellowship; Ethne-to-Ethne Network; 24:14 Coalition; Member of Trustees, Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association; Founding Coordinator, Mentor Development Global Network, and Kingdom Vanguard Africa; Director, African Christian Textbooks; International Training Director and until recently, Vice President for International Training Leadership Ministries Worldwide as well as Patron, Women of God International/SMILE Initiative. He oversees the development of Encountering the World of Islam in English-Speaking African countries to train believers, evangelists and pastors on Strategic Training in Evangelising Muslims (STEM). He is the Convener/Chief Host, Mentor Development Gathering and Young Adults' Kingdom Vanguard Assembly;

Timothy's training and background in Communication and media and his stint in TV Production have oiled his writing and publishing ministry with more than a dozen personal books including Motivation for World Mission published in 1988 and recently released Nuggets of Life – insight for life that counts, published in 2017. Through More Books Africa and El-Rehoboth Media, Timothy has assisted leading authors in Nigeria to publish 100+ titles.

He's married to Hannah, a fellow missionary and President, WOGIN SMILE Initiative for Women and Vulnerable Children. The Olonades are blessed with three adult children.

### **BRIEF PROFILE OF LADY BRIDGET DANIA**

Born 66 years ago to the family of Chief Richard Omuaro Efekodo and Mrs. Betty Efekodo in Warri, Delta State, Bridget attended Primary and Secondary Catholic Mission Schools in Warri. She got her early Christian Foundation as a Roman Catholic where she was born, baptised and confirmed. She attended College of Education, Abraka, from 1974 – 1977. She got married in December 1977 and converted to the Anglican Communion. From here, she proceeded to continue her education in the prestigious University of Lagos from 1982-1985, graduating with a second class upper in English/Education.

She worked for many years as a teacher in the following schools:

- Federal Government College, Rumuokoro, Port Harcourt
- Federal Government College, Warri, Delta State
- King's College, Lagos

She is presently self-employed in the Hospitality industry and loves reading, teaching, cooking and real Estate business. She loves the Lord and God's people.

She was licensed as a Lay Reader on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September, 2012 by us, The Rt. Rev. Innocent Ordu, JP. She is also a Patron of her Alma-mater, Our Lady's High School, Effurun, Warri, Delta State as well as a Patron of the Boys Brigade (8<sup>th</sup> Port Harcourt Company). Bridget is happily married to Sir Victor Olumide Dania and they are blessed with four sons, beautiful daughters' in-law. Today, she is a happy grandma.

## **OUR SYNOD THEME:**

### **Introduction**

Our theme for this Synod is “**Do Not Be Weary in Well-Doing.**” It is drawn from the epistle to the Galatians, Chapter six (6), verse Nine (9).

### **Epistle to the Galatians**

#### ***Authorship***

At least 13 New Testament epistles were written by Paul. For a number of years, it was assumed that 1 Thessalonians was his first epistle. However, many conservative scholars now believe Galatians was his first. Apostle Paul had during his First Missionary Journey preached in Southern Galatia and also visited the Northern part during his second and third missionary trips. It is therefore presumed that this letter was written by him to his converts (churches) in these areas sometime between A.D. 48 and 58.

The Galatians themselves were an emotional and intense Celtic people. Caesar said: “They are fickle in their resolves, fond of change, and not to be trusted.” This is demonstrated during Paul's first visit to them: In the morning, they attempted to worship him, and in the afternoon to murder him (Acts 14). They were a branch of Gauls, originally from the north of the Baltic Sea, who had split off from a main migration west-ward to France and had settled in Asia Minor during the third century B.C.

Paul's work in Galatia had been highly successful. Great multitudes of people, mostly Gentiles, had accepted Christ. But after he left, the Judaizers (Jewish Christian teachers) from Jerusalem, who in their legalism perverted the gospel, came to Galatia and started teaching that Gentiles must put themselves back under the bondage of the law to be saved. The Galatians had thus received their message with the same zeal that they had accepted Paul's. There was then a general epidemic of circumcision among them. They had not only attacked the message of Paul, but also his apostleship.

In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul vindicates his authority as an expositor of the Gospel, and condemns the Judaizing position as anti-Christian legalism. Galatians is Paul's attempt to correct by letter, the error of the Judaizers as he had done to Peter by the spoken word.

Galatians may have been the only book written personally by the apostle without the aid of a stenographer (see chapter 6:11). It is, next to 2 Corinthians, the most



autobiographical of Paul's letters and the only epistle by Paul addressed to a group of local churches. The key word in this Epistle is liberty, used eleven times. This is more than all his other epistles combined.

It has been said that Judaism was the cradle of Christianity and very nearly its grave. But God raised up Paul as the Moses of the Christian Church to deliver believers from bondage.

Galatians finishes what Paul will begin in 2 Corinthians (concerning his apostleship), and begins what Paul will finish in Romans (concerning justification by faith).

On the nature of Galatians, J. Vernon McGee writes:

- (a) "It is a stern, severe, and solemn message (Gal. 1:6-9; 3:1-5). It does not correct conduct, as the Corinthian letters do, but it is corrective – the Galatian believers were in grave peril. Because the foundations were being attacked, everything was threatened. The Epistle contains no word of commendation, praise, or thanksgiving. There is no request for prayer, and there is no mention of their standing in Christ.
- (b) The heart of Paul the apostle is laid bare, there is deep emotion and strong feeling. This is his fighting epistle – he has on his war path. He has no toleration of legalism. Someone had said that Romans comes from the head of Paul while Galatians comes from his heart. 'Galatians takes up controversially what Romans puts systematically.'
- (c) It is the declaration of emancipation from legalism of any type. This was Martin Luther's favourite Epistle, and it was on the masthead of the Reformation. It has been called the Magna Charta of the early church, the manifesto of Christian liberty, the impregnable citadel, and a veritable Gibraltar against any attack on the heart of the Gospel. 'Immortal victory is set upon its brow.'
- (d) It is the strongest declaration and defence of the doctrine of justification by faith in or out of scripture. It is God's Polemic on behalf of the most vital truth of the Christian faith against any attack. Not only is a sinner saved by grace through faith, but the saved sinner lives by grace. Grace is a way to life and a way of life."

**The Epistle to the Galatians may be divided thus:**

- Part 1 – The Salutation and introduction: The Cross and the New Age (1:1-10)
- Part 2 – The truth of the Gospel: A narrative of Paul's experiences in support of his claim to true apostleship (1:11-2:21)
- Part 3 – The Defense of the Gospel: Paul's defence of the doctrine of justification by faith apart from the works of the law (3:1-5:12)
- Part 4 – The Life of the Gospel: Warnings, Instructions, and Exhortations (5:13-6:10):

- Warnings in regard to false teachers, and the misuses of liberty (5:7-13)
  - Exhortations concerning the spiritual life
  - The characteristics of the spiritual life
    - (a) Charitableness, and burden-bearing – 6:1,2
    - (b) Humility, self-examination, self-reliance and benevolence – 6:3-6
    - (c) The law of sowing and reaping holds good in the moral realm – 6:7-9
- Christian liberty is to be expressed or demonstrated through service to one another, 6:1-10

#### Part 5 – Closing: The Cross and New Creation (6:11-18)

It is from the fourth part of this Epistle which contains some warnings, instructions and exhortations concerning the spiritual life and its characteristics that our Synod theme, “**Do not be weary in well-doing**” (Chapter 6 verse 9) is drawn.

The spiritual life and its characteristics include charitableness and burden bearing -6:1,2; humility, self-examination, self-reliance and benevolence -6:3-6, and the law of sowing and reaping which holds good in the moral realm -6:7-9. In the very strong opinion of Paul, Christian liberty is to be expressed or demonstrated through service to one another -6:1-10. In summary, the focus is on how those in Christ should treat each other.

In this particular verse -9, Paul urges the Galatian Christians not to grow tired of doing good. Doing good is hard work, especially if someone begins to doubt whether it matters. Paul is urging the Galatians to keep living in a way that is consistent with what they believe particularly as free people.

Similarly, as Christians who are busy for the service of the Lord and His Church, we often grow tired for a number of reasons. We are however not to become weary.

“Tired” describes a physical condition, while “Weary” describes a spiritual attitude (See Isaiah 40). There is much work to be done. Paul encouraged the Christians to persevere, they were not to relax (*Gk ekluo*) their standards or give up doing the good they had learned.

This mandate is not however, an invitation to become a workaholic but rather a pep talk to continue walking by faith without becoming discouraged or losing heart. The hardworking, 'good-doing' child of God, should trust God to fulfil His promise of a great harvest or reward in His time and continually seek the strength from Him to do His will.

#### **Definition of well-doing**

When Apostle Paul exhorted the Galatians to not be weary in well-doing, what really did he mean? What did he mean by well-doing?

Well-doing when treated as a noun is the action or fact of conducting oneself well; it means good, proper or virtuous conduct. In plural terms, it means good deeds, virtuous actions.

Treated as an adjective, well-doing speaks of behaving in an admirable or righteous manner; valiantly; being beneficent; diligent in performance of work or duty, virtuous and respectable.

In summary, Paul was urging the Galatians to persevere in the practice of doing good- behaving in a benevolent or charitable manner.

Goodness is a fruit of the Spirit and one of God's many beautiful attributes. God's goodness is expressed in creation (Gen. 1:31) and experienced in salvation (Phil. 1:6). The Psalmist proclaims the goodness of God as great (Ps. 31:19) and as eternal (Ps 23:6; 52:1). God is the true essence of goodness, the Author of unlimited, undeserved generosity.

Though God alone is truly good, Paul was in his charge encouraging the Galatians to seek goodness by modeling their lives after Christ Jesus.

For the Christian, goodness is not simply the absence of evil; it is righteousness accompanied by acts of kindness which is a requirement for effective ministry whether by the clergy or the laity. Service to others is counted as evidence of the goodness of God at work in the life of the believer.

### **Acts of well-doing in the Early Church**

The attitude of the Early Church laid the foundation for every expression of or exhortation to well-doing that was to come later.

*“All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to any-one as he had need. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had” (Acts 2:44-45).*

As the number of Christians multiplied, different methods of benevolence appeared. But in all their practice of doing good, they expressed their understanding of God as the ultimate owner of all they possessed and they themselves, His stewards or managers and caretakers of all that belongs to God.

Consequently, Christians in every age, have an obligation to be faithful, unwavering, untiring and consistent in managing all that God has entrusted to their care - using them for the good of all who come their way.

### **In what areas are we to persevere (Not be weary) in well-doing?**

#### **1. In supporting the Needy**

The Bible is full of verses that demonstrate God's heart toward the poor among us. Such verses should encourage us to seek to live a generous life, displaying the same love Christ shows to us. For while we were poor and needy, Christ died for us (1 Tim. 6:17-18, Gal. 2:10, James 2:5, 14-17).

In the early Church, special men were chosen to serve as “deacons” - helpers in the distribution of offerings and gifts for the widows and needy (Acts 6:1). These men made it their ministry to channel all the giving to where there was practical need.

As individual Christians, we should endeavour to carry out personal social works/actions and also support the Church to do same towards those less fortunate, the vulnerable and needy persons within the Church in particular and those outside the Church (Prov. 19:17, 22:9,16). We must

avoid turning a blind eye to the plight of those who are really going through adverse conditions in our midst.

**2. In the area of supporting the Diocese and our local churches at a time of need:**

As members of the Diocese and also of our local parishes and stations, we are to be sensitive to the needs that are begging for our intervention, particularly as God places us in a position to address such needs.

*“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men especially unto them who are of the household of faith” (Gal. 6:10).*

From time to time, the sufferings, hardships and difficulties of other people, the needs of either the Diocese, our local churches or even another part of the Body of Christ, are brought to our notice. God presents these as opportunities for us to take some practical, positive and benevolent steps to relieve the situation.

The Church constitutes the household of faith Paul was talking about. Any act of good deeds or kindness extended to the Church, the Bride of Christ, is usually well-pleasing to God and He rewards such fully and openly. Individuals, families, organisations and governments should not be insensitive nor grow weary in sharing part of God's blessings bestowed upon them with the Church. Where they have done something in the past, they should now increase such acts of goodwill and support to the Church.

The Church has so much to do in the areas of spreading the good news of the gospel across the world. This neighbourhood and global evangelisation in turn leads to the salvation of many from the bondage of sin, thus bringing about a morally and spiritually sane society. Through her mission and evangelistic activities, the Church breeds a God-fearing and responsible citizenry.

The Church is equally engaged in a lot of construction activities and social works such as provision of quality education through the establishment of schools, healthcare and humanitarian services to all, especially the less-privileged persons in the society. The steady, persistent and untiring support of all lovers of God and His Church will go a long way in helping the Church accomplish her ministry and mission in these aforementioned areas.

Accordingly, we invite you in the name of God to come forward to partner with the Church. And endeavour not to be tired, faint or grow weary! We also urge you to try not to murmur in all your acts of well-doing to the Church. It is even better that one ignores the call to partnership with God in the advancement of His kingdom than to do so with grumbling and murmuring. God's blessings, honour and reward elude us each time we serve grudgingly. Our good deeds or well-doing must be rooted in cheerfulness.

We are hereby further charged to be careful not to discourage or dissuade those who are open to embarking on acts of well-doing towards the Church



when we ourselves are not prepared or fully persuaded to do so.

As children of God, we are to persevere in well-doing even when we have sufficient reasons or discouraging signals capable of making us not to continue, either from those we have previously served or are intending to serve or from even the Church itself. Well-doing is an attribute of God and also of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are all quite familiar with the slogan: “God is good!” and the response that follows when it is raised: “All the time!”

God's goodness is eternal; it endures continually (Psalm 23:6; 52:1). We are made in the image of God and so His attributes of goodness, compassion, benevolence and kindness should rob off on us as His children.

Secondly, Jesus left us with many exemplary deeds – preaching and soul-winning (reconciling many to God), healing the sick, bringing deliverance to the oppressed and succour to the depressed and afflicted, feeding the hungry, etc.

*“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him” (Acts 10:38).*

We are called to walk or follow in the steps of Christ. Jesus said:

*“The poor you will always have with you” (Matthew 26:11).*

For this reason, we must always brace up to respond to the genuine needs of the poor as the Lord enables us.

Even a Church can be poor! And so, individuals and other well-to-do congregations can deliberately decide to adopt or periodically send relief or help to such “distressed” or “poverty-stricken” congregations. Their less fortunate condition offers us the opportunity to sow seeds of generosity in their midst: For

*“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease” (Genesis 8:22).*

Just as we ceaselessly look up to God to shower His blessing upon us, so should we be prepared to water the grounds for the release of such anticipated blessings from God by reaching out to meet the needs of those around us, including the Church. The resultant effect will be a large harvest of blessings from God.

### **3. In churches giving sacrificially to one another**

When the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were in famine, the poor, suffering gentile believers in Macedonia begged to be included in giving to a collection to help them.

*“Out of the most severe trial their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability” (2 Cor. 8:1-4).*

In our Diocese today, there are churches that are relatively comfortable, there are also others that are poor - always in need. It is expected that the rich should take care of the poor. But from the above cited scripture, we note that even the poor can go the extra mile to support others in greater need. It is so sad that there are churches here which have in a most ungodly manner, maintained a hardened posture towards other suffering congregations including the ones either planted by or assigned to them by us, the Bishop. Leaders and members of churches that are quick to loudly talk about the grace of God in their lives are to demonstrate evidence of that divine grace in the way they respond to the distress cries of other churches around. The distressed churches themselves should explore avenues to equally reach out to others in greater need following the example of the Macedonian Christians. Everyone, group or Church, rich or poor is called to a life of well-doing.

In whatever state we find ourselves therefore, when we do good to others, we will be following the example of Jesus' sacrifice for us all. Individuals and churches should strive to give proportionally using their abundance to meet the need of others so that everyone of us and our churches may have enough.

#### **4. In our support and encouragement to our ministers**

As part of our worship of God, we are to support genuine missionary work and ministers sent to labour amongst us wholeheartedly and generously by finance and prayer.

Every genuine, God-fearing and Christ-serving minister of the gospel - Primate, Archbishop, Bishop (Overseer), Archdeacon, Vicar, Priest, Church teacher, Catechist, etc., has a right to be supported (1 Cor. 9:4-14). Those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel, according to the Lord's command (1 Cor. 9:14). They should however, not steal from or for the Church.

A basic principle of missions is that “it is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). To share what we have is a spiritual sacrifice pleasing to God.

*“But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Hebrews 13:16).*

The Apostle Paul traveled from place to place establishing new churches. On some occasions, he worked with his hands to provide his own support (Acts 18:3; 2 Thess. 3:7-9). On other occasions, the Philippian Church showed the true spirit of giving which God commends, by supporting traveling ministers such as Paul.

*“I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received... the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice pleasing to God” (Phil. 4:18).*

As God's people, we should be encouraged to have a sense of responsibility and partnership towards our ministers. Good deeds towards any settled, sincere and kingdom-focused (not distracted) minister are considered as fragrant offerings, acceptable sacrifices to God. He will always be well pleased with such. The benefiting servant of God himself will be enabled and encouraged to concentrate on his task of shepherding the flock of God committed to his cure and care.

Lastly, we are to support our ministers by unceasingly upholding them in our prayers to God (Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3).

**5. In the payment of our tithes, offerings and other acts of Christian stewardship**

We are not to get weary in giving our tithes, offerings and other Christian stewardships but rather to be calculated and consistent in these acts to the end that God's work is advanced and the needs of the Church are attended to. As God prospers us, let us respond to His generosity by the inward compulsion of the Holy Spirit.

God expects us to begin with a percentage:

*“ 'Bring the whole tithe (10% or one tenth) into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much room enough for it”' (Malachi 3:10);*

and to do so **systematically**:

*“Hezekiah gave orders to prepare storerooms in the temple of the Lord, and this was done. Then they faithfully brought in the contributions, tithes and dedicated gifts...” (2 Chron. 31:11,12).*

God intended His Church to be a house of bread, a storehouse where nothing is ever in short supply. The generous, freewill contributions or donations of all that is required by members will enable the Church to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, treat the sick, shelter the homeless, fund the education of the indigent and economically empower the financially weak. **Every Church in this Diocese should consider establishing Welfare Store Houses or Food Banks** to address the rising cases of poverty, hunger, unemployment, etc., in our midst.

**6. In the area of soul winning and constant preaching of the gospel:**

*“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in*

*Jerusalem and in all Judaea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth” (Acts 1:8).*

*“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise” (Proverbs 11:30).*

*“And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, And compel them to come in, that my house may be filled” (Luke 14:23).*

Every Christian is either a soul-winner or a backslider. **Which one are you?** The task assigned to every believer in Christ is to proclaim the gospel throughout the world and make disciples of all kinds of people (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15).

The passages above, often referred to as the Great Commission, were among Jesus' final admonitions to His disciples before He ascended to heaven.

Mark's gospel refers to Christ's command to His followers to “go preach the gospel to the world”, while Matthew reflects His emphasis for the Church “to go and make disciples of all Nations.” The combination of these two elements - evangelism and discipleship, are generally considered as Christ's primary mission for His Church.

“Evangelism” is the ministry of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ that will bring men's souls into fellowship with God, while “discipleship” is the training of believers to become disciplined followers of Jesus and His principles.

These are the primary tasks or functions we exist as individual Christians and as the Church of Christ on earth to faithfully carry out, no matter the challenges we encounter while doing so. They are essential parts of our mission as a Church – no other activity can be rated higher or more important than they.

Each time we file out on evangelism and/or disciple a convert to maturity in Christ, it is an act of well-doing and God is well pleased. We must endeavour therefore, not to become weary in doing these!

Jesus, our Lord and Master, devoted Himself wholly to these tasks while here on earth. In the same vein, he urges us to continue in His steps and not to faint. The redemption of the souls of men was the sole purpose of His earthly ministry, and He in turn imparted the same objective to His disciples (John 14:12; Matthew 18:11; 4:19). We cannot afford to be lukewarm, indifferent or weary about it:

*“And all things are of God who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18).*

It is the purpose of every believer, not only pastors or clergymen, to bring souls to Jesus Christ. Christ intended for His Church to let its light shine to the world – to love, to care for, and to meet the needs of humanity, while upholding His redemptive truths and righteousness



*“And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful” (Titus 3:14).*

Jesus told His Church:

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).*

### **The inevitable results of persevering in well-doing**

When we do good to men and God's Church:

- i. We demonstrate that we are truly in Christ (1 John 2:29; 3:7);
- ii. We reflect the good and upright nature of God, our Father (Psalm 25:8);
- iii. We show others God's love (John 3:21);

In the words of Brennan Manning, an American author, laicized priest, and public speaker,

*“The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips then walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. This is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.”*

- iv. We improve society, the Church and the lives of those benefiting from our good deeds (Judges 21:25);
- v. God is pleased, particularly as He considers our gestures as spiritual sacrifices (Prov. 21:3; 2 Cor. 9:7; Hebrews 13:16);
- vi. We avoid sin becoming our master (Gen. 4:7);
- vii. We are enriched and our generosity produces sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God (2 Cor. 9:11,13) by those who benefit from it, and so God is further glorified (2 Cor. 8:19);
- viii. We lay up for ourselves a good foundation for the future (1 Tim. 6:19);
- ix. We discover a unique happiness and unexpected blessings (Malachi 3:10; Psalm 106:3);
- x. Great harvest awaits us (Gal. 6:9b);
- xi. All will be well with us (Deut. 6:18); and
- xii. No good thing will be withheld from us (Psalm 84:11).

### **Conclusion**

As we conclude this part of our address, may we remind us that our Synod theme: **“DO NOT BE WEARY IN WELL-DOING”** is to be regarded as a charge, an admonition, exhortation, instruction and above all, a command from God which we must obey, if we sincerely love Him. It is not something to debate or argue against. It is God's law, which when obeyed, holds the promise of great blessings for us. Jesus said,

*“If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).*

As we strive to keep this charge however, let us note the following facts:

1. Although, good deeds are good, they are however, not sufficient to earn us eternal salvation. The fact that we do good to others or to the Church proves nothing about our spirituality. Jesus warned us that in the final day of judgement, many who had done miracles including good works in His name would be rejected and disqualified because they had lived in sin.

Well-doing, by itself, is no indication that a man is completely approved by God. To earn total approval and acceptance from God, the one who does good to others must ensure that he/she is equally saved from sin, the world and Satan's rule over his/her life. He/she **MUST BE BORN AGAIN** (John 3:3).

God values our liberality, generosity and acts of kindness. He might even go on to bless us in keeping with His unfailing promises:

*“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days” (Eccl. 11:1).*

*“The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself” (Prov. 11:25).*

*“He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed: for he giveth of his bread to the poor” (Prov. 22:9).  
“And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday” (Isaiah 58:10).*

*“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again” (Luke 8:38);*

yet, He did not just stop at acknowledging and extolling the liberality and almsgiving of Cornelius; He had to send Peter to go and preach to him about remission of sin and salvation through faith in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 10:1-43).

God did not want Cornelius to end up with His approval and that of men here on earth only for him to miss out on his eternal salvation on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God did not want Cornelius to possibly accuse Him of injustice and unfairness on the day of judgement; consequently, He offered him an opportunity to encounter the Lord Christ.

Our acts of well-doing are therefore, **NOT COMPLETE OR ACCEPTED BY**

## **GOD UNTIL JESUS IS CROWNED OVER OUR LIVES AND HE REIGNS IN OUR HEARTS AS LORD AND SAVIOUR.**

If we ignore this call to surrender our lives to Jesus for our souls' salvation, we stand to suffer loss on the day of judgement. Our well-doing counts best when they are done from a life that is totally yielded to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Dorcas, a Jewess who lived in the beautiful seacoast city of Joppa is reported in the bible to have loving eyes that saw the most urgent needs of others... **“She was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.”** She was not only known for using her skilled fingers to stitch beautiful garments and distributing them generously to the city's bereaved and destitute widows and orphans, but also for having a heart for the Lord. Luke the author of the Acts of the Apostles calls her a **“Christian disciple.”** Dorcas was not only generous; she had a relationship with the Lord Jesus (Acts 9:36-42). So must every person who engages in acts of good deeds.

As we visit the sick, prisoners; the fatherless and widows in their affliction; feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, empower the financially poor, award bursaries and scholarships to indigent students, build churches, parsonages and provide other needs of the Diocese and our churches as well as carry out several other acts of benevolence or contribute towards these (Matthew 25:35-36; James 1:27), we must most importantly not forget to yield our lives **TOTALLY** to Jesus like Dorcas and receive the assurance of the forgiveness of our sins and a place in glory with God when He returns for His own.

2. In responding to scriptures' calls on us to persevere in well-doing, we are to do so bearing in mind that they are calls to a spiritual service - not a social or humanitarian service as some local and international organisations see it. We are not in the same class with these Bodies which merely seek to provide palliatives to an aching and suffering humanity.

Every act of well-doing (good deeds) by the individual Christian, Church group or a whole Church congregation, should aim at not only responding to the physical needs (well-being) of the receiver(s) but also and most importantly, at the **salvation of the soul(s)** of that person or group of persons from sin where they are yet to be born again.

Our primary aim therefore, should be to use good deeds to promote the mission of Christ on earth, which is the salvation of every man.

3. Thirdly, our **motives** must be right before God whenever we embark on acts of good deeds.

Every act of well-doing on our part must be rooted:

### **i. in our love for God, His Church and for our fellow men:**

*“... And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, **but have not love, it profits me nothing** (1 Cor. 13:1-3);*

*“... But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may supply their lack, that their abundance also may supply your lack – that there may be equality... Therefore, show to them and before the churches, the proof of your love and of our boasting on your behalf” (2 Cor. 8:14,24);*

**ii. in our desire to obey God's command; glorify Him and not ourselves:**

*“Therefore, whether you eat or Drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, **not seeking my own profit but the profit of many, that they may be saved**” (1 Cor. 10:31-33).*

Our well-doings should seek to honour God just as our Lord's every thought, word, and action was totally devoted to the glory of God. We should avoid aiming for self-glory, the worship, praise or recognition of men or attracting any form of immediate or future gain or attention to ourselves.

The story is told of Frederick Orberline, a Philanthropist. This generous man lost his way one day in a snowy storm very close to Strasbourg. One Christian who risked his own life saved him from freezing to death. When the selfless Christian refused to take any reward, Oberline said to him. “At least tell me your name.”

“First tell me the name of the good Samaritan” he replied.

“I don't believe it's recorded.”

“Then permit me to withhold mine”, said the Christian.

This action deeply impressed Oberline. He never forgot that humble man who expected no earthly praise for his deed but preferred to receive his reward in heaven.

4. In carrying out our acts of well-doing, we should equally prepare our hearts to cope with a number of challenges such as:

- a) Possible display of ingratitude or non-return of kindness to us by those we have struggled to reach out to.

Many persons are by nature very unthankful, including churches and groups, yet at their time of need they eagerly look out for succour from both God and man. And so, we should not waiver or be discouraged from doing good when we experience attitudes of non-recognition from anyone or group we have chosen to bless. Rather than step down on our generous attitude towards them, we should



follow the example of God, our Father and continue in our goodwill:

*“... That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45).*

- b) At some point, the prevailing economic climate may exert unbearable pressure on us coupled also with the unrelenting pressure from those who constantly look up to us; such that we are no longer in a position to do as before, or we are tempted to shut every needy person out of the doors of our lives; we are still enjoined not to be weary but to be **“full of goodness”** (Romans 15:14) knowing that **“in due season we shall reap, if we faint not”** (Galatians 6:9b).
5. Lastly, we should remember that God who Himself calls us to a life of well-doing does not faint, neither does He get weary in extending His goodness to us. Consequently, when we start becoming faint or getting weary of well-doing, we should endeavour to draw near to Him, for the needed strength and grace to go on.

*“Hast thou not known? Has thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding.*

*He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.*

*Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”. (Isaiah 40:28-31).*

#### **Let us close with the following scriptures:**

*“Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked,*

*and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matthew 25:34-40).*

*“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27)*

*“Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble. The LORD will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The LORD will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou will make all his bed in his sickness” (Psalm 41:1-3)*  
*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).*

## **THE DIOCESE IN RETROSPECT**

### **SYNOD 2020**

**This was hosted by Trinity Archdeaconry** at St. Matthias' Anglican Church, Atali District firstly on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2020 for the One-Day Synod at 12 venues within Atali Community at which discussion groups discussed the various reports submitted to the Synod and secondly from Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2020. The theme was **“Stronger and Better Together”** (Ps. 133; 1 Cor. 12:14; Eccl. 4:9-12).

The synod resource persons were The Rt. Rev. Dr. Babatunde Ogunbanwo, Bishop of Ijebu South-West, Ogun State, who led us in three Synod Bible Study sessions and The Ven. Dr. Christian Onundu Ifeanyichukwu Iwuagwu-Amatu, Vicar of St. Mary's Church, Harmondsworth, London, UK, who handled the daily morning meditations on the Synod theme and delivered a talk on “The Church Post COVID-19: Repositioning for greater efficiency and growth” via the Zoom application.

We remain grateful to the host Archdeaconry and Church, The Archdeacon, The Ven. Charles Mordi, priests, their wives and the entire laity of the Archdeaconry as well as the community leaders, men, women and youths of Atali for their great hospitality.

The Diocesan Christian Men's Fellowship ably served as the Chief launcher of our Address/Charge and gave the sum of **N12, 200,000** to

support the developmental efforts of the Diocese. It was a feat no one expected from the men. But they did it to the glory of God and joy of all of us. We appreciate the efforts of the men led by Sir Engr. Sunny Worlu and all who shared in the vision of the Executive Committee members in the actualisation of that huge dream.

At the Synod of last year, we preferred the following priests as **Honorary Canons of the All Saints Cathedral** of our Diocese:

- The Rev. Canon Samuel J. Ejekwu
- The Rev. Canon Confidence Gura
- The Rev. Canon John Bekwele Chinda
- The Rev. Canon Raymond Osakwe
- The Rev. Canon John Nkuene
- The Rev. Canon Kemakolam C. Jasper
- The Rev. Canon Samuel Fedigha

We also appointed a new Chancellor for our Diocese in the person of Sir Barr. Nlerum Amadi who had since inception functioned as our Diocesan Registrar. We also announce the appointment of Barr. Chimezie Otuonye as Diocesan Registrar (in charge of lands) and Sir Barr. G. O. Dike as Deputy Registrar.

## **DIOCESAN CONVOCATIONS**

**1. Nigeria at 60: Evo Praise and Prays Day** Held at Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2020. Members of the Diocesan community turned out in good numbers. The message of the day was preached by The Ven. Alex Usifoh on the topic “Nigeria at 60: Waxing great and prospering as a nation” (2Kings 2:18-22). We thank the Diocesan Prayer Chaplains, The Rev. Samuel Udeh, and Church Teacher, David Wopara; the Diocesan Music Ministry Chaplain; The Ven. Dr. Ikechukwu G. Anene and members of the chaplaincy as well as the host Church and others for their notable roles in the staging of the One-Day Praise and Prayer Programme to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of our country as an independent nation.

**2. Diocesan Harvest Thanksgiving Service**

This took place on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 at St. Mark's Elelenwo District, Elelenwo Archdeaconry. Attendance to this service was on a representative basis by the various Admin Blocs. It was a colourful and spiritually refreshing outing for members of the Diocese in attendance.

Our gratitude goes to Lady Felicia Derek-Iyo, Chairperson and members of the Diocesan Harvest Committee for their sacrificial sponsorship of the costs of the Harvest on behalf of the Diocesan Board; the Vicar of St. Mark's Elelenwo, The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha, the DCC and members of the

Archdeaconry; the Eze Elelenwo-Etor and his Council of Chiefs, Elelenwo daughters, the CMF led by Sir Adegbuji for their solidarity, as well as our very special Harvest launchers and preacher, The Ven. Charles Mordi for their outstanding contributions to the overall success of the event.

### **3. Diaconate and Priestly Ordination Service**

On Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2020 being All Saints Day, the following were ordained Deacons in our Diocese at the All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi:

- The Rev. Best Ekendia
- The Rev. Chibuzor Virginus Chukwuemeka
- The Rev. Christian Gabriel
- The Rev. Chukwuemeka Obani
- The Rev. Chidi Nwarie
- The Rev. Ogini Ogochukwu
- The Rev. Joseph Asonye

The underlisted were in the same service ordained priests:

- The Rev. Amoson Ijah
- The Rev. Dandison Fiberesima
- The Rev. Nzubechukwu Esomonu

Similarly, in this same service, the priests earlier listed in this address as having been preferred Honorary Canons of the All Saints Cathedral during the reading of our address at last year's Synod were formally installed.

We appreciate The Ven. Ifeanyi Aniagboso from Niger Delta North Diocese, our Guest Preacher at the above joint services who also coordinated the pre-ordination retreat of the Deacons and Priests; our own The Ven. Alex Usifoh who coordinated the retreat of the Honorary Canons, The Ven. Dr. Ikechukwu Anene who assisted both coordinators as well as other resources persons, for all their services to the Church of God.

The Ven. Ifeanyi Aniagboso has since voluntarily returned to take the newly ordained Deacons and Priests on a 2-Day post-ordination (follow-up) training. We thank him for this sacrifice.

### **4. New Clergy and Wife**

We welcome The Reverend Kingsley and Mrs. Chioma Imenwo who joined our Diocese early this year from the Diocese of Ohaji/Egbema. The couple has since settled down at their assigned ministry post – Holy City Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi. May the Lord grant them fruitful ministry in our midst now and in the years ahead.

### **5. Service of Investiture of new Knights, unveiling of the Book “Evo @ 10” and presentation of 10th Anniversary awards/honours.**

As part of the programmes of the services of investiture of new knights, ordination of priests and deacons and installation of Honorary Canons on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> October and Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2020, we installed our



newly appointed Legal Officers of the Diocese - Chancellor, Registrar and Deputy Registrar, unveiled the book “**Diocese of Eyo @ 10 - Memories, Milestones and Monuments**”, copies of which have been made available to all delegates as part of their registration for this year’s Synod. At the two services also, we presented awards to some Diocesan faithful and other friends of the Diocese in recognition of their services and notable contributions to the development of the Diocese in different areas over our 10 years of existence. The award ceremonies were to bring the activities marking the July 2019 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Diocese to a close. The following were the areas of awards and the recipients:

**a. Outstanding Builder Award in appreciation of their Notable Contributions in the Construction and Completion of The New All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusu Building.**

1. Sir Dr. Max Ugwu
2. Sir Engr. Gibson Okeke
3. HRH, Eze Sir Simeon C. Wokoma
4. Sir Chief Alexender Orakwue
5. Sir Engr. Sam Uwaezuoke
6. Sir Harold C. Okoye
7. Sir Chijioke Tasié
8. Sir Eze Ihekweba
9. Sir Chief Ray Amadi
10. Sir Engr. Victor Dania
11. Engr. Babs Abinusawa
12. Sir Prof. Anthony O. Ibe
13. The Ven. Dr. Fyeface N. Akah
14. The Ven. Chris Chukwumati
15. Chief O.C. Wali

**b. Award for their Outstanding Leadership Influence and Stewardship in The Diocese**

1. Mrs. Chinyere Uchenna Ordu, JP
2. Sir Chief Ike B.S. Chinwo
3. Mr. Chika Amadi
4. Sir Paul Chukwumati
5. Dame Meg Orianwo
6. Sir Reginald Waboso
7. The Ven. Alex Usifoh

**c. Award in Recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Contributions in the General Administration of the Diocese**

1. Sir Barr. Nlerum Amadi
2. Barr. Chimezie Otuonye
3. Sir Chief (Barr.) G.O. Dike

4. The Ven. Chris Chukwumati
5. The Ven. Sunny Opara (now late)
6. Mr. Benjamin Peterson
7. Rev. Canon Chieme Chimaobi
8. Rev. Samuel Fedigha
9. Dr. Kasarachi Innocent
10. Mr. Lawrence Chinda
11. Lady Dr. Ndidi Utchay
12. Sir Promise W.O. Owhor
13. HRM, Sir Clement Ejiofor
14. Mrs. Ibelema Chibuzor
15. The Rev. Canon Hosanna Naenwi
16. Mrs. Elsy Ekeocha
17. Lady Charity Chuku
18. Mr. Samuel Ogbu
19. Mr. Godwin Mendie
20. Mrs. Rose Chieme
21. Ms. Stella Nyeche
22. Sir Gilbert Chuku
23. Mr. Godwin I. Chinda (now late)
24. Lolo Agnes Ezenta
25. Surveyor Gaius Asor
26. The Ven. Dr. Ikechukwu G. Anene
27. Mrs. Priscilla Alex-Usifoh
28. Barr. (Mrs.) Chidinma Otuka
29. Mrs. Chikaru Oloruntobi

**d. Merit Award in recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Contributions in the Educational Mission of the Diocese**

1. The Ven. Dr. Fyनेface N. Akah, JP
2. Sir Engr. Victor Dania
3. Mrs. Chinyere U. Ordu, JP
4. The Rev. Canon Chieme Chimaobi
5. The Rev. Timothy S. Otuka
6. Sir Godfrey N. Ohuabunwa
7. Diocesan Council of Knights
8. Hon. Martin Chike Amaewhule

**e. Outstanding Builder Award in recognition and appreciation of their contributions towards the infrastructural development of the Diocese and care for her churches**

1. HRH, Eze Sir Emeka & Lady Gladys Ihunwo
2. HRH, Eze Sir & Lady Morgan Amadi

3. Mr. Austin Chinda
4. Hon. Mrs. Goodnews Ozioma Amadi
5. Sir, the Hon. Justice & Dame Iche Ndu, OFR
6. Sir Chief Ike B.S. Chinwo
7. Hon. Martin Chike Amaewhule
8. Sir Chief Mike Ejims Enwukwe
9. Hon. Prince Solomon Abel Eke
10. Sir Mike Epelle

**f. Excellence in Ministry Award in recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Contributions in the Teaching and Discipleship Ministry of the Diocese**

1. The Rev. Canon Cephas Okarefe
2. Mrs. Ijeoma Anagbogu
3. The Rev. Canon Samson O. Abada
4. The Rev. Canon Olufemi Ejiro Igbamerun
5. Mrs. Oluwaseun Ijaware

**g. Excellence in Ministry Award in recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Pastoral Ministry in the Diocese**

1. The Rev. Canon Kingsley U. Ohajianya
2. The Ven. Okechukwu Owhonda
3. The Rev. Canon Gospel Onuchuku
4. The Rev. Canon Bright Welekwe
5. The Rev. Collins Daniel

**h. Award of Distinction to Churches and Group in recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Financial Contributions towards the growth of the Diocese since 2009**

1. Saint Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery
2. All Saints Cathedral Church, Rumuokwurusu
3. New Wine Anglican Church, East/West Road Parish, Okporo
4. Saint Nicholas' Church, Woji District
5. Diocesan Women's Ministry (MU/WG)

**i. Special Service Award in recognition and appreciation of their Outstanding Services to the Diocese within the first decade of her existence**

1. Sir (Arch) Charles O. Chukwu
2. Dame Priscilla Nosiri
3. Sir Engr. Ben Uduh
4. Sir Chidi Osuji
5. The Rev. Canon Joseph Ofoegbu

6. Lady Patience Wokoma
7. Mrs. Sylverline Ejims
8. Lady Rita Okugini
9. Dame Akudo Nnadozie
10. Sir Barr. Emmanuel Izuehie
11. The Ven. Chidi S. Worgu
12. The Ven. Charles Mordi
13. The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha
14. Mr. John Okene
15. Lady Felicia Derek-Iyo

**j. Friends of The Diocese Award in recognition and appreciation of their Notable Contributions towards the Creation and Growth of the Diocese since inception**

1. Alabo (Dr.) Gabriel T.G. & Dr. Christie Toby (KSC)

**k. Friends of The Diocese Award in recognition and appreciation of their Notable Support towards the Growth of the Diocese since 2009**

1. Sir Nelson Wali
2. Hon. O.C.J. Okocha, SAN

**l. Missions Advancement Award in recognition and appreciation of their Generous Support towards the missionary endeavours of the Diocese since 2009**

1. HRM, Sir Sydney O. Worlu
2. Sir Godfrey N. & Lady Angela Ohuabunwa
3. Sir Ama & Lady Amonia Hart

**m. Post Humus Award in recognition of their Notable Contributions towards the development of the Diocese while alive**

1. Sir Chief Samuel A. Wutche
2. HRH, Eze Sir W.W. Onunwor, JP
3. Sir Prince Udoh Egege
4. Sir Francis I. Mbeledogu
5. Hon. Mrs Faustina Wali
6. HRH, Eze Sir G.N. Nwanwa

We congratulate these persons and thank them once again for their sacrifices which necessitated the awards.

**6. 2020 Diocesan Discipleship/Revival Conference**

Due to the ravaging Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic last year, we could not gather as usual together at a common venue for this conference but rather at the different selected venues within the Administrative Blocs.



The activities of the Conference began with rallies on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2020. This was followed by gospel crusades on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> December and the conference proper from Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> December. Conference Thanksgiving Services were held in all Parishes and Stations on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup>. The Conference theme was “Perfecting the Saints” (Eph. 4:12), highlights included expositions on the theme, talks, seminars and panel discussions on the 2020 Synod theme - “Stronger and Better Together”, Bible Engagements, etc. The speakers were drawn from our team of clergy and laity in the Diocese.

We commend the Discipleship/Revival Conference Planning Committee headed by The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha for the great job they did in packaging and executing the activities of the conference particularly, given the challenge of using multiple venues. We, the Bishop, were able to visit all the venues through the days of the Conference except for Trinity Archdeaconry which had rounded up on the last day.

#### **7. 2020 Diocesan Christmas Carol and Service of Nine Lessons**

This was held here at the Cathedral courtyard on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2020. It was facilitated by the Diocesan Music Ministry and was covered and aired to the public by Treasure 98.5 FM Radio station, Port Harcourt on Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2020. The Preacher was The Rev. Canon Ozioma Iheanetu. We greatly appreciate him.

We also appreciate the efforts of our Music Chaplain, The Ven. Dr. Ikechukwu G. Anene, our Director of Music, Mr. Wilcox Abbey and the Diocesan Organist, Mr. Idala Fila and the team of choristers in packaging the service.

#### **8. 2021 Diocesan Rededication Service**

This crucial, spiritually refreshing and empowerment service to begin the year was held in this new Cathedral auditorium on Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2021. The service featured worship, prayers of thanksgiving and intercessions, prophetic declarations, the Word, ministry of the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, rededication prayers for the various activity/ministry groups and units of the Diocese and the unveiling of the Diocesan Theme for this year, “**Through God We Shall Do Valiantly**” (Psalm 60:12, 2Chron. 32:8<sup>b</sup>, Heb. 11:34). Our Guest Speaker, The Rev. Canon (Lieutenant) M.O. Lucky, Vicar, St. Jude's Military Church (Prot.) GRA, Port Harcourt, powerfully ministered on the theme and blessed the people as well.

The annual Council of Knights' public presentation of scholarship awards to students of higher institutions, graduation of students from our Diocesan Youth ICT/Empowerment Centre also took place.

### **HUMAN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT (Trainings/workshops)**

- 1. The Council for Clergy and Laity Continuing Education** under The Venerable Azubuike Ugoha as Rector, with the other Directors of studies hosted **periodic training schools for the clergy, Church teachers**

**and wives** respectively in the course of the Synod year with speakers drawn from the Houses of Clergy and Laity of our Diocese.

2. Similarly, the **Bishop, clergy, Church teachers and wives took time off for prayer and fasting retreats**. These were held from Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 at Christ, The Redeemer Anglican Church, Eliogbolo.

They began the year, 2021 with a 5-Day retreat held from Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> January at St. James', Iriebe District, Upper Room Church, Eliozi and Bethany Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi. This retreat was held under the Diocesan theme for this year “**Through God we shall do valiantly**” (Psalm 60:12; 2Chron. 32:8<sup>b</sup>; Heb. 11:34). Speakers and other resources persons were drawn from among the clergy and wives. In all these prayer/fasting retreats, the participants spent quality time in the presence of God praying for their ministry, families of the Diocese, the year 2021 as well as for the Diocesan Rededication Service of 17<sup>th</sup> January.

Again, the Bishop, Clergy, Church teachers and their wives took time-off for a 2-Day Prayer and Fasting Retreat to begin the second half of this year. This was held from Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> July at Church of the Epiphany, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi.

3. **The Diocesan Lay Readers Association** also began the year with the renewal of vows of licensing. This took place from Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> February at their Mission Station, Holy City Anglican Church, Pipeline – Rumuokwurusi. The theme was “Doing Valiantly as a Lay Reader in the Lord's Vineyard Service.” We ministered at the retreat and presided over the service of renewal of vows of licensing on Sunday.
4. **The Diocesan Council of Knights** began their activities for the year with a retreat held at St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery from Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2021. The theme was “Knight as Contemporary Gideons: Challenges and exploits” (Judges 6). We, the Bishop, the knights' Chaplain – The Ven. Charles Mordi and The Rev. Canon Samuel Obialor ministered at the retreat alongside others.
5. An empowerment training/workshop was organised by the **Women's work office** for members of the **Sisters Forum and Girls' Guild** on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 at St. Michael's, Church, Rumuomasi Deanery. It was an opportunity for those who attended the Joshua Generation International Youth conference to report back to their fellow sisters and girls on the outcome of that gathering at Nsukka. A similar training was organised for women leaders of the Diocese on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 at St. Nicholas', Woji District. The theme was “The Excellent Woman” (Prov. 31:7). The training featured talks, craft and issues of health.

6. **The weekly prayer for clergy and Church teachers' wives** has continued to gain strength with time. It is now being shared amongst the ministers in the various Administrative Blocs for effectiveness. A 2-Day retreat/training workshop for all wives of clergy and Church teachers was held from Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at the Archbishop Akinola Retreat Centre, Rumuobiokani Deanery with the theme “Valiant Minister's Wife” (Rev. 3:7-13) and featured Eucharistic Service, Bible Study, Talk on the theme as well as prayers and an interactive session.
7. **The Diocesan Guild of Stewards** held their maiden Conference from Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 at Immanuel Anglican Church, Ogbatai Parish, Woji. It was mainly a training conference and proceedings centered around the theme: “Being a Faithful and Valiant Steward.” Speakers included Canons Onuchuku and Ofoegbu, Dr. Kasarachi Innocent, Dame Akudo Nnadozie and We, the Bishop.
8. **The Anglican Children Ministry (ACM)** organised a training programme for all ACM teachers of our Diocese. One of such was held at Christ Church Federal Housing Estate, Woji from Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April this year with 189 of such teachers in attendance. They were issued with membership certificates at the end of the training which will be renewed annually based on each teacher's attendance to ACM programmes and general effectiveness. They had also held a prayer retreat from Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> of February to begin the year. This was at Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara Parish. The Diocesan theme for the year was the focus for this retreat which attracted 134 participants.
9. **The Diocesan Adult Sunday School, Literature, Publications and Discipleship Ministry** held a mandatory One-Day Retreat/Training for all Adult Sunday School/Discipleship Class Teachers on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at St. Mark's Anglican Church, Elelenwo District with the theme: “Through God We Shall Do Valiantly.” 82 teachers were in attendance. The Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Owzor spoke on “Harnessing the Teaching Ministry of the Church for Kingdom Exploits and Advancement.” Brother Chibuzo Igbonu moderated a detailed Bible Study on the 2021 Diocesan theme while Brother Uche Nwachukwu led the intercession on the occasion.
10. In our continuing effort at developing all categories of the workforce in the Diocese, the Council for Clergy/Laity Continuing Education organised a number of training sessions for members of the **Diocesan Lay Workers Association**. On Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2020 a training school was held at St. Nicholas', Woji District for the support staff of the Bishop's/Central Office and churches of the Diocese. The theme was “Modern Church Workers (Levites): Challenges to different duty posts

and the way forward in ministerial assignments” (1 Chron. 23:26-32). Members of the Association also began the year 2021 with a retreat held on Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusu. The retreat dwelt on the Diocesan Theme for this year – “Through God we shall do valiantly” (Psalm 60:12).

As part of the trainings for this year's Post Vestry Meeting Leadership Training/Workshop, the Council for Clergy/Laity Continuing Education held the first in the series for Church clerks, Administrative Secretaries, Drivers and Treasurers from Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. It took place here in the Cathedral. Diverse topics on spirituality, accounting/handling of Church finances/remittances, records and analysis, cybercrime and its implication to Church finance; the role of financial support staff and treasurers in the Church's ministry, etc., were treated.

**11. Trainings by the Diocesan ICT Youth Development Centre**

The Diocesan Youth ICT Development/Empowerment Centre conducted a four-month computer training programme after the Covid-19 lockdown for 15 registered participants drawn from churches of the Diocese. They graduated during the Diocesan Rededication Service of January 17 this year. This was followed by another batch of 8 participants who have equally completed their training.

**12. The Family Life and Home Fellowship Ministry of the Diocese** organised a One-Day Leadership retreat on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at the Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Rumuogba Parish with the theme: “Developing Valiant Leaderships for all seasons.” Following restriction in attendance, only 150 participants took part in the retreat.

**13. Post Vestry Meeting Leadership Training/Workshop, 2021**

This year's Post Vestry Meetings trainings and workshops for the various categories of Church workers and leaders were held in batches because of the challenge of Covid-19 and for better management of participants and expected outcome.

These series of trainings began with the Diocesan/churches' support staff and treasurers as already highlighted above.

The second phase of the trainings took place on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> March at St. Jude's, Oginigba Deanery. This was for all People's and Pastor's wardens as well as Church secretaries. The course contents included a Bible Study, talks and seminars/workshop while topics treated included “Using your leadership skills to administer and influence others for Kingdom benefit”. Others included – “The Roles and Ministry of People's and Pastor's Wardens” and “The Roles and Ministry of a Church secretary”.

The final phase attracted all Clergy, Church teachers and their wives; Knights and Ladies, lay readers, Synod delegates, members of the Diocesan and Archdeaconry Boards, Cathedral Standing Committee,



Deanery Councils, PCC, SCSC and leaders of all other groups in the Diocese. It was held here in the Cathedral from Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 under the theme: “The Role of Church leadership in achieving the propriety of God” (Matthew 6:33). We had Bible Studies, talks on the theme, special presentations on *Google* digital skills acquisition for Church growth and a look on how the clergy and laity can help their Bishop to succeed, handled by the immediate past Archbishop of the Niger Delta Province/Bishop of Calabar, The Most Rev. Tunde Adeleye.

Other speakers in this three-phased training/workshops included The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha, Canons Joseph Ofoegbu, Ozioma Iheanetu, Engr. Sylvester Chiemeka, The Ven. Chris Chukwumati, Mr. Lawrence Chinda (Diocesan Financial Secretary), The Lay Synod Secretary, Sir Barr. Emmanuel Izuehie, Mr. Chidubem Godfrey Nweke and Brother Nnamdi Eze, the wife of the Bishop, Mrs. Chinyere Ordu and We, the Bishop.

We thank the Council for Clergy/Laity Continuing Education, leaders of the various Diocesan activity groups particularly those listed above for organising these trainings.

#### **14. Diocesan Prayer Groups Training, 2021**

For better understanding of their roles and performance as Leaders of the various Diocesan Prayer Groups/Ministries of Men, Women and Youth, a One-Day training was organized on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2021 at St Andrew's Rumuobiokani Deanery for Executive members of all Diocesan Prayer Meeting Groups. This was facilitated by our Administrative Assistant and superintending Chaplain of all Prayer Groups, The Venerable Chidi S. Worgu. The training featured talks on “**Management of Human Resources in Prayer Meeting Groups**” by The Rev. Canon (Lt.) M.O. Lucky of St. Jude's Military Church, Port Harcourt, “**Generation and Prudent Management of Financial Resources**” by Mrs. Margaret Wagwu of the Church of the Holy Spirit, Paraclete Deanery and “**Strategies on How to Actualise the Mission Mandates of Each Prayer Group**” by the various chaplains.

## **OUR EPISCOPAL VISITS AND FUNCTIONS IN CHURCHES**

### **Confirmation Services**

We visited the underlisted Churches within the year under review and confirmed the number of baptised and prepared candidates presented to us by each of them:

1. Christ Anglican Church, Federal Housing Estate Parish, Woji on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 – **36 candidates**.  
Some teenage members of the Parish who had gone through the Discipleship trainings of the Parish also graduated into the Adult Church on this occasion.
2. New Covenant Church, Eliminigwe Parish, Elelenwo on Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2020 – **45 candidates**;



3. St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 – **27 candidates;**
4. St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 – **83 candidates;**
5. All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Christmas Day, Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 – **101 candidates;**
6. Church of The Epiphany, Azumini-Rumuokwurusi Parish, Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 – **28 candidates;**
7. Holy Ghost Anglican Church, Iriebe Housing Estate Parish on Palm Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 – **56 candidates;**
8. Church of the Holy Spirit, Elioza Parish on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May – **30 candidates;**
9. St. Simon's Anglican Church, Okporo District on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 – **48 candidates;**
10. Immanuel Anglican Church, Ogbatai Parish, Woji on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> June (Father's Day), 2021 – **25 candidates;**
11. Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Elingbu Parish, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 – **42 Candidates;**
12. Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School Chapel, Rumuobiokani on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 – **51 candidates** (students).

### **Baptisms**

We baptised the following infants except for one in the Bishop's Court Chapel of Refuge during the year under review:

1. Baby Iwaibokom Jerry Utchay - Child of Mr. Jerry and Mrs. Martha Utchay, baptised on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.
2. Baby Chukwuka Tamunomiebaka - Child of Mr. & Mrs. Chukwu Nwachukwu, baptised on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.
3. Baby Ichendah - Child of Barr. Ndamenem & Mrs. Sandra Ejims, baptised on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2021. \* Baptism took place at St. Mark's, Elelenwo.
4. Baby Oburizuchidonum Runey - Child of Rev. & Mrs. Kingsley Imenwo, baptised on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
5. Jaidyn Ikechukwu - Child of Mr. & Mrs. I. Felix Obidi, baptised on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 2021.
6. Don Kamsiyochukwu - Child of Mr. & Mrs. Ndunaka Chukwu, baptised on Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2021.
7. Baby Grace Hachikaru Onyinyechi - Child of Postulant & Mrs. Benjamin Peterson, baptised on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.
8. Baby Glory Chizarum – Child of Rev. Uchechukwu and Mrs. Amarachi Chinda, baptised on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

9. Baby PraiseGod Chimenem – Child of Rev. Richard & Mrs. Gift Richard-Alete on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2021.
10. Baby Amiable Uga Horstead – Child of Rev. Amoson & Mrs. Happiness Amoson Ijah.

### **Foundation Stone Laying of New Projects**

We carried out the laying of the foundation stone of the following new projects within the Diocese:

1. **New Parsonage building complex at the Chapel of Grace and Knowledge, ACMGS, Elelenwo on 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2019. *\*Omitted in our 2020 Address.***
2. **New Church Building of Calvary Anglican Church, RD Road, Mgbuesilaru, Okporo on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.**
3. **A Five-Star Hotel complex at Elingbu belonging to HRM Eze Jobson Anyabele Utchay (now late) on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.**
4. **New Parsonage building of Upper Room Anglican Church, Elioizu on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.**
5. **New Church Building of Cornerstone Anglican Church, Rumurolu at new location on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.**
6. **New Parsonage building and Children's Chapel at The Redeemer's Cross Anglican Church, TAP, Elelenwo on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.**
7. **New students Dormitory block at Dame Christie Toby Inclusive Education Centre, Iriebe on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.**
8. **New Parsonage building and Children's Chapel at Faith Community Anglican Church, Eliowhani, Okporo on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.**
9. **New Okporo/Rumuogba Archdeaconry House at St. Simon's Anglican Church, Okporo District premises on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.**
10. **New Diocesan Investment House (Printing Press, ICT and Events Centres) at the premises of Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.**
11. **New Iriebe Archdeaconry House at St. James', Iriebe on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.**
12. **A Business and Office complex of the Christian Men's Fellowship of St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2021**

### **Dedications**

The underlisted Church projects and assets were dedicated by us within the synod year:

1. A **kitchen** built by the MU/WG of **Christ Anglican Church, FHE, Woji on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2020;**

2. New **Church building of Church of The Advent**, Rumuewhara Parish on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2020;
3. A **Hiace Bus** bought by the women of **Church of the Advent**, Rumuewhara Parish on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2020
4. A **7.5 KVA electricity generating set** donated by Sir Promise Eze Wodi to **Berea Saints** Anglican Church at its christening on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.
5. A **set of choir robes** (donated by the Local Helper), altar rail, 2 altar seats and desks for the Bishop and Archdeacon also at **Berea Saints** Anglican Church Green City, Odani, Elelenwo on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.
6. A **3-Bedroom apartment** at Etche built by **St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery for the family of the late Chukwuma Anele** on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.
7. New **Church Belfry** donated to the **Holy Trinity** Anglican Church, Elingbu Parish by HRM, Eze Jobson A. Utchay (now late), dedicated on Saturday, 7<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.
8. **Church fence and gate** at **Bethany** Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2020
9. New **60-KVA power generating set** at **New Wine** Anglican Church, East West Road Parish, Okporo on Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2020. (Bishop represented by The Ven. Chidi Worgu).
10. New **Church Building of Upper Room** Anglican Church, Elioizu on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.
11. New **Parsonage Building of Great Physician** Anglican Church, Atali **donated to the Church in perpetuity by Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin** at Valley View Estate, Atali on Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.
12. New **Church Building, Church Hall, offices and Parsonage of Daystar** Anglican Youth Church, Rumuokwurusi on Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.
13. New **Church Building** at **St. John, The Evangelist**, Atali on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.
14. New **Church Building** at **Holyhill** Anglican Church, Elioizu on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2021.
15. **Children's Play pen** at **Holy Ghost** Anglican Church, Iriebe Housing Estate Parish on Palm Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.
16. A **Mini Bus** purchased by **Rose of Sharon** Anglican Church, Atali on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021.
17. A brand new **110-KVA generator** at **All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi** on Easter Day, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
18. New **Family House** of Sir Ugem & Lady Christiana Rogers on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2021.

19. A **Hiace Bus** bought by the **Diocesan Council of Knights** on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2021
20. **Service Apartments and Guests Lodge** at **Immanuel** Anglican Church, Ogbatai Parish, Woji on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.
21. A new **Lister 30KVA power generating set** at **Holy Trinity** Anglican Church, Elingbu Parish on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.
22. A brand new **110-KVA sound proof JMG Perkins generator** at **Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani** on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

### **Inauguration of New Parishes, Deanery & Archdeaconries**

The following new parishes, Deanery and Archdeaconries created by the Diocesan Board and ratified by the Synod within the last two years were formally inaugurated by us as follows:

1. **Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara Parish** was approved a Parish Church with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2020 and was formally inaugurated on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020.
2. **Elelenwo Archdeaconry** was inaugurated on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 with St. Mark's, Elelenwo as the Headquarters.
3. Church of the Holy Spirit, **Paraclete Deanery**, Elelenwo was inaugurated on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.
4. **Okporo/Rumuogba Archdeaconry** on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 at St. Simon's Church, Okporo District.
5. **Great Shepherd Church, Mgbuesilaru** was inaugurated a **Parish** on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.
6. **Iriebe Archdeaconry**, inaugurated on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2020 at the Headquarters – St. James' Church, Iriebe District.

### **Other Services**

We were also in the following churches for worship and Eucharistic services:

1. All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2021 for first Sunday of the year service;
2. St. Philip's, Oroigwe for Ash Wednesday service on 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2021;
3. New Wine Anglican Church, East/West Road Parish, Okporo on Maundy Thursday for services of the Washing of Feet, Holy Communion and Consecration of the Chrism on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021;
4. Christ Harvest Anglican Church, Woji and St. Jude's Oginigba Deanery for Good Friday services on Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2021;
5. All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Easter Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 for Holy Communion Service;

6. Great Physician Anglican Church, Atali on Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 for Eucharistic service;
7. Great Shepherd Anglican Church, Mgbuesilaru on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 for family thanksgiving of Sir Ugem and Lady Christiana Rogers;
8. Living Waters Anglican Church, Eliogbolo on Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 for Episcopal Visit.

### **St Jude's Military Church (Protestant), GRA, Port Harcourt**

For the second year running, we were invited by this Nigeria Army Military Protestant Chaplaincy headed by the Vicar, an Anglican Priest, The Reverend Canon (Lieutenant) Moses O. Lucky, to carry out some routine Episcopal duties in that Church. This was on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2021. In the said service, we **confirmed 43** baptized candidates, **inducted 13** women into the **Women's Guild** and **admitted 11** others into the **Mothers Union**.

We thank the Vicar, his wife and the leadership of the Church for once again extending their invitation to us.

### **Anniversaries**

We congratulate the following churches on the anniversaries of their establishment:

1. Christ Anglican Church, Federal Housing Estate, Woji Parish, celebrated her 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a thanksgiving service and other activities on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
2. Bethany Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi, celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.
3. Christ, The Redeemer Anglican Church, Eliogbolo, celebrated her 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.
4. Church of the Holy Spirit, Elioazu Parish, celebrated her 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2021.
5. Daystar Anglican Youth Church, Rumuokwurusi on their 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary today.

We pray for greater fruitfulness in ministry in the years ahead.

### **Felicitations**

- **New Babies**

We congratulate the following on the arrival of their new babies:

1. The Rev. Nzube and Mrs. Ogechi Esomonu, a baby boy
2. The Rev. Uchechukwu and Mrs. Amarachi Chinda, a baby girl
3. Postulant Benjamin and Mrs. Joyce Peterson, a baby girl
4. The Rev. Richard and Mrs. Gift Richard-Alete, a baby girl
5. The Rev. Amoson and Mrs. Happiness Ijah, a baby girl



6. The Rev. Canon John and Mrs. Lucky Nkuene, a baby boy
7. Mr. Felix and Mrs. Kelechi Obidi, a baby boy
8. Postulant Chinedu and Mrs. Uchechukwu Opara, a baby boy
9. Mr. Kaka and Mrs. Adaeze Chukwu, a baby boy
10. The Rev. Kingsley and Mrs. Chioma Imenwo, a baby boy
11. Postulant Herbert and Mrs. Joy Anson, a baby boy

• **Weddings**

We congratulate the following persons and several others who wedded within the year:

1. Former Miss Nkechi Mbeledogu of Rumuobiokani Deanery and Mr. Anthony Chukwurah on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani.
2. Mr. Martins Wachukwu of the Diocesan Media team and former Miss Goodness Benson Sunday at St. Philip's Anglican Church, Oroigwe District on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
3. Mr. Chima Okekem (immediate past Diocesan AYF President) and former Miss Harriette Elewa at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
4. Former Miss Peace Akpenuchi Wokoma and Mr. Chinemeze Edmund Enyi at the All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> December, 2020
5. Barr. Ndamenem and Mrs. Sandra Ejims on their marriage blessing on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.
6. Former Dr. Miss Joan T. Pepple (our God-daughter) and Dr. Bernard Chukwuma at St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
7. Pharmacist Chidera Igboeli (our God-daughter) and Mr. Brown Orji at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
8. Former Miss Nora Uzoma, our office assistant in the Synod Secretariat and Mr. Ejike Anslem Iwuagwu at Upper Room Anglican Church, on Easter Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
9. Former Miss Chibugom Favour Obike of St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani and Mr. Onyedikachi Daniel at St. Luke's, Amakama, Umuahia on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
10. Former Miss Vivian Nwankwo of St. Nicholas', Woji District and Mr. Amos Sigbenu at St. Nicholas' on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
11. Mr. Anthony Idono Okugini and former Miss Jennifer Chisom

Udechukwu at St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

- **Birthdays**

We congratulate and rejoice with:

1. Mr. Olu and Mrs. Florence Edeki both of All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on their 71<sup>st</sup> & 70<sup>th</sup> (141<sup>st</sup>) joint birthday celebration on Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2021.
2. Lady Joy Emeruem of All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2021.

- **Installations**

1. Sir Chief Raymond Amadi of All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi was installed as the 7<sup>th</sup> President of the Rotary Club of Port Harcourt Airfield District 9141 on Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.
2. Similarly, Sir Barr. Nlerum Amadi, Barr. Chimezie Otuonye and Sir Chief Barr. Godfrey Dike were installed as our Diocesan Chancellor, Registrar and Deputy Registrar respectively on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2020 at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi.
3. HRM, Sir Capt. Clement Ejiofor the Igwekani, Obi of Ukala Kingdom in Oshimili North LGA of Delta State on the formal presentation of his First-Class traditional stool staff of office by the Delta State Government on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> of May, 2021.
4. Hon. Barr. George Chituru Ariolu, the newly elected Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area on his swearing in to office on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.
5. Hon. Michael Uche Azuonwu on his election and swearing in as Councilor representing Obio/Akpor Ward 1 (Oroigwe) on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021.

Furthermore, we felicitate with as many members of our Diocese who in the course of the year, had one achievement or the other to celebrate – promotions, appointments, higher educational attainment, etc. May the Lord continually give them more occasions for joyful celebrations and thanksgiving.

- **Deaths, Burials and our Condolences**

We lost to death the following persons amongst others:

1. Chief Mrs. Adline Ijinwere Chinwo of Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara who died on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 at the age of 100 and was buried on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2020.

2. Mr. Godwin Chinda, our Diocesan lead Auditor who died shortly before the Synod of last year and was buried at his home town, Ogbakiri on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020.
3. Sir Dr. Moses Idehen of Church of the Holy Spirit, Elioizu Parish who died in September, 2020 and was buried on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> October, at his home town in Edo state.
4. Dr. James Ikechukwu Wihioke (husband of Mrs. Augusta Wihioke) of Rumuomasi Deanery who died on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2020 and was buried 21<sup>st</sup> November, 2020 at Elele.
5. Lady Roseline Ahuruole Jonathan (wife of HRH, Eze Sir Robinson Jonathan) of Church of the Holy Spirit, Paraclete Deanery, Elelenwo who died on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 and was buried on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.
6. Elder Emmanuel Ovunda Chinwo of St. Andrew's Rumuobiokani Deanery who died on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, and was buried on Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.
7. Ezinne Irene Ada C. Azubuike Chieme, mother of our Chaplain, The Rev. Canon Chimaobi Chieme who died on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 and was buried on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.
8. Elder Thompson Webilor Elewa of St. Simon's, Okporo District, Father of Sgt (Rev.) Stephen O. Thompson who died on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> March and was buried on Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
9. Retired Rev. Canon Joseph Adele Elewa of Bethel Church Rumuibekwe Parish, father-in-law and father of The Ven. Dr. F.N. and Mrs. Joy Akah who died on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 and was buried on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
10. Mrs. Rhoda Oriji Ejims of St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery who died on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 and was buried on Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
11. Mrs. Uju Opara (wife of our late Archdeacon and Financial Secretary, The Ven. Sunday C. Opara) who on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2021, was found already dead in her bedroom under unknown circumstances. She was buried on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
12. HRM Eze Jobson Anyabeledike Utchay of Holy Trinity, Elingbu, who died on 19<sup>th</sup> April and was buried on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
13. Sir Justice Wenenda Chinwo of Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Ahia-Woji (ACOPA) who died on 27<sup>th</sup> April and was buried on Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
14. Mrs. Tolorunloju Usikalu, wife of Abiona Usikalu of St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery (now resident in Lagos) who died on 11<sup>th</sup> of May and was buried on the 21<sup>st</sup>.
15. The Rev. Canon Luke Odum, who died on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> of June and was buried on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> July, 2021.

16. Ojiowhor Christopher Nwenenda and Mrs. Felicia Nwanyibuekwu Okene of St. Philip's, Oroigwe who died on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 and 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 respectively. Both were buried on 27<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
17. Lady Ejimole Grace Chinda of Church of The Holy Spirit, Paraclete Deanery, Elelenwo, who died on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.
18. Mama Ogonda Matthew Nnanna Iyo, mother of Sir Hon. Derek Iyo, at the age of 103 years.
19. Mrs. Cecilia Daniel, a Lay reader of St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery and mother of The Rev. Collins Daniel, who died on Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2021.

May their souls and all the faithful departed through the mercies of God rest in perfect peace. Amen.

We equally extend our heartfelt commiserations to all Clergy, synodists, and other members of the Diocese who lost their loved ones in the course of the year and pray the Lord to grant them the comfort and consolation of His Spirit. Amen.

## **DIOCESAN ACTIVITY GROUPS**

- **Diocesan Christian Men's Fellowship**

The 2020 Diocesan Christian Men's Conference and Harvest Thanksgiving service tagged "Omasi 2020" was held at St. Michael's Anglican Church, Rumuomasi Deanery from Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. The theme of the conference was "He became mighty, great and powerful" (2Chron. 27:6) and it was presided over by the President-General, Sir Engr. Sunny Worlu. Highlights of events included Holy Communion Service, Bible Study, Talks on the conference theme and on health matters as well as the address of the President-General.

On Investment, the Diocesan men have since taken possession of the 3 plots of land leased to them by our office from the Diocesan land at Atali and are making steady progress on their integrated piggery farm project. The Fellowship has also acquired a fairly-used Sienna Bus for a transportation business which has already started yielding returns on investment.

### **Induction of New Members**

On Sunday, 13<sup>th</sup> June, 2021, the Chaplain of the Diocesan Christian Men's Fellowship, The Venerable Thompson Onyewuotu with the President-General, Sir Sunny Worlu presented to us a total of 225 men to be inducted into the Fellowship at the induction service held at Bethel Anglican Church, Rumuibekwe Parish. These men were taken through a series of induction classes which lasted for over two months by the Diocesan Chaplain of the CMF in conjunction with some key officers of the Fellowship.

We thank the Chaplain for his painstaking efforts at preparing them; Bethel Church, Rumuibekwe for hosting the Induction Service and the Executive Committee of DCMF for their roles as well.

We hereby charge all the newly inducted members to quit themselves as men, be strong and faithful and do exploits for God and His kingdom beginning from their local parishes to the Diocesan level and beyond.

### **Father's Day 2021**

This year's Father's Day was celebrated in all churches of our Diocese on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 under the theme “**He Became Great, Mighty and Powerful**” (2 Chronicles 27:6). Various activities were held in churches and at the Diocesan level in the week preceding the Father's Day proper, including a Dinner with the Bishop (represented by the Diocesan CMF Chaplain, The Ven. Thompson Onyewuotu), men of the Diocese with their wives. This took place at the All Saints Cathedral Church Hall on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2021. The men of our Diocese from a good number of churches, accompanied by some of their priests, paid us surprise visits after the Father's Day Thanksgiving Service and presented us with diverse gifts. We use this medium to very specially thank them and particularly the President-General, Sir Engr. Sunny Worlu and the Diocesan Chaplain for mobilising the men to carry out those visitations. May God bless them abundantly.

- **Women and Girls' Ministries**

**The Diocesan Mother's Union/Women's Guild (MU/WG):** The women held their Conference/Harvest Thanksgiving Service between Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2020 with the theme: “Blessed Shall You Be Above Women” (Judges 5:24) at St. Michael's Anglican Church, Rumuomasi Deanery. The features included Admission and Induction of women

### **Inductions/Admission**

The Conference began on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November with the Induction of **205** candidates into the Diocesan Women's Guild and **128** Women's Guild members admitted into the Mothers' Union; **67** young ladies were formally recognized in the Sisters Forum and **95** admitted into the Girls' Guild.

**The Diocesan Girls Guild (GG):** This group held their conference with the theme: “Pure and Useful” (Acts 21:8,9; 2 Tim. 2:21,22) on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 at St. Mark's Church, Eledenwo District. The Conference featured Seminar, Bible Study, Craft – which included baking of “Queen's Cake.” They also held a One-Day Retreat for the girls across the Administrative Blocs on Saturday, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.

**The Diocesan Sisters Forum:** They held a programme tagged *Worship Without Walls* (WWW) 2 on Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2020 at Upper Room Anglican Church, Elioizu with the theme: “The Rain of Abundance” (1Kings 18:41). They also took part in the National Sisters Retreat held at St. Thomas Anglican Church, Benin, Diocese of Benin from Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 with the theme – “And forgive us” (Matt. 6:12). The Sisters Forum also carried out a monthly cleanup/outreaches to the different Administrative Blocs across the Diocese.



**Diocesan Widows Fellowship:** The widows had their conference on Saturday, 27<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> June, 2021 at Chapel of Grace and Knowledge, ACMGS, Elemenwo. The theme was “That Ye might walk worthy.” They produced such items as Air Freshener, Detergent and other household cleaning substances during their conference which were used to support the indigent ones among them. We are informed that their farm project is doing well. We thank the Diocesan Council of Knights who have continually assisted the widows of our Diocese with financial empowerment to encourage them in owning businesses.

- **Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF)**

The Anglican Youth Fellowship of our Diocese were still able to carry out much of their activities during the year notwithstanding the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic. The events included:

- Diocesan Bible Study Conference/Annual Harvest Thanksgiving Service held in two batches in all the churches. Group A was held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> July and Group B from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 with the theme: “Godliness with Contentment” (1Tim. 6:6)
- The Annual General Meeting/Love Feast held at the Cathedral from Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> December, 2020
- The Sisters Forum Conference hosted by St. Philip's Oroigwe District with the theme: “Thy Will Be Done” (Matthew 6:10<sup>b</sup>)
- Diocesan AYF leadership retreat, 2021, held on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February at St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery under the theme: “The Valiant Youth Leader”
- The Diocesan Youth Crusade at Elioizu which culminated in the planting of a Youth Church along Farm Road 2, Elioizu from 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2021. We are glad that at last the youths have been able to carry out this twelve-year-old mandate.

We charge the youth Chaplain, our Advisers on Youth matters and the Executives of the Diocesan AYF to ensure that the Church planted is carefully nurtured to growth.

Our youths also took part in some other programmes of the National Chapter of the Anglican Youth Fellowship and also in the Joshua Generation International Youth Conference organised by the Office of the Primate from Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State. The theme was: “Living with a Purpose” (Romans 8:28-30). Fifty-Four (54) youths from our Diocese attended this conference. Reporting back to us on the Conference, the Diocesan Chaplain and Youth President said: “It was an interesting Conference no youth should miss.”

We commend those Archdeacons and their Blocs who heeded our directive to sponsor at least 10 youths from their Blocs. Those youths who were denied

sponsorship by the defiant Archdeacons and their Blocs have been made to miss something “interesting.” Those Archdeacons are answerable to God. They should not expect these youths whom they denied the opportunity of participating in this maiden Joshua Generation Conference with their fellow youths to be always there for them when needed.

### **Revival of our “Generation Yes – Push for Success” Youth Programme**

In 2012 we initiated and sponsored a highly successful youth motivational/economic empowerment seminar tagged “**Generation Yes – Push for Success**” for youths across the State and beyond, in partnership with the UK-based Focus Learning Support Team. The goal of the programme was both spiritual and developmental – inculcating into our youths the values of godliness and sound moral values, good citizenship, career/self-development and entrepreneurship and general rules and secrets to achieving success in life. This programme cost us quite a huge sum of money. Help came from our churches and some well-meaning faithful. We staged a second edition of it in 2013 with Alex Ihama from the United States. Again, the cost of hosting it was enormous and thereafter, we could not continue. We must confess that ever since, we have largely lost grip of our youths who were fast coming up in the Diocese.

After much thoughts and reflections, we are considering bringing back the programme in the hope that by it, we can get back our fast-drifting youths. This is actually what the Joshua Generation programme at the national level sought to achieve. But it all started here. Consequently, we are expecting to reconvene that programme early next year after our hosting of the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee Meeting.

We call on every one to prayerfully plan along with us. To this end, We charge our Youth Chaplain, The Rev. Collins Daniel, and advisers on Youth Concerns/Revival, Sir Mazi Sam Azoka, and Barr. Chinedu Ogbonna to immediately commence necessary preparations towards our reconvening of this conference. We cannot afford to sit by and watch our youths waste away or be carried away by every wind of doctrine or move that will lead them to nowhere.

*“...A society that cuts off from its youth severs its lifeline” – Kofi Annan.*

We must not let this continue to happen. No matter what it will cost us, we charge individuals, groups and churches in our Diocese to get ready to invest in the spiritual, economic, academic and social development of our youths.

Our families, churches, Diocese and society at large will benefit greatly when we expose our youth to the way things ought to be done in a normal society. We therefore, call on everyone to see this move to revive the 'Generation Yes-Push for Success' programme as a bold measure towards tapping the enormous power of our youths; hence all should commit to its success.

Our youths are the chief launchers of this year's Synod Address. They have worked so hard in the last one year to be able to achieve the target they have set for themselves. We have as Bishop tried to encourage them as much as we are able. We charge everyone here present to equally lend their support to the youths of our Diocese when they take the stage to fulfil their assigned task in this Synod.

## **Youth Churches**

We are looking forward to creating an Archdeaconry for Youth churches to be made up of the existing ones (youth churches) and others to be planted. By the grace of God, we are proposing the take-off of the new Archdeaconry in 5 years' time. Consequently, we charge each of the Administrative Blocs to plant at least one new Youth Church and nurture such to maturity. This, they should target to accomplish latest by the 3<sup>rd</sup> session of our 5<sup>th</sup> Synod. Our ministry to the youths must be given serious attention.

- **Anglican Children's Ministry**

The Anglican Children's Ministry under the watch of the Chaplain, The Rev. Canon Olufemi Igbamerun, has fared extremely well even under the most difficult period of Covid-19. The ministry made adequate use of the internet in preparing and sending out online studies/materials for teachers (before they taught the children) and parents (as a follow-up after teaching).

## **Conferences**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Teachers Conference was held here in this Cathedral from 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2020. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, only one delegate was allowed to attend from each Church.

The annual Easter Conference of the teenagers and members of the Youth Stars of the Anglican Youth Fellowship "Teenstars" took place at the Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elelenwo from Maundy Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> to Easter Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2021. The Conference had a total of 141 young ones and 38 Coordinators in attendance.

We commend the Diocesan Women's Ministry (MU/WG), members of the Pink and Peach Green Colours Prayer Groups for their support towards the hosting of the conference.

Other programmes of the ACM for this reporting period include the annual '**Evo Children Rejoice**' – a praise programme of the children which held on Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020 at the various Administrative Blocs with the central message coming to the participants by Zoom; the Children's Christmas party in churches and the Diocesan Children's Week which held from Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> to Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2021. The week's activities featured prayer and fasting, exhortations, Bible Study, Music fiesta and thanksgiving services. We applaud the commitment and dedication of all our children's chaplains, coordinators and teachers at all levels of the Diocese and charge them to not faint at their duty posts.

An anonymous couple in our Diocese made a donation of 100 chairs for children's

use in churches of the Diocese. These chairs were distributed to four of our churches – Good Tidings Church, Igbo-Etche Road, Beatitudes, Rumuokwurusi; Christ, The Redeemer, Eliogbolo and King of Glory Mini-Ewa, Rumuobiokani.

- **Council of Knights**

We are pleased to inform the Synod that the Council of Knights of our Diocese ably led by Sir Dr. Emenike Williams Amobi and members of his Executive Committee have continued to be to us a strong and dependable pillar of support both spiritually and physically in line with their vision. They have diligently sustained their brand of evangelism in the areas of good deeds and welfare, particularly through sponsorship of indigent students and empowerment packages to widows in business. We commend them very highly.

Apart from their retreats, the following programmes were carried out by the Council during the year:

### **Knights' Charity Luncheon, 2020**

The 2020 edition of the Charity Luncheon, the flagship programme of the Council usually organised in June every year to raise funds to support indigent undergraduate students in institutions of higher learning and widows in their small-scale businesses, did not hold in June last year due to the raging Coronavirus pandemic. It was held later in the year on Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> November at All Saints Cathedral Church Hall.

The Bishop of Niger Delta West, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Oko-Jaja who was the Guest Preacher, ministered on the theme for the luncheon, “Modern Knights as Gospel Patrons and Partners of the Church's Ministry.” Sir Chijioke Tasie doubled as the Chairman of the occasion and Chief Launcher.

### **Annual Scholarship Awards**

The Council awarded Academic Bursaries worth One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000.00) each to Thirty-One (31) indigent students for the 2020/2021 academic session. Eighteen (18) of the recipients were already in the scheme, while 13 new ones became beneficiaries. They were all selected from the churches of our Diocese after a careful screening. The cheques presentation ceremony took place during the Diocesan Rededication Service held here in the Cathedral Church on Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2021. On that occasion too, the Council presented a brand-new laptop to a blind final year student to assist him in his project work. We equally used the occasion to present appreciation plaques in various categories to members of the Council and others who made donations towards the charity efforts of the Council. We, your Bishop were presented with a plaque by members of the Council on that occasion. We are deeply grateful.

A couple-member of the Council of Knights has offered to pay the grants for two of the benefiting students in the fields of Engineering and Accounting during the next cycle of awards presentation. We are grateful to this anonymous couple.

## Knights' Charity Luncheon, 2021

The 9<sup>th</sup> edition of this welfare initiative by our Diocesan Council of Knights was held on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at All Saints Cathedral Church Hall.

At the occasion, The Ven. Precious P. Nyanaboibi, a former Chaplain of the Council of Knights and presently, Rector of Abam Deanery, Diocese of Okrika, took the pulpit and addressed the gathering on the theme of this year's luncheon, "The Christian Knight as a Veritable Partner for Kingdom Exploits." Testimonies were received from some of the students and widows who have benefitted from the goodwill of the knights in recent years.

The event was chaired by HRH (Dr.) Sunny Chuku, Nyenwe-Eli Elelenwo-Etor. We commend the President, Dr. Amobi, members of his Executive Committee and other knights who have shown commitment to this course of reaching out to the vulnerable groups of our Diocese. May the Lord continue to bless them.

## New Knights

A total of 49 persons who were nominated, screened and found fit to be investitured as knights in our Diocese, were formally admitted by us into the sacred **Order of Knights of St. Christopher** on Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> October, 2020 at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwursi. They are:

S/NO.	KNIGHTS	GENDER	LADIES	CHURCH	ADMIN BLOC
1	ADAGOGO, COCKEYE BROWN	M	ADAGOGO-BROWN, EDNA	ST. NICHOLAS	WOJI
2	ADELE, CELIA AMBROSE (INVESTITURED ON SUNDAY, 13 <sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 2020 @ ST. ANDREW'S, RUMUOBIOKANI DEANERY )	F	XX	ST. MICHAEL'S	RUMUOMASI
3	AGBOGU, GEORGE U.	M	AGBOGU, STELLA CHIKODI	COHS, ELELENWO	PARACLETE
4	AMADI, JONATHAN O.	M	AMADI, JOSEPHINE C.	ADVENT	OROIGWE/ELIOGBOLO
5	AMADI, PATRICK ACHINIKE	M	ACHINIKE-AMADI, JOYCELYN	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
6	AMADI, GODWIN WORLU	M	AMADI, SILVERLINE	ST. PHILLIP'S	OROIGWE/ELIOGBOLO
7	AMADI, OKECHUKWU	M	AMADI, EJOVWOKE E.	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
8	AMAWEHULE, GERSHON A.	M	AMAWEHULE, IHUOMA C.	NEW WINE	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
9	ANONYE, KENNETH I.	M	KEN-ANONYE, JOSEPHINE N.	NEW WINE	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
10	ANUNOBI, KINGSLEY I.	M	ANUNOBI, EVA O.	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
11	ANYANWU, COLLINS	M	COLLINS, VICTORIA	HOLY GHOST	IRIEBE
12	ARUAH, SILAS O.	M	ARUAH, NKECHINYERE .F.	NEW WINE	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
13	AWANYE, EMEKA DANIEL	M	AWANYE, AMAKA	CHAPEL, ACMGS	ELELENWO



14	AWUSIONU, KINGSLEY I.	M	AWUSIONU, NKIRUKA JOY	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
15	CHINDA, CHIKA	M	CHIKA-CHINDA, BARIDON	ST. MARK'S	ELELENWO
16	CHINDA, EDWARD IKE	M	IKE - CHINDA, ROSE	ST. MARK'S	ELELENWO
17	CHINDA, KINGSLEY C.	M	CHINDA, GRACE EJIMOLE (NOW LATE)	COHS, ELELENWO	PARACLETE
18	CHINDAH, DAVID E.	M	CHINDAH, EKA D.	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
19	CHINWO, JUSTUS W. (NOW LATE)	M	CHINWO, ANGELA	ACOPA	WOJI
20	CHUKU, BRIGHT CHIMA	M	CHUKU, ADEBISI MILDRED	ST. MICHAEL'S	RUMUOMASI
21	CHUKU, KINGSLEY	M	KINGSLEY-CHUKU, AUGUSTA U.	ST. NICHOLAS	WOJI
22	EGEGE, URSULA NKIRUKA	F	XX	NEW WINE	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
23	EKEZIE, SILAS WOBIDIKE	M	SILAS-EKEZIE, CHIOMA	ST. MATHIAS	TRINITY MISSIONARY
24	ESSOM, CHIKE NNAMDI	M	ESSOM, YVONNE UZOMA	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
25	FUBARA, SIMINALAYI JOSEPH.	M	FUBARA, VALERIE I.	ST. NICHOLAS	WOJI
26	LAFUA, VINCENT K.	M	LAFUA, MERCY O.	ACOPA	WOJI
27	LAGUDA, CHRISTIE KAINÉ	F	XX	ST. MICHAEL'S	RUMUOMASI
28	MBAMALU, SOMTO S.	M	SOMTO-MBAMALU, UCHE	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
29	MINIMAH, PROMISE	M	MINIMAH, IBINYE P.	ST. NICHOLAS	WOJI
30	NNA, ENWUZURIKE	M	NNA, ONYINYECHI P.	ACOP RUMUOGBA	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
31	NWANWA, ROSE	F	XX	MOUNT ZION	OROIGWE/ELIOGBOLO
32	ODUMODU, UZOMA .O.	M	ODUMODU, NKECHINYERE R.	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
33	OGBOLOGUGO, UGEM ROGERS	M	ROGERS, CHRISTIANA UGEM	GREAT SHEPHARD	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
34	OKE, JONAH CYPRIAN	M	OKE, ROSELINE JONAH	NEW COVENANT	ELELENWO
35	OKE, KINGSLEY O.	M	OKE, LOIS OLUCHI	ST. MARK'S	ELELENWO
36	OKENWA, EUNICE	F	XX	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
37	OKI, GODSPOWER .O.	M	OKI, FLORENCE	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
38	OKORAFOR, CHIEDOZIE	M	OKORAFOR, CHINASA	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
39	ONUBOGU, NELSON	M	ONUBOGU, UCHENNA	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
40	ONYECHI, SAM AZOKA	M	AZOKA, CHIOMA	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
41	OWHOR, BRIGHT NDA	M	OWHOR, BLESSING UGOCHI	ST. MICHAEL'S	RUMUOMASI
42	RISI, GODWIN NNANTA	M	RISI, AUGUSTINA OGOCHUKWU	NEW COVENANT	ELELENWO
43	SEMENTARI, TAMUNOIBIM	F	XX	ST. NICHOLAS	WOJI

44	UGBUNU, PETER S.	M	UGBUNU, HELEN	NEW WINE	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
45	UZUEGBUNAM, KENNEDY O.	M	UZUEGBUNAM, ANESTINA O.	ST. ANDREW'S	RUMUOBIOKANI
46	WACHUKWU, CATHERINE	F	XX	CATHEDRAL	CATHEDRAL
47	WODI, VICTOR ECHE	M	WODI, GLORIA AKELACHI	CHAPEL, ACMGS	ELELENWO
48	WOPARA, EDDY EMEKA	M	EDDY-WOPARA, WALE	ACOP RUMUOGBA	OKPORO/RUMUOGBA
49	WORGU, GLORY O. DR.	M	WORGU, JOY O.	HTC ELIMGBU	OROIGWE/ELIOGBOLO

Their investiture took place after a successful retreat and training sessions held for them at both the Bishop's Court Chapel and Peter Akinola Retreat Centre, Rumuobiokani.

Among the new knights are the following women:

- Mrs. Celia Ambrose Adele
- Lady Nkiruka Ursula Egege
- Mrs. Christie Kaine Laguda
- Lady Rose Nwanwa
- Mrs. Eunice Okenwa
- Hon. Mrs. Ibim Semenitari
- Mrs. Catherine Wachukwu

They were knighted on their personal merit and are now to be each addressed as **“Dame.”**

We are grateful to the following local and guest speakers who joined us to handle different roles during the training sessions:

- The Ven. Charles Mordi, the Chaplain of the Knights Council,
- Sir Dr. & Dame Emenike Amobi, the President, Diocesan Council of Knights and his wife,
- Sir Chief Ike B.S. Chinwo
- Sir Polycarp Ndoueteng from Niger Delta North Diocese
- Sir Chidi Osuji
- Sir Henry Imoni
- The Rev. Canon Ozioma Iheanetu
- The Rev. James Iriekefe
- Mrs. Chinyere Ordu, the Bishop's wife as well as The Ven. Dr. Chimela Samuel who also preached the Sermon at the service of investiture.

We wish to use this medium to emphatically declare that we did not place any financial obligation on these persons before or after they were made knights. We did not do so equally in 2014 when we made our first set of knights as a Diocese.

However, we are not opposed to any or group of knights deciding to personally or collectively address any observed area(s) of critical need in the Diocese for the advancement of our collective ministry just as the new knights have on their own donated two Sienna Buses to enable us commence our Evo Mass Transit Company. We appreciate those of them who contributed sacrificially and another who personally donated the sum of Five Million Naira (N5,000,000.00) to enable us achieve the same purpose.

We are reliably informed that the gesture of acquiring the Buses in support of the Diocese was collectively agreed upon by all the new knights with their ladies. Regrettably, a good number of them are yet to make any financial commitment towards its full actualisation. We charge them to rise up and build as it is just too early in the day to start becoming weary in well-doing.

Furthermore, we believe that knighthood is a sacred office which can only be conferred on those who have demonstrated faithful churchmanship and Christian stewardship at their local church levels and the Diocese. In other words, those aspiring to become knights must make their presence – physical and spiritual involvement and efforts - towards the growth of their local churches and the Diocese of Evo very visible, though not in hypocrisy or eye service. We are not carried away by the rush on the part of many parishioners here to become knights – a development that has forced them to go elsewhere to secure it even at huge costs in some cases. For us, knighthood is neither for sale to the highest bidder nor an office to be indiscriminately conferred on just anybody who desires it; but for those who have overtime distinguished themselves as faithful, sacrificial, supportive and serving Christians within and outside the church. Such persons are encouraged to be patient and persevere in their well-doing and in due time they would be recognised if the Lord permits.

Henceforth, those who are not patient to wait for this Diocese will not enjoy our recognition/acceptance as knights no matter where the investiture is given. We once again charge the Executive of the Diocesan Council of Knights not to accord recognition to those whose knighthood did not pass through our due process.

We hear that some of these persons who were knighted outside this Diocese were encouraged by some clergymen amongst us to go and receive such honours. We see such clergymen as enemies of the system they claim to be a part of. We wonder what they stand to gain by encouraging or recommending their members to go for knighthood outside this Diocese. We expect that clergymen should encourage their parishioners to work hard and support both their local churches here and the Diocese for possible consideration at future investitures. Any pastor who is found to be encouraging this desperation for knighthood would be seriously sanctioned.

### **Ladies of the Knights**

A new Diocesan Executive Committee of the ladies of the knights is now in place following a successful election held on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi. The new officers are:

- Lady Dr. Ndidi Utchay – President
- Lady Dr. Barr. Chinyere Nwachukwu – Vice President
- Lady Sharon Chinwo – Secretary
- Lady Vivian Ihejirika – Asst. Secretary
- Lady Chibuzor Anyabele – Treasurer
- Lady Gloria Nwachinyere – Financial Secretary
- Lady Victoria Emelu – PRO
- Lady Stella Onyeji – Provost 1
- Lady Nkiru Chukwu – Provost 2

- **Diocesan Lay Readers Association**

The Diocesan Lay Readers Association under the leadership of Dame Meg Orianwo has continued to make us proud, particularly for bringing the Parsonage project of Holy City Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi, to completion. God bless them.

We dedicated the project on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 with some of the Lay Readers accompanying us at the service.

- **Adult Sunday School Discipleship, Literature and Publications Ministry**

The Adult Sunday School, Discipleship, Literature and Publications Ministry, has in no small way been contributing towards the spiritual enrichment of the lives of the faithful of this Diocese. We thank them.

Below is a record of their activities in this Synod year:

- Diocesan Writers Training/Workshop was held at St. Simon's Anglican Church, Okporo District, on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2020, which focused extensively on the intricacies of Bible Study writing.
- The 2020 Diocesan Bible Week held in all churches from Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> of October, 2020, with the theme “Revelation of God's Glory in Difficult Times” (Gen. 33:18, 19:9-25). Features of this weeklong activity included Talks and Panel Discussions on the theme and Quiz competitions among various arms of local churches as well as at the Archdeaconry/Deanery levels and a Diocesan Bible Quiz held at St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery, on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2020. The All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi clinched the first position while Woji and Oroigwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconries were the first and second runners-ups respectively.

The 2021 Annual Sunday School/Discipleship Teachers Conference held on Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> June at St. Matthias Church, Atali District.

Once more, we reiterate our earlier charge to clergy and Church teachers in charge of churches in the Diocese of Evo that the observance of Sunday School for at least one hour every Sunday morning is sacrosanct. Sunday School is a crucial part of the divine service and no true man of God should

have any reason whatsoever not to take it seriously or encourage the congregation to do so.

- **Diocesan Prayer Ministry**

God has continued to bless us as a Diocese with Prayer Chaplains who have not failed to motivate and call us to prayer as events unfold in our Diocese, State, Nation and even globally.

We use this medium to commend and thank The Rev. Chukwuemeka Udeh and Postulant David Wopara - our Prayer Chaplains - for their faithfulness and sacrificial services to the Diocese in the place of prayer. They dutifully responded to all prayer convocations at the Provincial and National Church levels with others in the prayer ministry, anchored all the prayer retreats of the Bishop, Clergy, Church teachers with their wives at the beginning of each of the two halves of the year. With our introduction of fortnightly Diocesan night prayer vigils at family levels to pray for revival and other pressing issues, they have consistently developed and released powerful prayer points to guide us each time we are all expected to pray at night from 10.00pm to 2.00am at our homes.

*“Prayer lays hold of God's plan and becomes the link between His will and its accomplishment on earth. Amazing things happen, and we are given the privilege of being the channels of the Holy Spirit's prayer” – Elizabeth Elliot.*

*“God shapes the world by prayer. The more praying there is in the world, the better the world will be, the mightier the forces against evil” – E.M. Bounds.*

*“God warms His hands at man's heart when he prays” – John Masefield.*

The above quotes underline very strongly, the all-importance of Prayer.

The unpleasant state of affairs in many homes, churches of the Diocese, our communities and nation can only be turned around for better in the place of prayer. It is the desire of God that we pray always and not to faint (Luke 18:1).

We are equally grateful to the clergy wives who have also faithfully met with the Bishop's wife every Saturday morning to pray for the ministry of their husbands, families and the Diocese as a whole. It is regrettable that many of the clergy and teachers' wives do not feel interested at all in this special ministry to which God calls them. They should repent from this apathy and indifference and team up with their fellow sisters in ministry to regularly seek the face of God.

*“There has never been a spiritual awakening in any country or locality (**State, Diocese, Parish, family**, etc., emphasis mine.), that did not begin in united prayer” D.A.T. Pierson.*

- **Diocesan (Men, Women & Youth) Prayer Groups/Ministries**

Within the year under review, the various Diocesan Prayer Groups of men, women and youths met with their Chaplains, Diocesan Coordinators and Leaders to review tasks assigned to them by us and as well chart the way forward.



We summarise here the activities of the various prayer groups according to their binding colours:

- **Red Colour Prayer Groups:** These are made up of St. Peter Group (for men), with Mr. Osita Oko as Coordinator; Deborah and Phoebe groups (for the women) coordinated by Barr. Mrs. Chidinma Otuka and Love Group (for the youths) coordinated by Mr. Favour Chinonso. The Ven. Chidi and Mrs. Happiness Worgu are Diocesan Chaplain and Supervisor (for the women groups) respectively. The task of these groups is to lend material support to struggling churches in the Diocese. During the year, they donated the sum of **N50,000.00** to support the project of Faith Community Anglican Church, Eliowhani as well as the sum of **N100,000.00** to Chapel of Restoration Rumuogba for the purchase of sound Amplifier. This is commendable!
- **Wine Red Colour Prayer Groups:** These comprise of Paul Group (for men), Lydia Group (for the women) and Goodness Group (for the youths). Their ministerial focus/assignment is missions with the specific mandate of planting and nurturing of new churches locally and externally. Led by Mr. Justice Amachree (as Diocesan Coordinator), Mr. Temple Elenwo (Youth Leader) and Engr. Mrs. Chinelo Ezeorah (Secretary) and The Ven. Alex Usifoh as Diocesan Chaplain, this group has not accomplished any aspect of their assignment for the year under review. Leaders and members of these groups must arise from their slumber and keep their charge.
- **Purple Colour Prayer Groups:** They are King David and Nehemiah Groups (for men), Priscilla (for the women) and Pleasant Stones (for the youth). Led by the following persons at the Diocesan level, Sir Festus Adegbuji, Mrs. Joy Nwachukwu, Dame Christie Laguda, Mrs. Ijaware Oluwaseun Opeyemi (Secretary) and The Ven. Okechukwu Owhonda as Chaplain, this group focuses on the welfare of Church members, visitation/follow up and discipleship. In fulfilment of their mission mandate, they donated 15 tubers of yam, 1 bag of 50kg rice, 2 cartons of sachet vegetable oil, 2 cartons of tin tomatoes and half bag of onions and cash to some widows of the Diocese on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021. We commend their efforts.
- **Ash Colour Prayer Groups:** These are constituted by Daniel Group (for men), Sarah (for the women) and Fidelity (for the youths). Their responsibility is job placement and economic empowerment of members of our Diocese. They are to collaborate with the Bishop's Advisory Committee on Skills Acquisition and Economic Empowerment to fulfill their assignment. Led by Sir Mike Epelle (Diocesan Coordinator), Sir Chidi Osuji, Dame Priscilla Nosiri, Mr. Daniel Okwuchukwu, Ven. & Mrs.

Azubuike Ugoha (Chaplain/Supervisor), the groups supported the 2020 Diocesan Synod with the sum of N220,000. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May this year, this group organized a seminar and workshop on investment, entrepreneurship, online store, virtual training, affiliate marketing, business visibility creation on social media platforms. Despite the elaborate publicity given to this programme before the day, we consider the response to it by members of the Diocese, particularly from the youths, very poor. It was such an economically rich and profitable seminar which we believe must have greatly served those who attended. We appreciate the efforts of the Ash Colour Prayer Groups and charge them to do more in the coming Synod year.

- **Cream/Orange Colours Prayer Groups:** These comprise of Samuel Group (for men), Esther and Joana (for the women), and Joy (for the youths). Led by Sir Vincent Ikoko, Engr. Kingsley N. Amadi (Secretary), Lady Josephine Enwukwe, Mrs. Joy Madume, Mrs. Nkeiru Onyewuotu (Supervisor) and Rev. Canon Chimaobi Chieme (Chaplain), the group organized a number of retreats and workshops for members of their Diocesan and churches' executives. They also facilitated the clergy and Church workers appreciation Sunday in the various churches. We commend their efforts and charge them to do more.
- **Sky Blue Colour Payer Groups:** These are made up of Joshua Group (for men), Abigail (for the women) and Peace (for the youths) with ministry to families, the community and our Diocesan Educational Institutions. Led by Sir Sunny Worlu, Sir Silas Ekezie, Mr. Innocent Adele, Mrs. Priscilla Usifoh (Supervisor), Mrs. Joy Nwachukwu (Secretary) and Ven. Charles Mordi (Chaplain), the group, on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 gave Bursary awards to the tune of **Fifty Thousand (50,000) Naira** to one indigent student in each of our three Diocesan Secondary schools. We commend them and charge them to redouble their efforts.
- **Yellow Colour Prayer Groups:** These are made up of St. Luke Group (for men), Blessed Virgin Mary (for the women), Faith and Victory Groups (for the youths) with ministry to the sick and health institutions as their primary assignment. They visited our Diocesan Bishop Elenwo Memorial and Obio Cottage and other Hospitals close to our churches for Prayers and distribution of provisions to the sick. The group also facilitated the setting up of a Sick Bay at St. Nicholas' Church, Woji District. They are led by Dr. Henry Ngari, Pharm. Ijeoma Ewurum, Mr. Chukus Okorie, Mrs. Goodluck Anyasodo (Supervisor) and The Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Owhor as Chaplain.

We appreciate the efforts of members of this group particularly at the Church levels and charge them to not be weary in their assigned areas of ministry.

- **Lemon Colour Prayer Groups:** These are constituted by Joseph Group (for men) Elizabeth (for the women) and Kindness (for the youths) with ministry to special persons (the destitute, cult groups, drug addicts, commercial sex workers, prisoners and the physically challenged). Led by Mr. Iria Edeghere, Barr. Mrs. Mercy Nweke, Miss Lois Adele, Mrs. Joy Owhonda (Supervisor) and The Ven. Dr. Ikechukwu Anene as Chaplain, this group preferred to “sit at ease in Zion”. There are no records of any accomplishments by them throughout the year. We charge members of the group particularly the leaders to wake up from their deep slumber and make full proof of their assigned ministry.
- **Royal Blue Colour Prayer Groups:** Made up of Barnabas and Emmanuel Groups (for men), Dorcas (for women) and Success (for the youths), the Royal Blue Colour is charged with ministry to widows, orphans, retired clergy and the aged within the Diocese. They identified with the widows during the 2020 Diocesan Widows Conference held on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> September at New Wine Anglican Church, East/West Road. They also visited some retired clergy and made cash presentations to them. We commend their efforts at fulfilling the ministry assigned to them. We charge them to mobilize for greater performance.
- **Green/Peach Colours Prayer Groups:** They are made up of Timothy Group (for men), Lois and Ruth (for the women) and Olives (for the youths) and are charged with ministry to teenagers and youths. They supported the Diocesan 2021 Teenstars Conference with a donation of N125,000 and have initiated the development of a database for youths in all our churches. It is hoped that this would be completed not too long from now. Leaders of these groups are – Surv. Gaius Assor, Mrs. Augusta Chukwumati (Supervisor), as well as Rev. Canon Hosanna Naenwi and Rev. Collins Daniel as Chaplains.
- **Pink Colour Prayer Groups:** These are made up of St. John Group (for men), Hannah (for the women) and Excellence (for the youths). They are charged with ministry to children and pregnant women and couples believing God for children. Members of these groups also supported the 2021 Diocesan Teenstars Conference and bought musical instruments for the Diocesan Anglican Children's Ministry (ACM). They are led by Sir Engr. Emmanuel Nwaizuzu, Rev. Canon Olufemi Igbamerun (Chaplain) and Mrs. Nkasi Hanachor (Secretary). We also commend the efforts of these groups and charge them to still do more in the areas of ministry assigned to them.

From the above performance analysis of the Diocesan Prayer Groups, we are compelled to conclude that while some are striving to make full proof of their ministries, several others are visibly lukewarm and not committed to

our vision of setting up the prayer groups/ministries. By establishing these prayer groups, we desire that every member of this Diocese will be focused, purposeful, impactful and mission-oriented in their service to God. In other words, we look forward to every member of this Diocese becoming a minister, serving God at a specific duty post. We are not encouraged at all by what we are observing and hearing about the leadership attitude, style and or response of those whom we have assigned to lead these groups as well as others who balloted to be members. As we await the imminent return of our Master, we charge everyone to see these groups as platforms and opportunity deliberately created by God through the Diocese for us to do good unto all men thus occupying till Christ's return. We therefore charge everyone to take his/her place and serve the Lord without fainting. We stand to reap greatly in due season.

- **Diocesan Family Life & Home Fellowship Ministry**

The Family Life and Home Fellowship Ministry was established to encourage all Evo family members to become more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ through their active participation in the home fellowship ministry; to institute godly families in the Diocese from the day of marriage and to ever remain so.

The ministry organised a 2-Day Family Conference from Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday, 3<sup>rd</sup> October, 2020 at The Church of The Holy Spirit, Paraclete Deanery, Elelenwo. The Conference theme was “Survival of the family in this end time” (2Tim. 3:1-5). The Guest Speaker was The Rev. Dr. Steve Ogan. A total of 325 persons participated in this Covid-19 attendance-restricted Conference.

The Family Life and Home Fellowship Ministry is also in existence to enhance the spiritual and numerical growth of our churches. We encourage all ministers of our Diocese to ensure that this ministry is sustained in their parishes and stations and their activities at all levels regularly emphasised to enable Church members actively participate in them.

We thank the Diocesan Co-ordinator, Mrs. Ijeoma Anagbogu, the Chaplain, The Ven. Okey Owhondah and other officers of this ministry for their consistent sacrifices and dutifulness.

- **Public and Private Secondary Schools Ministry (PPSSM)**

During this Synod year, this ministry carried out the following programmes:

- a. **Schools Visitation:** With the easing of the lockdown occasioned by the Covid-19, the ministry commenced her weekly visitations to schools from the month of April this year during which they ministered to the students of various schools.
- b. **Week of Evangelism:** From Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 they carried out gospel tracts evangelism targeted at students in various non-Diocesan secondary schools within our area.

- c. **Schools' Quiz:** On Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2021, the Ministry hosted a quiz competition at the Community Secondary School, Okporo for Secondary Schools, based on the following subjects – Mathematics, English Language, Christian Religious Knowledge and Chemistry. The event attracted 144 students, 11 staff and 18 contestants from 9 schools. Pacesetters Academy, Elelenwo, emerged winner of the overall trophy.
- d. At the beginning of this year, we procured 1,600 copies of the *Daily Dynamite* Youth Devotional published by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and distributed same to various schools through the PPSSM. They were received with excitement by staff and students of the benefitting schools.
- e. Five additional schools: - **Bluebell Academy, Trans-Amadi; Topline International Schools, Eliminigwe Housing Estate; Community Secondary School, Oyigbo West; Iriebe Town Secondary School and Gloryland Academy, Rumuewhara**, have recently come under coverage of the ministry, bringing the total number from 47 to 52 schools. This is quite remarkable and praiseworthy!

We appeal to authorities of other non-Evo Diocesan schools within our area to receive our schools' chaplains and evangelists and give them the opportunity to freely minister to the staff and students of their schools for their spiritual benefit and upliftment.

We commend the Chaplain, The Rev. Canon Ozioma Iheanetu and his team for the work they are doing among the youths in schools within our Diocese and hereby renew our call for more volunteers and financial support towards the procurement of copies of the *Daily Dynamite* and other outreach materials.

- **Anglican Corpers' Fellowship**

This fellowship brings together all corps members of the Anglican Communion who are posted to serve in government and other institutions located within our Diocese and environs. The activities of the group center mainly on fellowship, rural evangelism and outreaches to churches.

A new Executive Committee was inaugurated on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> February this year by the Diocesan Chaplain, The Rev. Collins Daniel. We hosted the Batch C-2019 and Batch A-2020 members who had completed their one-year national assignment to a send-forth fellowship and Dinner in the Bishop's Court on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2020. They were all presented with parting souvenirs from the Diocese. The presence and activities of these Anglican Christian Corps members can be of great impact on the overall ministry of all our churches if encouraged. We therefore call on our clergy and leadership of our churches to please extend their hands of fellowship to these willing vessels of the Master and give them every necessary support/provision to enable them contribute effectively towards the growth of God's Kingdom here and beyond.



We are grateful to St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery and Olive Plants Anglican Youth Church, Rumuolukwu, Rumuomasi for the lodge and fellowship center respectively provided for these corps members. The lodge is however, becoming grossly inadequate and so we call on other Churches, individuals and groups to assist in this regard.

- **Anglican Communion (Boys) Brigades (ACB)**

This Church-based organisation exists to nurture children and young people, based on Christian values towards a life of service and leadership.

Despite the challenges of the past year, the group was still able to carry out much of its activities at both the Diocesan, Church and State levels. Companies of the Boys Brigade in the Diocese carried out their enrolment services and participated in all activities of the Diocese and those of the Rivers State Council of the Boys Brigade Nigeria including the annual State Rededication Service which we hosted at St. Nicholas' Church, Woji District on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.

Our Cathedral Church hosted the service of Investiture of State Honorary Patrons and conferment of the Anchor Bearer Honours on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.

As State Grand Chaplain, We, Your Bishop, presided over these state services with the State President, Prof. Blessing Didia, other State officers and chaplains.

We commend the efforts of our Diocesan Chaplain of the Boys Brigade, The Rev. Canon Samuel Ejekwu with the Co-ordinator, Mr. Chibueze Ucheagha, the Chaplain of the Obio/Akpor Battalion Council, The Rev. Canon Ozioma Iheanetu, in repositioning and building a stronger Boys Brigade in the Diocese.

We are equally encouraged by the outstanding roles being played by members of our Diocese who are holding critical positions of trust in the Rivers State Council of the Boys Brigade. We commend Sir Raymond Elenwoke, Chairman, Obio/Akpor Battalion Council, Dame Loretta Enwezor, Chairman, Garrison Battalion Council, Patrons and Honorary patrons at all levels and all who have in one way or the other, continued to support the ministry of the Boys Brigade. May the Lord continually reward you for your great sacrifices towards the spiritual development of the Boy-child.

- **Clergy & Church Workers Children's Ministry**

The ministry held a Christmas retreat on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 to mark the Holy Innocents' Day. It featured a Holy Communion service, a talk, Bible Study, Seminar and an interactive session. 137 children, 17 clergy and wives were present at the retreat. They also had a One-Day beginning-of-the-year retreat at the various administrative Blocs in February, 2021 as well as an Easter prayer retreat held on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 at St. Philip's Anglican Church, Oroigwe with the theme "The Risen Christ" (Matthew 28:6). It featured a talk on the theme and a session on Anglicanism. 96 children were in attendance. We thank our sister, Mrs. Seun Ijaware - the Diocesan Coordinator of this Ministry and the Chaplain, The Rev. Samuel Nvene - for their labours amongst the children of our clergy and Church workers.

- **Diocesan Chaplaincy for Royal Fathers, Chiefs and Elders in Evo**

This Chaplaincy led by The Ven. Godwin B. Chinda and assisted by The Rev. Gift Chukwumati, has remained in constant touch with our Royal Fathers, retired Clergy, Chiefs and Elders.

On Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2021, the Chaplaincy hosted the first Evo Traditional Rulers Leadership Summit at St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery under the theme: “**Reigning Valiantly in Majesty for Success**” (Psalm 60:12). The summit attracted speakers and participants from within and outside Evo, among them were HRH Dr. Bokumo Orukari, KSC, JP, Kala X, Amananaowe of Sabagreia who spoke on the theme and Mr. Felix Odungweru, Permanent Secretary Emeritus of the Ministry for Chieftaincy Affairs and Community Development, Rivers State, who delivered a paper on the topic “Living for Posterity.” We were represented at the occasion by The Ven. Chidi Worgu.

Our Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital staff were present to offer medical services to the 70 participants at the event.

We thank those Royal Fathers and traditional rulers who have seen the need to open their doors to the chaplaincy to have devotions with them in their houses and palaces. Our prayer is that God's presence and wisdom will abound towards them and their domains of authority in Jesus name, amen.

- **Diocesan Industrial, Business and Workplace Chaplaincy**

Over the past Synod year, this Chaplaincy held quarterly meetings and prayers at Bethel Anglican Church, Rumuibekwe Parish. On Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2021, they held a New Year/Fresh Commitment Retreat at the same Church.

The Chaplaincy distributed 50 copies of Ancient & Modern Hymn books and other Christian books to new fellowship centers and market places, respectively.

Market-place ministrations were held at Rumuibekwe, Woji, Oil Mill, Eliozu flyover, Elelenwo railway, and Rumuomasi (evening) markets among others. Other places the chaplaincy carried its evangelistic outreaches to include:

- Gibsco Hotel, Rumuomasi
- Joshua Waters, off Stadium Road, Rumuomasi
- Royal Gardens, Hotel, Rumuomasi
- Echelon Heights, Stadium Road, Rumuomasi
- Zenith Bank, PLC, Woji Branch
- Access Bank, Rumuokwursi
- Everyday Supermarket, Rumuibekwe
- Everyday Buyers, Rumuokwursi
- Eco Bank Plc, Rumuomasi Branch

They also opened new contact points at:

- Enfield Water Company, Rumuibekwe
- Synergy Construction Company, off Boskel Road, Elelenwo.

The Industrial, Business and Workplace Chaplaincy would have covered more

grounds during the year had there been sufficient labourers. We use this medium once again to invite members of the Diocese to make themselves available to serve God in this area and to also donate outreach materials such as bibles and other Christian literature to support the efforts of the Chaplain, The Rev. Canon Ugochukwu Nwahaghi and members of this Chaplaincy.

For members of the Chaplaincy, we commend their efforts and hereby charge them not to be weary in their service to God.

- **Diocesan Sports Ministry**

Not much was done by the Sports Ministry in the course of the year due to the Coronavirus pandemic and the consequent restriction on gatherings even for sporting activities. However, the Bishop, Clergy and Church teachers with their available wives, started a monthly morning aerobics (keep-fit exercise) at the Bishop's Court on the last Saturdays of the month.

The Clergy Football Club now trains every Monday morning at the sports field of ACMGS, Elemenwo. They had earlier in the year -on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2021 at BCMSS, Rumuobiokani football field played an inter Diocesan friendly football match with the visiting Clergy team of the Diocese of Okigwe South whom they defeated by a lone goal. We congratulate our Clergy.

## **DIOCESAN INSTITUTIONS**

### **EVO DIOCESAN EDUCATION BOARD AND SCHOOLS**

To the glory of God, despite the far-reaching effects of the Covid-19 pandemic in the last year, our 3 Diocesan Schools: Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School (ACMGS), Elemenwo, Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School (BCMSS), Rumuobiokani and Woji Town Word of Faith Group of Schools (WTWoFGS), continued to make steady progress under the leadership of the Education Board headed by Sir Victor Dania.

We particularly appreciate and commend the commitment and dedication of the Principals and staff of these Schools, who had to make personal and collective sacrifices to keep things going in the period.

While exercising overall governance to ensure quality spiritual, moral and academic standards in the Diocesan Schools, the Education Board has continued to focus on the following key objectives:

- To attain accreditation by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI)
- Implementation of Personnel and Organisational Management Systems
- Information and Computer Technology (ICT)-enhanced operations for our existing 3 schools.

In addition, the Board has been charged with overseeing the Parish Schools to ensure that they also meet the Diocesan and Government standards while progressing plans and actions towards the establishment of a new Model Secondary School.

### **Parish/Nursery/Primary Schools.**

The Education Board has made progress in their role of supervising and regulating all Parish Schools in the Diocese, namely:

- All Saints Nursery/Primary School, Rumuokwurusi
- St. Michael's Nursery/Primary School, Rumuomasi
- St. Mark's Nursery/Primary School, Eledenwo
- Holy Ghost Nursery/Primary School, Iriebe

Limited progress has been made by these Parish schools, with two of them now having Governing Councils, but much still needs to be done in the areas of administration, furnishing, quality of teaching staff and environmental upkeep to bring the schools up to the quality standards required by the Diocese of Evo.

### **New Diocesan School (Seed of David Academy)**

Front-end planning activities have started towards the establishment of a new Diocesan School. The Education Board engaged the services of an Educational Consultant to define the various steps and deliverables in the process leading to the start-up of the Academy. A name search has been successfully concluded with the Corporate Affairs Commission, and the process of getting the Certificate of Incorporation is in progress.

Conceptual architectural designs have started with a group of in-house architects led by the Diocesan Architects 1 & 2 – Sir Arch. Charles Chuku and Arch. Chiedozie Okoroafor.

We encourage these architects and the Education Board's team to endeavour to complete the architectural design before the end of this year.

Financing options we are considering for the development of the *Seed of David Academy* include joint-venture partnering with interested persons and organisations.

**Our three Diocesan Schools are growing steadily and now have a combined Nursery, Primary and Secondary population of 1,983 at the end of the second term.** We anticipate greater growth with the ongoing infrastructure upgrade projects.

Compared to the trend of increasingly good performances in external exams in the previous 4-5 years, the last year's WAEC results for ACMGS and BCMSS were rather disappointing, though the NECO results were much better. This prompted the Education Board to carry out a thorough review to ascertain the immediate and remote causes and to identify remedial measures, which include in the following major areas;

- i) Staff recruitment, retention, motivation and development.
- ii) Academics – Curriculum, teaching, learning, and examination preparations, for which actions being taken include:
  - Engagement of Consultants – Curriculum Development and Assessment (CUDAS) Group Training on Current Teaching Methodologies to train teachers and prepare SS3 students for the forthcoming external

examinations among other measures. This group has also submitted a revised Curriculum to include JAMB, IGCSE, TOFEL, IETSL and SAT. The teaching for these International Examinations has already started since the month of June and hopefully some students will sit for SAT Examination by October, 2021.

- Recruitment of full time Guidance Counsellors for each of the 3 Diocesan Schools.
- Review of Students admission and progression policies to allow admission of only qualified candidates and progressing of students based strictly on meeting applicable criteria.

We charge the Education Board, Principals and Staff to continue to strive harder towards achieving the vision for all Evo Diocesan Schools to be “Schools of first choice for parents, students and staff.”

### **Infrastructural Developments**

In an ongoing effort to upgrade all the infrastructure and facilities in the Schools, several upgrade and Capital projects are ongoing, including the following:

- **Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School (ACMGS), Elemenwo:**

To the glory of God, work commenced in January on the construction of a modern 3-storey Dormitory project, which is expected to accommodate some 500 students in rooms of not more than 8-10 students each, with complete en-suite facilities. To accelerate completion, the Diocesan Board has approved a soft loan of One Hundred Million Naira (N100m) to the school to augment its own funds. Half of this amount has since been released to the school and used up.

- **Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School (BCMSS), Rumuobiokani:**

The School executed the inter-locking tiles pavement of the front of the Dining Hall to address the problem of flooding, and also purchased a sound-proof 110 KVA generator to support the existing ageing one.

- **Woji Town Word of Faith Group of Schools (WTWoFGS):**

The school provided 50 classroom desks, 40 computer tables, and 20 bunk beds, while a new water tank was installed in the Girls' Hostel. A new computer laboratory with 10 desktop computers was commissioned within the period.

### **Special Donations and Support**

In recognition and appreciation for the commitment, dedication and sacrifices of all the teaching and IT staff of our three Diocesan schools during the schools lockdown occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic, We, the Bishop, on behalf of the Diocese, donated various sums of money and gift items to them during the World Teachers' Day Celebration of 5<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.



### **ACMGS, Elenwo**

Our very sincere gratitude goes to His Excellency, The Executive Governor of Rivers State, Ezenwo Nyesom Wike (CON, GSSRS, PoS [Africa]) and his dear wife, Hon. Justice Suzette Eberechi Nyesom-Wike (an Old Girl of ACMGS) for executing the rehabilitation of the road and drains on Elenwo School Road, which has been a perennial cause of flooding at the ACMGS entrance.

The ACMGS Old Girls Association of North America, represented by Mrs. Deborah Abbey, for the 4<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, gave bursaries of N50,000 to each of the 58 SS3 students at a ceremony on 20th January, 2021.

The Rotary Club of Port Harcourt has also continued with their annual donation of various books to the School's Library.

### **BCMSS, Rumuobiokani**

We are also grateful to Hon O.K. Chinda, member representing Obio/Akpor Federal Constituency at the National Assembly for locating an Information and Computer Technology (ICT) Centre inside the BCMSS premises as part of his constituency projects.

### **WTWoFGS**

The PTA donated 5 desktop computers for the ICT laboratory of the school, while the MU/WG of St. Andrews's (Anglican) Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery, donated various food items to the school as part of their 2021 Mothering Sunday activities.

On behalf of Synod, we wish to thank all those who have consistently supported the Schools over the years, notably NDDC, RSUBEB, Rotary Club, Old Students and the PTAs of the three schools, groups and churches of the Diocese. May God reward them abundantly.

We hereby charge them to do more and not to be weary in their well-doing towards these academic institutions of the Diocese.

### **Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital (BEMH), Rumuobiokani**

We are grateful to God for the progress being made by our Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital.

The efforts/sacrifices of the Diocesan Hospital Management Board headed by Lady Dr. Ndidi Utchay with the staff of the Hospital are greatly appreciated by us. The patients diary of the Hospital within the period under review is 1,142. Out of this number the hospital had 15 Spontaneous Virginal Deliveries (SVD), 14 Caesarean Sections (C/S) and 7 successful surgeries (Herniorrhaphy).

### **Facilities upgrade**

On facilities upgrade, the entrance of the Hospital Car Park, which was hitherto eroded has been maintained by the Diocesan Projects Committee. The Hospital building now has a facelift after undergoing refurbishment by the Diocesan Projects Committee. The fence connecting the Hospital to BCMSS Nursery school and the Principals' House has been raised with Iron sharps to secure the Hospital.

## **HMOs**

Other progress being made at the Hospital include the introduction of the services of some Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs) for the running of Health Insurance Schemes for the Clergy of our Diocese with their wives and 4 other family members as well as for other interested members of our Diocese. This was approved at the June 2021 meeting of the Diocesan Board.

## **Salaries upgrade and Purchase of New Machines**

We have approved the request of the Hospital management Board for the upward review of the salaries of the workers with effect from September this year; the purchase and installation of X-Ray and Ultra Sound SCAN machines to enable the Hospital run all X-Ray and Scan processes there in the Hospital without having to refer patients to other hospitals. This has cost us over **Fifteen million (15,000,000) naira.**

## **Friends of the Hospital**

Arising from the recommendation of the group that discussed the report of Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital in our last year's Synod, we are instituting a "Friends of the Hospital" group to advise the Hospital Management on matters of administration, expansion of services/physical infrastructure, image making and assistance to the Hospital in any other areas of need.

We are very grateful to the Rivers State Ministry of Health for posting once again to our Hospital a Youth Corps Doctor in the person of Dr Peter Ogbanje, he has resumed duties since the month of June.

We encourage members of the Diocesan Community to patronize the services of the Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital whenever they have the need to visit a hospital.

Our staff are quite dedicated and committed to their calling; and the charges there are very affordable, being a missionary hospital.

## **BOARDS, DIRECTORATES AND COMMITTEES**

### **➤ Diocesan Mission, Evangelism and Church Planting Board**

The Diocesan Board on Missions, Evangelism and Church-Planting under The Rev. Canon Kingsley Ohajianya has continued to provide mobilisation and supervision to churches as they carry out our Diocesan vision in these areas of ministry.

Members of the Board have consistently drawn up strategies for our quarterly outreach programme, "On the Highways and Hedges" by every Church. The Board also monitored the activities of the students of the Institute of Theology, Awka, who were in our Diocese on College Mission from Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> to Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February this year.

The Mission that God has given us is a highly relational one. On the strength of this and in order to better equip our ministers in this all-important area of ministry, severally described as the heart-beat of God, we sent forty-five (45) of them from every Bloc to participate in a 5-Day Non-denominational Missions

Conference which was convened by Bishop Winston T. Iwo of the Grace Covenant Church located at No. 88 East/West Road, Eliogbolo. The Conference held from Wednesday, 5<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2021. Our team of participants were led by the Chairman of our Missions Board, The Rev. Canon Kingsley Ohajianya.

The Bishop of the Grace Covenant Church, The Rt. Rev. Winston T. Iwo has personally visited us to express his gratitude for the attendance of our ministers to that Conference.

- **Christening and Planting of New churches**

The Anglican Worship Centre, a new Church-plant of St. Mark's, Elelenwo District planted on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2019 was formally christened **Berea Saints Anglican Church, Odani Green City Estate** by us on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020.

To the glory of God, more new churches were planted in the Diocese within the year under review. This achievement was made by:

1. The Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF) which started a Youth Church at Elioza Farm Road 2 on Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2021.
2. St. Simon's Anglican Church, Okporo District, which opened a new Church at Iriebe Housing Estate on Palm Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. We were there at that occasion to equally christen the new station: **“Zion's King Anglican Church, Iriebe.”**
3. Iriebe Archdeaconry which planted a new Church station at Liberty Estate, Iriebe, on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2021.
4. St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery started a new congregation at No. 2 Adele Street, behind the Yakubu Gowon Stadium on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2021.
5. Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Elingbu Parish, also planted a new station on Trinity Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May, within the community.
6. Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Rumuogba Parish, planted a new Church on Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 at Royal Avenue, off Igbo-Etche Road, Rumuokwursi.

We commend these mother churches for their safe deliveries of these new Baby stations and for not allowing other competing issues in their group/churches to make them continue to ignore our call for the nesting/nurturing of more new churches. It is our prayer that they take good care of these infant churches and work hard to provide permanent sites for them to enable them stand strong and grow rapidly.

Even as we celebrate the birth of these new churches, we are however very concerned about the plight of others before them. Reports of the near total neglect of these young stations and their workers by their mother churches have come to us severally and we are not comfortable with the situation as it makes rapid growth of the affected churches almost impossible.

This should no longer continue. Bigger churches should from henceforth not embark upon nesting of new churches which they are not prepared to carefully nurture. This however, does not call for the adoption of a lazy approach to ministry and Church expansion by both the priests and their respective Church councils. Our position on Church planting remains unchanged: More churches should be planted but must not be abandoned. It is a sign of laziness and negligence and it does not speak well of an Archdeacon or Vicar of a Church who is comfortable at the headquarters Church and consistently ignores the cries of other stations and workers under him.

- **Diocesan Investment Board**

We thank God for the various investments of our Diocese established for the purpose of generating additional income outside the traditional offerings, tithes and voluntary donations.

Through the supervisory roles of the Diocesan Investment Board, we have continued to make efforts at repositioning the Diocesan Printing Press, the Books/Stationery and Vestment Shop as well as the agricultural farm at Atali.

Our contract with a consultancy firm – Vital Solutions Limited for the repositioning of the Printing Press ended in March this year. Under their watch, the Diocesan Printing Press recorded tremendous improvement in its operations. And in order to maintain the current relative stability we are enjoying there, we have decided to retain the services of one of their staff, Mr. Chisalem Robert as Administrative Manager. He will be partnering with the Operations Manager, Mr. Lanre Oyebode for the continued growth the Press while Vital Solutions Ltd monitors the establishment from a distance for another 12 months beginning from April, 2021. The performance of the Book/Stationery and Vestment Shop is equally satisfactory. We are doing everything possible to relocate the shop down to a more suitable and easily accessible location within the Cathedral premises. Until then, we are to remind churches and members of the Diocese that regular patronage of its services will help grow our collective business there.

We equally extend this call for patronage to the sales and services of the **Diocesan Women's Garment Industry** located at the premises of Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School, Elelenwo. Let us engage them in the making of our children's school uniforms and our personal wears as men and women and even our Church liturgical colours. We can vouch for their quality services.

Activities at the Diocesan Farm were brought to a temporary halt due to the incessant stealing of our plantain produce by thieves despite our fencing the entire land.

We have provided money to the Investment Board to erect farm houses there and also engage farm workers/guards permanently as well as the provision of a water Borehole. So soon as these are achieved, we shall be introducing fish farming and the planting of other economic crops there.

### **Evo Mass Transit Company**

We are about to introduce a Diocesan Mass transit company into our investment packages. The newly conferred knights of our Diocese have already donated two Sienna Buses towards this vision and another new knight who would want to remain anonymous has personally supported the project with the sum of Five Million Naira (N5,000,000). We are deeply grateful to these knights for their great support.

The Diocesan Investment Board has already worked out proposals for the smooth take-off and management of the Mass Transit company which shall be made public shortly.

We use this occasion to appeal to individuals, families and groups to come forward and support the Diocese with the donation of healthier vehicles for the growth of this investment. God's blessings await all such donors.

- **Directorate of Social Welfare**

The Directorate of Social Welfare led by Lady Bibian Nnoli is tasked with reaching out to needy members of our Diocese and the larger society. Within the Synod year, they visited various orphanages within and around us. Supported by the various Administrative Blocs of the Diocese, members of the Directorate on Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 (just before Christmas) carried out “On-the-street-feeding” outreaches to some less privileged and homeless persons on the streets. Cooked food and drinks were freely distributed to these vulnerable persons at Iriebe, Eneka, Oil Mill, Igwuruta, Eliozu, Okporo, Rumuomasi, Slaughter, Elelenwo and Akpajo areas of Greater Port Harcourt.

Our office empowered the Directorate with the sum of N250,000 to both offset the hospital bills of a dumb and deaf couple who on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May, 2021, were delivered of a set of twins (boy and girl) through caesarean section at our Bishop Elenwo Memorial Hospital, Rumuobiokani, and also provided some food items for their upkeep with the babies.

They also visited retired priests and widows of deceased clergy in our Diocese and extended welfare packages to them.

The generous cash support and donations from Ladies Bridget Dania, Chioma Ekezie and Mrs. Elsie to the Directorate are hereby acknowledged and appreciated. God bless them.

We wish to inform this Synod that a good-spirited faithful, Mr. Lotana Nnoli has through the Directorate, provided a Welfare Box in the Bishop's office. We therefore call on members of the Diocese and those who visit the Bishop's office to ALWAYS remember to come with some spare cash to drop into that box to help raise the much-needed funds for the activities of this ALL-IMPORTANT arm of the Diocese. You can also write cheques or make fund transfers to their account. You may wish to contact Lady Bibian Nnoli, the Chairperson, or obtain a copy of the Directorate's brochure/handbook for further information.



## ON-GOING DIOCESAN PROJECTS

- **Diocesan Investment House**

We have finally commenced construction of the Diocesan Investment House at Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani premises. Initially proposed to cater for the Diocesan Printing Press alone, the drawing of the Project has now been modified by the **Diocesan Projects Committee** headed by Sir Promise Eze Wodi to make room also for two Event Halls each with a seating capacity of over 500 persons and also an ICT Hall capable of containing close to 100 units of computers with desks/chairs. The ICT Centre will not only offer services to the Diocese but is to also serve as Examination Centre for rent by National Examination Bodies in the country. We laid the foundation stone of this project on Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> of June, 2020.

- **500-bed Students Dormitory Bloc**

Additionally, the Diocese is lending some financial assistance to Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School (ACMGS), Elemenwo in the on-going building of a 500-bed Students Dormitory Bloc there in the school.

- **Diocesan Archives**

Our desire to establish a Diocesan Archives/Records unit is gradually coming to reality. We thank our Diocesan Archivist, Dr. Grace Jaja for her effort so far in working towards the realization of this goal. We hereby call on the Clergy, Chaplains and Leaders of the various Diocesan churches, units and groups to avail her office of needed vital information and materials that will assist us put in place a properly equipped archival centre. When achieved, this unit will serve as a veritable Information Bank in the Diocese.

## REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATIVE BLOCS/CHURCHES

➤ **All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwursi**

A brand new 110-KVA Sound Proof generator was purchased and donated to the Cathedral Church by a group of good-spirited parishioners. We dedicated it on Easter Sunday, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2021. May the light of God's countenance always shine upon these faithful parishioners for this giant support.

The Cathedral is on the verge of acquiring a new 4-Band Pipe Organ at the cost of Twenty-Seven Million Naira. More than half of the cost has been already paid to the manufacturing company, Magnus Organs based in Poland. We look forward to the arrival of the organ and the enhancement of worship here in the Cathedral.

A major repair work has taken place on the poorly roofed new Cathedral Church building which for long was leaking embarrassingly. The sum of Six Million Naira was spent on the repairs. We pray it will be a lasting work. We commend the Vicar, The Ven. Thompson Onyewuotu and the Standing Committee for their efforts in giving the Cathedral a facelift.

We note with gratitude the several individual and group donations of critical Church needs to the churches of the Cathedral Bloc ranging from choir robes, photocopy machine, musical instruments, microphone to a set of furniture at our Saviour, Rumunduru, Beatitudes and at All Saints.

We congratulate the Priest, The Rev. Canon Bright Welekwe, the Steering Committee and members of the Daystar Anglican Youth Church, Rumuokwurusi, on the completion and dedication of their new Church building, Parsonage, Church/children's Hall and offices on Sunday, 24<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.

➤ **St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery**

The various achievements of St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery, especially in the areas of playing host to the conferences of our major Diocesan Activity groups – DCMF, MU/WG and several others as well as meetings of ecumenical bodies in the state; church planting, etc. have been fully captured in their respective segments of this address. We commend the Deanery for their hospitality.

➤ **St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery**

We are pleased with the external outreaches carried by this Deanery to some Diocesan and government Secondary Schools and at Eliozu community, leading to huge harvest of souls, some who are going through discipleship classes.

We commend the Council of St. Andrew's Church for embarking upon and completing a major upgrade of the Church's facilities such as the Church building and fittings/furnishings, musical equipment, the Church fence, parsonages and offices. The Church is a holy place. God is glorified when we ensure that our premises and facilities are always in good state. Worship and other spiritual activities are usually enhanced.

The Deanery Council built a 3-Bedroom apartment for the widow and children of Mr. Chukwuma Anele, a deceased parishioner and member our Diocesan media team who served the Church faithfully for many years until his painful transition. The building was handed over to his family on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 by us at Etche. A similar facility is nearing completion by the Deanery as a retirement package for the retired Sexton of the Deanery, Mr. Peter Ucheagha who faithfully served the Church for decades. Mr. Ucheagha is the father of our Diocesan

Coordinator of the Anglican Communion Brigade, Mr. Chibueze Ucheagha.

St. Andrew's has continued to set an example for other bigger churches on how to nurture infant churches under them to maturity. Within two weeks, we dedicated the building of two of her station churches – St. John, The Evangelist on Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> March and Holyhill Church, Elioza, on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2021. The Deanery very significantly funded the building of these edifices.

We commend the Rector, The Rev. Canon Onuchuku, the Deanery Council and entire congregation for their large-heartedness. The blessing of God be upon the Deanery more abundantly.

➤ **Woji Archdeaconry**

To the glory of God, **St. Nicholas, Woji** has announced the reopening of its water factory which was commissioned by us a few years ago and later abandoned.

Work on the Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF) Multi-purpose Hall project of the Church is still ongoing.

**Cornerstone Anglican Church, Rumurolu** has relocated to its new and permanent site at No. 37A Elijiji Road within the community and is advancing with her new Church building project. We thank the immediate past Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government, Hon. Solomon Eke, for roofing the new Church building.

**Immanuel Anglican Church, Ogbatai**, has given their Church building a facelift and completed the service quarters for the Church clerk, Organist and a Guest lodge. We commend them.

Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Ahia-Woji (ACOPA) has successfully scaled the requirements for attainment of Parish status. We have consequently pronounced them a Parish Church with effect from Pentecost Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 2021. This was after Diocesan Board had painstakingly deliberated over the Diocesan Parish Inspection Committee Report at the Diocesan Board meeting held at Upper Room Church, Elioza on 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. The new Parish will be formally inaugurated before the end of the year.

➤ **St. Jude's, Oginigba Deanery**

The magnificent new Church building of St. Jude's, Oginigba Deanery is steadily nearing completion. The Church compound has been fully interlocked and is looking beautiful.

We commend Brother Innocent Chinda and his wife for their donation of a new video camera recorder to the Church. God bless this couple.

➤ **Oroigwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry**

We are pleased with the diverse spiritual and physical developments that are going on in all the churches of Oroigwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry. Two churches in the Archdeaconry – **Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara and Upper Room Anglican Church, Elioizu**, completed their new Church building projects and were dedicated by us during the year in review.

**Church of the Advent, Rumuewhara**, was approved and inaugurated a Parish Church as part of their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

**Christ The Redeemer Church, Eliogbolo**, now wears a more decent look following the refurbishment and repainting of the auditorium and other infrastructure of the Church.

The churches of this Archdeaconry received several generous material donations in cash and kind from their members for which we greatly appreciate and commend such goodhearted persons. Worthy of mention are the women of the various churches, the late Eze Jobson Anyabeledike Utchay, Sir Ike B.S. Chinwo, Sir Barr. Chuka Elenwa, Mr. & Mrs. Elvis Ogoloma, Mr. & Mrs. Obinna Amadike, Hon. Martin Chike Amaewhule, the Music **Committee of Church of the Holy Spirit, Elioizu Parish, HRH Eze Sir Barr. Emmanuel I. Utchay** for his donation of 3 plots of land for a permanent location of the newly-planted Church-station of **Holy Trinity, Elingbu Parish**; and several other anonymous donors across the Archdeaconry. May the Lord enrich and continually honour them all in Jesus name. Amen.

We are equally pleased to inform the Synod that nearly all the churches of this Archdeaconry were assisted by the Diocese at some point in the course of the year. We expect the benefitting churches to give details in their reports to the Synod.

➤ **Trinity Archdeaconry**

Trinity Archdeaconry hosted the Second Session of this 4<sup>th</sup> Synod last year amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic and acquitted themselves creditably. We thank them. They should however clean out on all outstanding debts to the Printing Press arising from that hosting. churches of the Archdeaconry were supported Outstandingly by various Groups and individuals in the course of the year.

The women of **St. Matthias', Atali District** donated the sum of One Million Three Hundred Thousand Naira (N1.3million) and an anonymous donor of materials in support of the ongoing Vicarage building of the Church which has been roofed.

We commend the Welfare Ministry of the Church for extending their acts of charity to St. Paul's Anglican Church, Ageva brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Okene, Kogi State, who were badly affected by the insurgency in that part of the country. We were however, not carried along in or notified by the leadership of the Church of this external outreach.

At **The Great Physician Anglican Church, Atali**, an anonymous family donated to the Church in perpetuity a two-bedroom flat to serve as the official parsonage of the Church. We have since received and dedicated this facility. We are grateful to this family.

Other donations of N500,000 towards the purchase of a permanent church land, the roofing of the temporary worship Centre, 50 plastic seats and a complete set of Boys Brigade Band were made by persons who prefer to remain anonymous. We are very grateful to them.

The Women of Epiphany also supported their church with a huge cash donation. We have extended financial support to the Church of Epiphany to enable them resume work on their parsonage building project.

We commend the Diocesan Lay Readers Association led by Dame Meg Orianwo for completing work on the parsonage building project at Holy City Church, Pipeline, which the Association started some years ago. We had at last year Synod, announced a cash support of One Million Naira to the Association towards this project. This was redeemed and it assisted in the completion of work. We also thank Sir Chigozie Etche for installing a water tank stand and tank for the Church.

Our “Wilderness Church” - **Rose of Sharon** - purchased a mini shuttle Bus to assist in bringing to church and taking home after service, members of the Church who have newly joined in our worship there. Rose of Sharon is growing steadily.

We commend some of our Diocesan faithful and groups who from time to time give one form of support or the other to the Church each time they go there for worship. We are grateful to Sir Chidi Iheanacho of St. Andrew's Rumuobiokani Deanery, who recently donated a Drum set and Piano to the Rose of Sharon Anglican Church. We pray the Lord to bless all who have assisted over the years and are continuing to do so.

We also thank the Archdeacons, other Priests and unit leaders of our Diocese for all your support towards the sustenance of weekly services in that area – Eneka/Atali/Igbo-Etche link Road.

➤ **Elelenwo Archdeaconry**

The formal inauguration of this new Archdeaconry took place on Saturday, 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2020, at **St. Mark's Church, Elelenwo (now District)**, the Headquarters. Other churches of the Archdeaconry are: **New Covenant, Eliminigwe Parish** and her two stations – **Anglican Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary** and **Anglican Worship Centre, Mango Estate**; **Chapel of Grace and Knowledge, ACMGS, Elelenwo** and her two stations – **Light of The World and Good Tidings**; **Anglican Church of the Passion, Rumuodani, Maranatha Anglican Church, Victory Estate, Elelenwo** and **Berea Saints Anglican Church, Green City, Rumuodani,**



**Elelenwo** – all under St. Mark's. On the occasion of the inauguration, we inducted The Ven. Azubuike Ugoha as the Archdeacon and Vicar of St. Mark's, Elelenwo District.

From reports available to us, churches of the Archdeaconry have enjoyed the support of a good number of their parishioners as evidenced in the diverse notable donations received by them from these faithful. We thank the former Chief Judge of the State, Sir The Hon. Justice Iche N. Ndu, OFR, Sir Promise E. Wodi, Sir & Dame Victor Agu, Engr. Thomas Uvoh, Lady Gogo Otuowo's family, Sir & Lady Jonah Okeh, Sir & Lady Godwin Risi, the CMF of Chapel of Grace & Knowledge, Chief Kingsley Nwankwo and family, Engr. & Mrs. Standford Nzeako Tasie, Mr. & Mrs. Amba Ollor, Mr. & Mrs. Okezie Ude, Dr. & Mrs. Nnamdi Ekeocha, the MU/WG and CMF of Church of Passion, Sir Dr. & Lady O.J. Kamalu, Dame Dorothy Ejabukwa, Mr. Chiemekam Nwankwo, Mrs. Florence Wodi, women of Maranatha and Rev. ThankGod Amadi as well as Mr. & Mrs. Innocent Chinda for their generous donations and support to their respective churches during the year.

➤ **Paraclete Deanery**

This new Deanery approved at the First Session of this Synod held at St. Nicholas', Woji District in August, 2019, took effect from Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 and was formally inaugurated by us on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 at the Church of The Holy Spirit, Elelenwo. The Ven. Emmanuel Anyasodo was also inducted as the Rector of the Deanery at the occasion. The new Deanery is constituted by the **Church of The Holy Spirit, Elelenwo - Headquarters, Jericho-Inn Anglican Church, Elelenwo, New Life Anglican Church, Rumuodani Elelenwo and New Jerusalem Anglican Church, Boskel Road, off PH/Aba Expressway.**

➤ **Okporo/Rumuogba Archdeaconry**

This newly created Archdeaconry took off from Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 and was formally inaugurated by us on Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2020, at St. Simon's Church, Okporo District - the Archdeaconry Headquarters. The Ven. Chidi S. Worgu was inducted by us as the Archdeacon.

Other churches of the Archdeaconry are: **Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Rumuogba Parish, New Wine Anglican Church, East/West Road Parish, Okporo** with her station – **Chapel of Restoration, Rumuogba; Great Shepherd Anglican Church, Mgbuesilaru Parish; and the stations of St. Simon's, Okporo – Faith Community, Eliowhani and Calvary Anglican Church, RD Road, Mgbuesilaru.**

The Great Shepherd Anglican Church was formally inaugurated as a Parish on Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2020.

The Archdeaconry has commenced work on her new Archdeaconry House, the Foundation stone of which was laid by us on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

Churches within the Archdeaconry are striving very hard to stand strong in fulfilling their ministry. We commend the Archdeacon and the team of ministers for their labours. The selfless, sacrificial contributions towards the growth of their churches by the laity are equally acknowledged and commended by us. We salute Sir and Lady Chidi Osuji, Dame Olayinka Edeghere, Bro. Ebube Ekiye, Engr. & Mrs. Chidozie Agu, Mrs. Ine George, The Rev. Canon Chieme Chimaobi and family, Sir & Lady Eddy Emeka Wopara and some other anonymous persons for their outstanding donations to the Church of Pentecost, Rumuogba Parish.

We acknowledge with thanks the donation of three (3) plots of land for the newly planted Zion's King Anglican Church at Iriebe by the Paramount ruler of Iriebe, Eze Jeremiah Worenwu in conjunction with the chiefs and elders of the community. May the Lord of the heavens and earth greatly reward them.

The investment into the lives of the youth by St. Simon's, Okporo through the provision of jobs and other forms of economic empowerment is worthy of commendation. Similarly, we applaud the efforts by New Wine and Calvary Anglican churches towards the support of indigent students and members of their churches.

### ➤ **Iriebe Archdeaconry**

This newly created Archdeaconry took effect from Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2020 and was formally inaugurated by us on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2021.

The churches constituting the Archdeaconry are: **St. James' Anglican Church, Iriebe Parish -The Headquarters, Holy Ghost Anglican Church, Housing Estate Parish, Iriebe** with her stations – **True Vine Anglican Church, Iriebe** and **Anglican Worship Centre, Iriebe; Anglican Church of The Messiah, New Haven Parish, Iriebe, Emmanuel Anglican Church, Okporo-Iriebe** (about to attain Parish status), **The Redeemer's Cross Anglican Church, Adolescent Project, Elemenwo, Anglican Worship Centre, Interlock, Iriebe, Anglican Worship Centre, Liberty Estate, Iriebe** – a newly planted station. The Venerable Alex Usifoh, Rector of Rumuomasi Deanery is presently supervising the new Archdeaconry. We commend him, the priests and laity of the Bloc for their collaborative efforts at growing the young Archdeaconry.

We have laid the foundation stone of the new Archdeaconry House to accommodate the Archdeacon and his family on completion. This took place

on Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2021. At the occasion, the outgoing Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, Hon. Solomon Abel Eke was on hand to lend his support and encouragement. We thank him immensely.

The Bishop, Clergy, Church teachers and wives who were at St. James', Iriebe in January for a retreat were very much pleased with the giant strides of the Vicar, The Rev. Canon Joseph Ofoegbu and members of the Church and decided to encourage the congregation with individual/family donations of brand-new church pews totaling 30.

From our office, we supported the Archdeaconry and her churches in their different projects. The Anglican Worship Centre presently operating at the Christie Toby Inclusive Education Centre, Interlock, Iriebe now has 4 plots of land to relocate to. The mother church, Holy Ghost Anglican Church, Iriebe Parish, with the assistance of our office paid for 2 of the plots while His Highness, the Paramount Ruler of Iriebe, Eze Jeremiah Worenwu gave the Church the remaining 2 plots for a token payment of N500,000 only. We thank him profusely. We also appreciate Sir and Lady Collins Anyanwu for their massive material support towards the completion of the ongoing parsonage building at Holy Ghost Church, Iriebe Housing Estate Parish.

### **SPECIAL DONATIONS AND SUPPORT**

In addition to donations captured in this address under the Administrative Blocs and churches, we are also pleased to further inform the Synod of the following:

- The offer of Secondary School Bursaries to the tune of N1m per academic session for 3 years in the name of the Diocese to Ten (10) indigent students in our Diocesan Secondary Schools by Sir Kingsley and Lady Chibuzor Anyabele.
- The construction of an Information and Computer Technology (ICT) Centre inside the Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani premises by the Hon. O.K. Chinda, member representing Obio/Akpor Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives, Abuja.
- Mr. & Arch. Mrs. Emeka Opara for the provision of designer curtains for the windows in the Bishop's Court Chapel of Refuge.  
We salute these persons and thank them for their kind gestures to the Diocese.

## **WEEKLY FINANCIAL (10% & 15%) REMITTANCES TO THE DIOCESE IN 2020**

### **AWARDS TO BEST PERFORMING CHURCHES AND GROUP**

**Category A (15%) For the Cathedral, Deanery churches and St. Nicholas, Woji and St. Mark's, Elelenwo Districts** (*Before the inauguration of Elelenwo Archdeaconry*).

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery with a total remittance of **N19, 674, 578.75**, an improvement on their 2019 performance of N17,308,671.91 which was drop from the 20,053,941.02 of 2018.

**Category B (15%) District Headquarters churches** (*Before the inauguration of the new Administrative Blocs*)

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – Church of The Holy Spirit, Elelenwo with a total remittance of **N2, 953, 208.10** as against the performances of 2019 - 2, 931, 539.46 and 2018 - N3,517,468.50.

**Category C (10%) Parish Churches:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – New Covenant Anglican Church, Eliminigwe Parish, Elelenwo with a total remittance of **N1, 766, 733.39** lower than the performances of 2019 - N1, 875, 542.70 and 2018 – N1,802,718.84.

**Category D1 (15%) Station churches (Stations under the Cathedral and Deaneries):**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – Daystar Anglican Youth Church, Rumuokwurusu with a total remittance of **N909, 890.00**, quite lower than the performances of 2019 - N1, 427, 570 and 2018 - N1,383,785.00.

**Category D2 (10%) Station churches (Stations under the Archdeaconries):**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – Church of The Advent, Rumuewhara (Before its inauguration as a Parish Church) with a total remittance of **N697, 710.69** -a far lower performances from those of 2019 - N927, 533.04 and 2018 – N946, 053.50.

**Category E (10%) Worship Centres:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – Anglican Worship Centre, Interlock, Iriebe, with a total remittance of **N152, 195.00** – an improvement on their performances of 2019 - N111, 190 and 2018 - N83, 785.

**Category F (10%) Diocesan Activity Groups:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – MU/WG (**Women's Work Office**) with a total remittance of **N3, 161, 141.00** – a lower performance from that of 2019 - N4, 893, 608.17. The 2018 performance was N3, 262, 446.00.

**Category G (10%) Archdeaconries:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Position** – Woji Archdeaconry with a paltry remittance of **N197, 758.50** yet, slightly better than the performances of 2018 – N105,166.50 and 2019 – 195,795.50.

## **AN ISSUE OF CONCERN: Offering for “First Meal” at Weddings**

Recently, we got to know that some clergymen in our Diocese have introduced a special offering during wedding services which they have tagged offering for the cooking of the “First Meal” by the couple in their new home. At a glance, this new idea appears helpful and encouraging for the couple and so should have ordinarily attracted our blessing. Regrettably however, no clergyman conferred with us before initiating the practice, neither was it presented to the Diocesan Board or Synod of the Diocese for approval. As if this illegality is not enough, we hear that in some places, monies raised in the name of wedding couples under this guise are not handed over to them after-all. This means that those who use the name of the couples to raise such monies actually had a completely different agenda in mind other than the welfare of the new families. This is unheard of!

The Church's platform is not to be used to perpetuate any form of fraudulent deals or sharp practices. On the strength of this abnormality, we have no other option than to use this medium to charge every clergyman in the practice of raising this so called “First Meal” Offering at wedding services to immediately put a stop to it. That offering is hereby abolished! The only offering at any wedding service remains the age-long wedding service thanksgiving which by tradition goes to the officiating ministers. Anything outside of this should be considered illegal, fraudulent and even criminal and we are not prepared to encourage it.

Similarly, no priest is authorised to place any form of mandatory demand on intending couples either for money for personal use or otherwise that is not that approved by the local Church Council and accruable to the Church. Appreciation of officiating ministers should be left for the couples to determine if they so wish. These practices that tend to present the Church in a very bad light should be discontinued henceforth.

Those who have withheld offering raised under the “Frist Meal” tag should go back from this Synod to their churches, calculate all such monies and return them to the couples in whose names they had deceived the congregations into raising. Where they fail to do this, we shall not hesitate to expose them and sanction them severely.

## **NIGER DELTA PROVINCE**

- **Provincial Episcopal, General Council and Women Executive Committee Meetings** were hosted by the Diocese of Uyo on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 at All Saints Cathedral, Uyo. The theme was “**...A desert place...give ye them to eat**” (Matthew 14:15-16).

The meetings were presided over by the Archbishop, The Most Rev. Tunde Adeleye and his wife, Ezinne Dorothy Tunde Adeleye respectively who also used the occasion to notify the Province of their approaching retirement from the active ministry of the Church with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2021. Also, the retirement of the Bishop of Okrika, The Rt. Rev. Tubokosimie Abere was announced; as well as the election of his successor, The Ven. Enoch



Atuboyedia and the appointment of The Rt. Rev. Dr. Blessing C. Enyindah, Bishop of Ikwerre as the Supervisory Bishop of Okrika by the Primate.

- **Enthronement of the New Bishop of Okrika**, The Rt. Rev. Enoch Atuboyedia took place at St. Peter's Cathedral, Okrika, on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. His consecration and enthronement thanksgiving service took place at the same venue on Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2020.

His first Synod (the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the 6<sup>th</sup>) was held at St. Thomas Anglican Church, Azuabie, Trans-Amadi, from Thursday, 6<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> May, 2021. To the glory of God, We, your Bishop ministered as the Guest Preacher in the two landmark events of the new Bishop and the Diocese of Okrika.

We heartily thank His Lordship, Bishop Enoch Atuboyedia for the invitations and right hand of fellowship.

- **Provincial Bishops and Wives Retreat**  
This was held at the Aliz Ambruz Hotel, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State from Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2020 with the theme as “Love one another” (John 15:2)
- **The First Provincial Council, Mothers' Union Executive Committee Meetings for 2021/Valedictory Session** in honour of our retiring Archbishop and wife, The Most Rev. Tunde and Ezinne Dorothy Adeleye were hosted by the Diocese of Calabar from Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> January under the theme “**Jehovah Jireh**” (Genesis 22:14). The retiring Papa and Mama Province were accorded a befitting sendoff service on Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> January at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, Calabar. We wish them a healthful and happy life in retirement.
- **ELMI Activities**
  - i. The Evangelism, Leadership and Missions International Institute (ELMI) hosted its **Alumni Convention** here at All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwursi from Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2021. The theme was “Arise, go up to Bethel.” We ministered at the convention with other resource persons.
  - ii. **International Christian Leadership Conference**  
The 5<sup>th</sup> edition of this Conference was held at the usual venue – St. Paul's Cathedral, Diobu, Port Harcourt, from Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2021. It had as its theme “The Making of a Christian Leader” (Mark 9:2<sup>a</sup>). The Primate of All Nigeria, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba while declaring the Conference open on Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> April, announced the readiness of his office to partner with the Province of Niger Delta and ELMI in the organisation of future conferences.

There was a fund-raise towards the development of the permanent site of the ELMI Institute at Eliminigwe, Elelenwo, as well as the unveiling of the

Book “Thus Far”, a brief compendium/record of God's moves and dealings through The Great Anglican Revival Team (GART) over the years.

We thank the organisers of the Conference for the opportunity given us to minister on the topic “**Perplexities in Leadership**” during the daily leadership reflections. We appreciate the clergy, Church teachers, their wives and the laity of our Diocese who heeded our call on them to attend.

### **ELMI Board Appointment**

The leadership of the Evangelism Leadership and Missions Institute (ELMI) has requested us to nominate a suitable person to represent our Diocese in the Board of the Institute. Accordingly, we hereby appoint The Rev. Canon Kingsley Ohajianya to serve in that capacity on behalf of our Diocese.

### ➤ **Our New Archbishop**

Following the retirement of our immediate past Archbishop, The Most Rev. Tunde Adeleye, Bishop of Calabar on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, 2021, The Primate of All Nigeria appointed our Father in God, the Bishop of Ikwerre, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Blessing Chinyere Enyindah, JP, as the Supervising Bishop of the Province with effect from that date.

Bishop Enyindah served in that capacity until Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2021 when he was formally elected the Archbishop of the Province by the Ecclesiastical Synod of the Church of Nigeria which held at the Faith Plaza, Diocese of Lagos. His Grace, The Most Rev. Dr. Blessing Chinyere Enyindah, JP, has since been presented at the service which took place at St. Peter's Cathedral, Asaba on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

We congratulate His Grace, Dr. Enyindah and his wife, Precious and pray for God's grace upon them to accomplish the demanding duties of their new/additional offices.

We in Evo are assuring them of our continuous prayers and total support as the Archbishop and Mama of our Province.

### ➤ **New Provincial appointments**

In his maiden meeting with the Bishops of the Province and their wives on Tuesday, 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 at Isiokpo, our new Archbishop announced the following appointments of Bishops and laity to serve as coordinators to the various departments of the Province:

- i. Episcopal Secretary – The Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Oko-Jaja (Bishop of Niger Delta West)
- ii. Prayer/Spirituality – The Rt. Enoch Atuboyedia (Bishop of Okrika)
- iii. Missions/Evangelism & ELMI – The Rt. Rev. Precious O. Nwala, JP (Bishop of Etche)
- iv. Assistant – The Rt. Rev. Prof. Nneoyi Egbe (Bishop of Calabar)
- v. Trainings/Retreats & Conferences – The Rt. Rev. Wisdom B. Ihunwo (Bishop of DNDN)

- vi. Children and Youths – The Rt. Rev. Funkuro G.V. Amgbare (Bishop of Northern Izon)
- vii. Assistant – The Rt. Rev. James A. Oruwori (Bishop of Ogbia)
- viii. Investments, Ecumenical Relations, Welfare & Finance – The Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP (Bishop of Evo)
- ix. Conflicts Resolution – The Rt. Rev. Clement Ekpeye (Bishop of Ahoada)
- x. Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF) – The Rt. Rev. Dr. Solomon Gberegbara (Bishop of Ogoni)
- xi. Assistant – The Rt. Rev. Ralph C. Ebiren (Bishop of Niger Delta)
- xii. Women's Ministries – The Rt. Rev. Prince A.E. Antai (Bishop of Uyo)
- xiii. Provincial Treasurer – Dame Okechukwu Owhonda- Niger Delta North
- xiv. Provincial Financial Secretary – Sir Innocent Worusah- Ikwerre Diocese

➤ **St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Nkpogwu**

This Church was established on the 4<sup>th</sup> of October, 1987 with the vision of Anglican revival and global evangelization under the old Niger Delta Diocese. At the inception of the Diocese of Niger Delta North on 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1996, it became a part of the new ecclesiastical structure and remained so until 2014 when her relationship with the Diocese became impaired over a number of issues, principally on Faith and Order.

However, following the conclusion of the assignment of the Task Force on Reconciliation set up by the Primate and headed by the Bishop of Aguata, The Rt. Rev. Dr. Samuel Ezeofor, the Church was annexed to the office of the Primate as a Primatial Chaplaincy for the time being.

The formal inauguration of the chaplaincy was carried out by the Primate himself on Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 and The Rev. (Prof.) Onyinye Okpala inducted as the Vicar.

● **JOINT PROVINCES OF THE EAST**

➤ **Institute of Theology, Awka: College Mission 2021**

Staff and students of this Institute were in our Diocese for a One-Week College Mission from Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> to Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2021. The students numbering 29 in all were drafted to different churches and institutions of our Diocese where they engaged in revival services, neighbourhood outreaches and counselling sessions.

They were accompanied by three members of the academic staff of the College. They were all accorded befitting send-forth packages by the various churches and institutions where they served and by our office at the end of their mission. We thank all parishioners of our Diocese for responding to our call for offerings to support them on the Sunday before their departure.

- **New Superannuation Office Building**  
A new administrative building for the superannuation fund office of the Joint Provinces, East of the Niger was dedicated on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 within the premises of the All Saints Cathedral, Onitsha, Anambra State, by the Primate of All Nigeria, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba.
- **Goshen Anglican Retreat Centre, Owerri**  
The Superannuation Fund Office has completed the extended block of 104 rooms at the Goshen Anglican Retreat Centre, Owerri. This was commissioned by the Archbishops and Bishops of the Joint Council led by the Chairman, The Most Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Olisaemeka Chukwuma on Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2021.
- **Joint Provincial Council Meeting**  
This was held at the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of our Lord (CATOL), Diocese of Owerri, on Thursday, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. The meeting of the wives of Bishops of the Joint Provinces also took place on the same day and venue.  
  
The theme of the Joint Council Meeting which was chaired by The Most Rev. Dr. Emmanuel O. Chukwuma, Archbishop of Enugu Province and Bishop of Enugu Diocese was “**Living in the Supernatural.**” Issues affecting the jointly-owned ventures/institutions of the 55 Dioceses, viz: Paul University, Awka, Institute of Theology, Awka, Trinity Theological College, Umuahia, Pension Scheme and welfare of serving and retired Bishops and Clergy of the Joint Council through the Superannuation Fund Office as well as a new salary structure were discussed at the meeting.
- **New Salary Structure: Implementation**  
The Joint Provincial Council of the East has approved a new salary structure for Bishops, Clergy and all Church workers replacing that which has been in operation since 2011. Dioceses have been authorised to implement it as convenient for them.  
  
Our Diocesan Budget and Finance Committee has critically examined the entire package and made its recommendations to the Diocesan Board. The Diocesan Board deliberated extensively on this matter at its sitting on Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> June and Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2021 and resolved to be guided by the recommendations of the Diocesan Budget and Finance Committee and to commence the implementation of this new structure by January, 2022 after all the necessary details shall have been worked out and circulated to our churches.
- **Paul University, Awka**  
In the continuing bid to reposition the only Anglican University East of the Niger – Paul University, Awka - for human and national development, the Primate of All Nigeria, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba convened a conclave of major stakeholders and leadership of the Institution at Enugu on Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. The event which attracted captains of

industries, the academia, politicians and the clergy East of the Niger, deliberated on the development of the permanent site and growth of the University, particularly in the area of its infrastructural deficit with the purpose of achieving the aim of its establishment.

Speaking at the event, the Primate described the citadel of learning as “A regional heritage..., an agent of change which must not be compromised”, adding that the “transformation of the Institution must remain pivotal.”

### **A New Acting Vice Chancellor**

A new Acting Vice chancellor, has been appointed for the University in the person of The Ven. Prof. Obiora Nwosu. He replaces the former, Prof. U.C. Nzewi. We wish the new Acting Vice Chancellor a successful tenure in office.

### **CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION)**

- **The 13<sup>th</sup> General Synod:** This took place at the new National Secretariat of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) – St. Matthias' House, Gudu District, Abuja, from Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> to Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> September, 2020. The Synod which had as its theme: “The Priority of God” (Matt. 6:33) was attended by Bishops and wives, Legal officers of every Diocese, two members of the House of Clergy and 3 other Lay delegates. Our Diocese was represented by the Bishop and wife, the Chancellor, Barr. Nlerum Amadi, the Clerical Synod Secretary, The Rev. Canon Gospel Onuchuku, The Ven. Alex Usifoh, Dame Meg Orianwo, Sir Chief Gilbert Chuku and Mrs. Priscilla Usifoh for the Women Executive Committee Meeting.

At the General Synod, new National officers and officials were elected and appointed as follows:

1. Odein Ajumogobia, SAN – Chancellor
2. Barr. Abraham Yisa – Registrar
3. The Ven. Saidu Isuwa – Prolocutor, House of Clergy
4. Hon. Justice A.O. Bamigbola – Chairman, House of Laity
5. The Rt. Rev. Praises Omole-Ekun – Episcopal Secretary
6. The Rt. Rev. William Aladekugbe – Assistant Episcopal Secretary
7. The Ven. George Ugo Njoku – Clerical Secretary
8. Dame Meg Orianwo (Our Own) – Lay Secretary
9. Mrs. Olayemi Dada – Treasurer
10. Chief Moses Oladele Otitoju – Auditor
11. Mr. James Nwabuokey – Auditor
12. Members of the Committees of Reference, Finance, Boards and Task forces were also announced in the Primate's address.

***We hereby congratulate our sister and delegate to the General Synod, Dame Meg Orianwo, on her election as the Lay Secretary of the Church of Nigeria General Synod. We pray for the grace and wisdom of God upon her and all the newly elected officers of our Church at the National level as they carry out the duties of their new offices.***



We, your Bishop were also appointed by the Primate as a member of the Proposed Anglican University of Technology, Kweita Project Implementation Committee as well as the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC). We thank His Grace, the Priamte for the privilege to serve.

- **Recent Appointments**

The following appointments of Bishop-Coordiators of some Church of Nigeria activity groups were also recently made by His Grace The Primate, Most Rev. Henry Ndukuba. They are:

1. **The Rt. Rev. Prosper Amah, Bishop of Ogbaru**

- Anglican Youth Fellowship (AYF)

2. **The Rt. Rev. Nedison Foreman, Bishop of Jalingo**

- Anglican Student's Fellowship (ASF)
- Anglican Corpers Fellowship of Nigeria (ACFON)
- Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (EFAC) Higher Institutions

3. **The Rt. Rev. Dr. Emmanuel Morris, Bishop of Maiduguri**

- Anglican Communion Boys' and Girls' Brigades

4. **The Rt. Rev. Godfrey Ekpenisi, Bishop of Ika**

- Anglican Children's Ministry (ACM)

These appointments took effect from Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2021.

- **Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON) 2020**

This annual national convocation of the Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) was held at the National Christian Centre, Abuja, from Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> to Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, under the theme “**We Are More Than Conquerors**” (Romans 8:37). Despite concerns about the Covid-19 pandemic, several thousands of Anglican faithful (including those from our Diocese) and other Christians still attended the Conference. At the conference, three of us from Evo were approved by the Primate and the Steering Committee to minister. We, your Bishop, took the corporate Morning Devotion on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup>; Sir Godfrey Ohuabunwa took the general seminar on “Mission: Reaching the Unreached” on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup>, while The Ven. Charles Mordi took the concluding Revival Hour on the closing day, Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> November. We remain grateful to His Grace, The Primate again for the privilege to serve.

For the second year running, our Diocese took the second-place trophy for Dioceses with the highest attendance. The Diocese of Aba-Ngwa North retained the first position. We congratulate them. We thank all who

attended the Conference from our Diocese and particularly churches and groups that responded to our directive to sponsor delegates.

Let us strive harder to bring home the trophy for the first position this year. The strategy to achieve this has already been worked out by our Diocesan DIVCCON Coordinators and approved by the Diocesan Board. Let us please cooperate with them.

- **Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON) 2021**

This year's edition is coming up from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> November at the National Christian Centre, Central Business District, Abuja. The theme is “**Quit Yourselves Like Men**” (1 Samuel 4:9).

Registration has since commenced. We encourage everyone to plan seriously to attend and churches/groups should not be weary in sponsoring those who are clearly unable to sponsor themselves, especially the youths. The spiritual benefits of this conference far outweigh whatever heavy financial burden participating in it might bring upon us.

- **Election and Consecration of New Bishops**

The following newly elected bishops were consecrated on Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2020 at the Cathedral of Advent, Gwarimpa, Abuja. They are:

1. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Peter Oludipe – Ijebu Diocese
2. The Rt. Rev. Adogoke Oludare Agara – Idoani Diocese
3. The Rt. Rev. Enoch Atuboyedia – Okrika Diocese
4. The Rt. Rev. Gabriel Elahor – Esan Diocese

These other new Bishops - The Rt. Rev. Obiora B. Uzochukwu of Mbamili and The Rt. Rev. Oluwagbemiro A. Fabuluje of Oke Osun Dioceses were consecrated on Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 at All Saints Cathedral, Onitsha, Anambra State, during the Standing Committee meeting.

The Rt. Rev. Prof. Neonyi Onen Egbe, the new Bishop of Calabar and The Rt. Rev. Victor Ebipade Okporu, the new Bishop of Western Izon, were consecrated on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 at St. Peter's Cathedral, Asaba, Delta State.

- **New Archbishops**

1. The Most Rev. David Onuoha, Bishop of Okigwe South was presented as the new Archbishop of Owerri Ecclesiastical Province on Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September, 2020, at the Cathedral of the Advent, Gwarimpa, Abuja.
2. The Most Rev. Dr. Blessing Chinyere Enyindah, Bishop of the Diocese of Ikwerre was presented as the new Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Niger Delta on Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 at St. Peter's Cathedral, Asaba, Delta State.

- **Translation**

1. The Rt. Rev. Henry Okeke was translated from Mbamili Diocese to the Diocese of Ideato to replace the retired Most Rev. Caleb Any Maduoma.

- **Retired Bishops**

1. The Rt. Rev. Ezekiel Danunsi - Bishop of Idoani
2. The Most Rev. Friday Imaekhai - Bishop of Esan
3. The Most Rev. Caleb Maduoma - Bishop of Ideato
4. The Rt. Rev. Tubokosemie Abere - Bishop of Okrika
5. The Rt. Rev. Benjamin E. Emamezi - Bishop of Western Izon
6. The Most Rev. Tunde Adeleye - Bishop of Calabar
7. The Rt. Rev. Amos Fagbemiye - Anglican Diocese of The Trinity (ADOTT)

- **Advent Sunday Collection, 2020**

This was observed on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> November, 2020. Total offerings realised from churches in Evo was Four Million, Five Hundred and Seventy-Four Thousand, Four Hundred and Eighty-Six Naira, Fifty Kobo (N4, 574, 486.50). This amount was remitted wholly as required to the Church of Nigeria. We thank our churches for their consistent positive response to the raising of offerings in support of our National Church.

- **Annual Bishops Retreat, 2021**

The Church of Nigeria Annual Bishops' Retreat was held at the Ibru International Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State, from Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2021 with the theme: "Servant Leadership: The Imperative of Jesus Christ" (Matthew 20:20-28).

- **Senior Clergy Advanced Management Course**

The Senior Clergy Advanced Management Course organised by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) for selected senior clergymen from different Dioceses was held at the Ibru Internal Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State, from Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 29<sup>th</sup> January, 2021.

The annual training is organised to improve the ministerial effectiveness and productivity of participants. Areas covered in the training included Conflict Resolution, Administration, Communication, ICT, Financial Management, the clergy as a CEO, health, goalsetting and human resource management, among others.

Those who attended the course from our Diocese are The Reverend Canons Ugochukwu Nwahaghi, Confidence Gura, Raymond Osakwe, John Chinda and Samuel Fedigha.

We thank their respective parishes for sponsoring them.

- **Opening of Church of Nigeria Mission Training Centre, Osoogun, Oyo State**

It was a day of joy for the town and people of Osoogun, Iseyin, Oyo State, the home town of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, when on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> January, the Primate of All Nigeria led some Archbishops, Bishops,

Priests and other officials of the Church of Nigeria to that town for the dedication of the first phase of the Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther Mission Centre established to immortalise the first black African Bishop. Speaking at the occasion, Primate Ndukuba declared that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) “owes a great part of her historical origins, establishment, growth and expansion to the missionary expeditions of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther.”

- **Meetings of the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee and Mothers' Union Executive**

The first Standing Committee Meeting of the Church of Nigeria in 2021 was hosted by the Diocese On the Niger at the All Saints Cathedral Church, Onitsha, from Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 under the theme: “**Costly Commitment: The Imperative of following Christ**” (Luke 9:23-27). In his address at the meeting, the Primate harped on the:

- i. need for all (who are yet to) to register as eligible voters in readiness for the 2023 general elections in the country, to do so;
- ii. importance of opening a welfare office and a Food Bank in every Diocese to address the rising cases of poverty, hunger, unemployment and displaced persons across the country;
- iii. need for Dioceses to invest more in the provision of improved healthcare services including the training of health professionals as part of the church's deliberate mission at rescuing the fast-collapsing healthcare delivery system in the country;
- iv. need to nurture the youth in professions that will put them in service to humanity within and outside Nigeria.

Some other far-reaching decisions that will impact the mission and ministries of the National Church were also taken.

The next Standing Committee Meeting (the second for this year) will hold from Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> September, 2021 at the Diocese of Lagos and thereafter it will be the turn of our Diocese of Eyo to host the meeting of the Committee in the last week of February, 2022 as announced by the Primate in his address at the Onitsha meeting.

- **New Inter Diocesan Links**

The Primate of our Church has at the last Standing Committee Meeting held at Onitsha in February this year announced a new Inter-Diocesan Link for Dioceses in Nigeria. Accordingly, the Diocese of Eyo now has 3 new link Dioceses. They are Bari (in Kaduna Province), Awgu/Aninri (Enugu Province) and Isiala Ngwa (Aba Province).

We hope to work out details of our Missions relationships with the Bishops of these Dioceses shortly.

- **St. Matthias Day Collection, 2021**

This annual day of fund raising in support of the diverse missions of Church of Nigeria was observed this year on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2021, across the Anglican Communion.

We continue to thank our Clergy, Church teachers and members of this Diocese for their commitment to the work and ministry of the National Church by their faithful financial support and remittance of offerings realised. The total offering raised in all churches of our Diocese for St. Matthias' offering Sunday this year was N7, 921, 960.33.

- **Church of Nigeria National Prayer Convocation**

This was held at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, Diocese of Gwagwalada, FCT, from Monday, 22<sup>nd</sup> to Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2021. The theme was “**The reign of God... the place of the watchmen**” (Isaiah 52:7,8). The convocation was attended by some Bishops, Prayer Chaplains/Supervisors/ Coordinators at all levels of the Church of Nigeria and other Intercessors/Members of the Anglican Communion. Our Diocese was also in attendance.

- **Church of Nigeria 24-Hour Chain Prayers**

The Primate of All Nigeria has instituted a 24-hour (Nonstop) chain prayers to be observed by the Provinces and Dioceses of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Each Province shall begin the prayer watch on their appointed day from 12.00 midnight to 12:00am of the next day to complete the 24 hour cycle. Another Province shall thereafter take over as scheduled.

All members and groups of the Anglican Communion in Nigeria have been requested to religiously commit themselves to this Chain Prayer watch. Accordingly, our Province of Niger Delta has been scheduled to observe this prayer watch every Tuesday from 12 mid night to 12 am the next day.

Furthermore, every Diocese in the Province has been scheduled to be on prayer watch for two hours only. **Our Diocese (Evo) is on duty from 10:00pm to 12 midnight every Tuesday.**

We encourage everyone to hearken to and observe this call to prayer by our National Church leadership and ensure to pray for the Church and the world.

- **The Joshua Generation International Youth Conference:**

In his address on Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020, at the 13<sup>th</sup> General Synod of the Church of Nigeria held at St. Matthias' House, Abuja, the Primate of All Nigeria, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba declared a state of emergency on matters pertaining to the Church's ministry to the youth and children. As a way of addressing the many challenges of the youth and in order to start preparing them towards their expected future leadership



roles both in the church and the wider society, his office, through the Joshua General Children and Youths Taskforce headed by The Rt. Rev. Aloysius Agbo, Bishop of the Diocese of Nsukka, organised the maiden edition of the “JOSHUA GENERATION INTERNATIONAL YOUTH CONFERENCE” which held at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Enugu State, from Easter Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 with the specific goal of using the conference to help rebuild our Youth Ministries and the Church for the future.

The conference theme was “**Living With A Purpose**” (Romans 8:28-30) and its primary focus is to raise mature, committed disciples of Christ with strong character and sound testimony which conform to His image.

The main conference in April was preceded by a 4-Day regional training for Group Mentors (GB) held from Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> March at Lafia, Ibadan and Awka for “Emerging Leaders Peer Groups (ELPG).

The conference was attended by about twenty-two thousand youths and was fully funded by the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) with contributions and partnership support from Dioceses, organisations, families and individuals of goodwill. More than four thousand of the youths gave their lives to Christ and over two thousand five hundred of them responded to mission commitment. The Diocese of Eyo generously supported the hosting of the conference.

- **Episcopal Strategic Mission and Empowerment Training Conference**

The office of the Primate in partnership with El-Rehoboth Global Leadership Foundation, Jos, organised a special Episcopal strategic training conference on Mission and Economic Sustainability from Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 2021 at the Lagos Diocese-owned Plaza, Bariga.

Hosted and sponsored by the Diocese of Lagos West, the conference deliberated on how the Church of Nigeria as a missional church can mobilise the universal church, to both contend for the faith once for all delivered to the Saints, and to proclaim Christ faithfully to the nations; deepening the task of discipleship and intentionally preparing the church for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Talks were presented by various speakers from the El-Rehoboth Global Leadership Foundation, Jos, the Central Bank of Nigeria and the Sequoia Group on Mission, issues of idolatry and syncretism in our mission enterprise, exploring local potentials for economic empowerment, effective resource and fund mobilisation, management and utilisation in a mission's context and agricultural potentials for economic sustainability. A good number of the Bishops of the Church of Nigeria took part in this consultative conference with the Primate, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba presiding.

- **National Christian Men's Fellowship Visioneering Workshop**

This was held at Abuja from Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 with all Provinces represented. Proceedings were anchored by the Institute for National Transformation led by Prof. Vincent Anigbogu and

the Archbishop of Bendel Province, The Most Rev. Cyril Odutemu.

Some of the key outcomes of the workshop included the need to harness our strength as a richly blessed communion given the continued absence of a unified focus and effective coordination particularly amongst the different and presently existing groups/societies of men in the Church of Nigeria; the need for a forum that brings men together with a clear focus and ministry in the Church.

With the approval of the Primate, this workshop has been organised also at the three regional levels of the Church of Nigeria. That of our Joint Provinces of the East (Aba, Enugu, Niger Delta, On the Niger and Owerri) was held at the Anglican Goshen Retreat Centre, Owerri from Wednesday, 7<sup>th</sup> to Friday, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2021.

Our Diocese was represented by the President-General, Secretary and Chaplain of the Christian Men's Fellowship.

- **Deaths**

1. The Rt. Rev. Foluso Taiwo- Bishop of Oke Osun
2. Madam Selina Ozioma Ndukuba, Mother of our Primate, the Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba
3. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Augustine Akinyele Omole, Bishop of Sokoto Diocese.
4. Mrs. Clementina Ojuolape Adeniyi (Nee Williams) wife of the pioneer Bishop of Ega Diocese, The Rt. Rev. Jonathan Soremi Adeniyi, OFR.
5. The Most Rev. Caleb Maduoma, recently retired Bishop of Ideato and Archbishop of Owerri Province.
6. The Rt. Rev. Seth Oni Fagbemi (the pioneer and retired Bishop of Osun Diocese)
7. Chief Enechi Onya, SAN, OON, Chancellor, Diocese of Enugu North
8. Lolo Tryphina Chitumaogu Oparajioaku, mother of the Bishop of Ohaji/Egbema Diocese, The Rt. Rev. Chidi Oparaojiaku
9. The Rt. Rev. Jonathan F.E. Edewor, the pioneer and retired Bishop of Oleh Diocese.
10. Dame Dr. Grace Ngozi Iwuagwu, wife of The Rt. Rev. Prof. Augustine O. Iwuagwu, retired Bishop of Aba.
11. Mama Matilda Baima Ayam, the wife of the late Bishop B.B. Ayam, the pioneer Bishop of Kano.
12. The Rt. Rev. Titus Ogbonyomi, the former Bishop of Northern Nigeria and Kaduna.

- **ECUMENICAL MATTERS**

Our Diocese has continued to be active in the ecumenical circles of the State. We have participated in a number of activities organised by both the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) and the umbrella Christian body – the

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), viz: Business meetings to which we were invited and the prayer meetings.

A new acting Chairman for the Christian Council, Nigeria, in the person of The Most Rev. Dr. Sunday Agwu, the Archbishop of the Methodist Diocese of Port Harcourt, was elected to Succeed the former Acting Chairman, The Rev. Gabriel Oton of the United Evangelical Church who had gone on transfer.

Archbishop Agwu's interim tenure is expected to end on August, 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 when the election of new officers of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Rivers State Branch will hold here in our Cathedral.

On Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) organised an Exchange of Pulpit for member denominations of the Body within the State. Visiting preachers from the Methodist, Presbyterian and First African churches took the pulpits in five churches of our Diocese – All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi, St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery, St. Simon's, Okporo District, St. Mark's, Elelenwo District and New Wine Church, East/West Road Parish, Okporo. In the same vein, five of our priests were assigned to minister in other denominations of the CCN. The priests included: The Venerables Chidi Worgu, Godwin Chinda, Chris Chukwumati as well as Canons Gospel Onuchuku and Hosanna Naenwi.

The Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) also organised a One-Day Seminar on “Unity in Diversity” (Ephesians 4:2-3) on Tuesday, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2021 at the Methodist Church Cathedral, D-Line, Port Harcourt. We attended this seminar with two of our priests – Rev. Maduakona Paul Ezigbo and Rev. Henry Odu. Representatives of the other Anglican Dioceses in the State and member denominations of the CCN also were in attendance.

The Christian Association of Nigeria, Rivers State Branch, convened an emergency Prayer/Church leaders' meeting on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> May, 2021 at St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery. The activities of the day included powerful prayer sessions with exhortations for Nigeria; address by the Rivers State Chairman of the CAN/convener, Most Special Apostle Dr. Stanley O. Dimkpa and a Keynote Address on the State of the Nation: The position of the Church in Rivers State on the diverse vexing issues confronting the Nation presented by us – The Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP, Bishop of Evo.

The Programme was fairly well-attended by Christian leaders in Rivers State from different denominations. A communique was issued at the end of the meeting. At that meeting, the State leadership of CAN decided to use the same venue, St. Michael's, Rumuomasi Deanery for the 3-Day prayers declared by the National Secretariat of the CAN for the “peace and stability

of our nation” from Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> to Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2021. The concluding prayers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Day were held at the various churches in the State on Trinity Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May.

We are immensely grateful to The Ven. & Mrs. Alex Usifoh, the clergy of Rumuomasi Deanery and the Deanery Council for playing good hosts to the two gatherings of Christian leaders and faithful in the State. The Lord greatly reward them.

The CAN leadership in the State has resolved from that prayer meeting to meet every quarter in any Church within our Diocese for prayers and intercessions for the Church and the Nigerian Nation. We thank the State leadership of CAN for choosing our Diocese for such moments of fellowship with God and welcome them happily. We hereby direct the Clergy and leaders of the churches we shall recommend to CAN to please prepare to make their facilities available for such gatherings when convoked.

### **TOWARDS OUR HOSTING OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA STANDING AND NATIONAL MOTHERS' UNION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES IN FEBRUARY, 2022**

As you are already aware, our Diocese has been announced by the Primate of All Nigeria, The Most Rev. Henry C. Ndukuba as the host of the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee and the National Women Executive Committee Meetings slated for Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> to Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2022.

We thank His Grace for the opportunity to play host to this great gathering of the leadership team of our Church at the national levels. It is a huge task we have since accepted to shoulder to the glory of God and progress of our Church in Nigeria. Those coming for these meetings include The Primate, all Archbishops, Bishops and their wives, Chancellors and other Legal officers, representatives of the Clergy and women's ministries of each of the 170 Dioceses/missions of the Church of Nigeria as well as other National officers and staff of the Church including Drivers.

In preparation, We have since with the approval of the Diocesan Board, set up and inaugurated a Central Working Committee as well as a Fund-Sourcing Committee to plan towards a successful hosting of our august visitors. The Central Working Committee is made up of 104 members with Sir Barr. Bright Nda-Owhor (our Diocesan Legal Secretary) as Chairman, The Ven. Charles Mordi and Sir Francis Chilam Dimkpa as Co-Vice Chairmen. Lady Bibian Nnoli and The Rev. Chukwudi Theophilus are the Secretary and assistant secretary respectively. The Fund-Sourcing Committee is headed by Sir Chief Mike Ejims Enwukwe with Sir Raymond Amadi and Lady Amonia Hart as Co-Vice chairmen. This Committee is charged with the task of canvassing/raising the enormous funds that we shall be needing to spend for the hosting of these crucial national meetings. The Clerical Synod Secretary, The Rev. Gospel Onuchuku is the secretary of the committee.

The two committees were jointly inaugurated by us on Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2021 in the Cathedral. They have since commenced earnest preparations and are making steady progress.

With the approval of the Diocesan Board, we have also assigned levies to all parishes, stations and activity groups of the Diocese. The churches are required to take weekly offerings (On Sundays) as part of the strategy to offset their levies. Every Church is to remit additionally, 5% of the offerings from all their Harvest thanksgivings for this year.

We commend the churches and groups for their support so far and wish that this will continue to be given by them and everyone else in the Diocese.

Our hosting of the Church of Nigeria Standing and National Mothers Union Executive Committees meetings next year, should be regarded as the collective responsibility of all of us and not the burden of our parishes, church stations and activity groups alone.

Let us see it as God creating an avenue through which His greater blessings will be showered on us all, particularly, as we identify with the Diocese of Evo in shouldering some of the areas of need. We therefore invite you as individuals and families to stand in solidarity and support with us by offering to sponsor/provide some of the needed items/materials, e.g., substantial cash donations, payment for the conference bags/ writing jotters/pens, payment for conference service programmes, provision/payment for accommodation in aid of financially weak Dioceses, hotel shuttle vehicles, souvenir items, decent/healthy snacks, water, soft drinks/juices, toiletries, reams of A4 paper, etc.

We are confident that God will, as always, abundantly reward all who will partner with us in these and many other areas of need.

On this note, we welcome the Primate of our Church with his wife as well as all other delegates to the Diocese of Evo for the meetings of the Church of Nigeria Standing and National Women Executive Committees.

#### **SCHEDULE OF PAST AND FUTURE SYNOD HOSTS/VENUES**

<b>S/ N</b>	<b>YEAR OF SYNOD</b>	<b>HOST</b>	<b>DIOCESAN CHIEF LAUNCHER</b>	<b>HOST BLOC CHIEF LAUNCHER</b>
1	2010	All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi		<b>Usually determined by the host Bloc</b>
2	2011	Oroigwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry		
3	2012	Rumuomasi Deanery		
4	2013	Okporo Deanery		
5	2014	Rumuobiokani Deanery		
6	2015	Chapel of Grace & Knowledge, Firstfruits Parish, ACMGS, Elemenwo		
7	2016	St. Jude's, Oginigba Deane.		



8	2017	St. Mark's, Elemenwo Deanery	Diocesan Clergy
9	2018	Evo South/East Archdeaconry	Diocesan Council of Knights
10	2019	Woji Archdeaconry	Diocesan MU/WG/SF/GG
11	2020	Trinity Archdeaconry	Diocesan CMF (All Men)
12	2021	All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi	Diocesan AYF (All Youths)
13	2022	Rumuomasi Deanery	Diocesan Clergy & Lay Ministers (Readers)
14	2023	Oroigwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry	Prayer groups of CMF, MU/WG of churches
15	2024	Evo Diocesan Schools	Diocesan Council of Knights
16	2025	Rumuobiokani Deanery	Anglican Traditional Rulers & Chiefs in Evo
17	2026	Okporo/Rumuogba Archdeaconry	To be determined
18	2027	St. Jude's, Oginigba Deanery	To be determined
19	2028	Elemenwo Deanery/ Archdeaconry	To be determined
20	2029	Iriebe Archdeaconry	To be determined
21	2030	Church of The Holy Spirit, Paraclete Deanery, Elemenwo	To be determined
22	2031	All Saints Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi	To be determined
23	2032	Woji Archdeaconry	To be determined

• **Our 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebrations**

We give thanks to God for preserving us to attain the Diamond age of 60.

While still thinking on how best to mark the day on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2021, the leadership of the Rivers State Council of the Boys Brigade, Nigeria, led by Prof. Blessing Chimezie Didia approached us to announce an elaborate plan and programme of activities they have drawn to celebrate us at 60 to the glory of God.

We were and are still overwhelmed at such show of love, solidarity and goodwill towards us and will always remember it in appreciation of the State Boys Brigade Council and in eternal gratitude to God.

Activities carried out included a Novelty Football Match between the State Council of the Boys Brigade and the Evo Clergy Football team on Sunday evening, 1<sup>st</sup> August, an evening of fellowship and outreach with children of Clergy and Church workers in the Diocese of Evo on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, as well as a thanksgiving service and Banquet on Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2021.

The cost of these events ran into millions of Naira which were borne entirely by members, officers, patrons and other lovers of the Boys Brigade across the State.

To the President and Executives of the Rivers State Council of the Boys Brigade Nigeria, especially Mr Chukwudi Ibim- ANTO, the State Secretary-Organiser, the State Vice President (Projects) and Chairman of the Birthday Planning Committee, Sir Kingsley Wobo, Mr. Okuru Jonathan, NTO-Secretary, Sir Chief Raymond Elenwoke, ABH, Dame Dr. Loretta Enwezor, ABH, Sir Magnus Tuboalabo, ABH, Sir Chief Chike Okoli, ABH, Sir Owene Wonodi, Sir Rogers Ugem, ABH, Sir Chidi Osuji, The Rev. Canon Samuel Ejekwu, Lady Dr. Okechi Anunobi, Barr. Emeka Onyeka, Sir Hon. ThankGod Amaechi, JP, Sir Warisenibo Ibifubara Wilcox, ABH, Eze David Nwankpa, NTO, Mr. Evans Adi Wobeh, Mr. Charles Isaiah, NTO, Mr. Onyebuchi Otih, NTO and Mr. Chibueze Ucheagha and every other person who partnered with the State Boys Brigade Council, We say, 'THANK YOU' for making what we took as an ordinary moment, extraordinary. THANK YOU for making a difference in our life and giving our spirit such a great lift; for filling our life with beauty, joy and grace. The Lord reward you all much more abundantly!

In the same vein, We thank the Rector, The Rev. Canon Gospel Onuchuku, Clergy, members of the Deanery Council and entire parishioners of St. Andrew's Rumuobiokani – the Church of our nativity and baptism for inviting us on Sunday, 1<sup>st</sup> August to specially celebrate our 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The demonstration and outpouring of love on us by the congregation was simply awesome such that we will always live to remember and appreciate. We use this medium to very specially say a big 'THANK YOU' to Rumuobiokani Deanery for rekindling the spark and lighting the flame within us in such an extraordinary manner.

And to all members of the Diocesan Board and entire Diocesan faithful who felt the need of celebrating us at 60, we express our hearty gratitude. May our Lord Jesus always think good of you and honour you much more in return.

And to God Almighty, Who has given and sustained the life in us by His grace, strength, mercy and loving-kindness which have enabled us to get to where we are now and to keep going, We say, “We're grateful”! We thank Him for blessing us directly and through you all, much more than we deserve.

## **RIVERS STATE**

It is now six years since His Excellency assumed governance of our dear Rivers State, as the 6<sup>th</sup> elected Governor. By this, he is already in the second year of his second tenure. We therefore, seize this medium to heartily congratulate him and pray God for His ever-abiding grace on his life and administration.

Within these six years of his administration, Rivers State has witnessed flag-offs, completion and commissioning of diverse impactful projects across all sectors in

the twenty-three Local Government Areas, in line with the blueprint and policy thrust of his administration, some of which are positively impacting on our great Diocese of Edo.

Further to these, on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> May this year, as part of the activities marking the Second Year Anniversary of the Governor's Second Tenure in office, we were greeted during his speech at St. Paul's Cathedral, Diobu, with the cheering news of the construction of a 10th Flyover at Tank Junction here in Rumuokwurusi, the seat of our Cathedral and the reconstruction with drainages and streetlights of the Road leading to our premiere Girls' School -Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School (ACMGS), Edelewo. We gladly wish to announce to Synod that earnest work has commenced on this school road project.

The condition of the Tank Junction, Rumuokwurusi, for about two years has been a nightmare to the entire faithful of this Diocese and people from all parts of Nigeria plying that portion of the East-West Road, although presently, there seem to be some palliative works going there apparently from the Federal Government. The announcement by the Governor however, that a flyover will soon be constructed there has come to us as a cheering, breaking news for which we are already in the mood of celebration while awaiting its flag off.

We cannot thank His Excellency enough for these good works God is using him to do for our dear State from which our Diocese also benefits. We will continue to uphold him, his family and administration in our prayers while charging **him to not grow weary in well-doing** (Galatians 6:9) as the theme of this Diocesan Synod admonishes every one of us and also to pay more serious attention to the issue of environmental sanitation of every part of Port Harcourt and other cities of the state.

As we congratulate the Governor for his excellent stewardship to the people of the State, we pray God to reward him and grant him the grace to end well in the remaining 22 months of his administration.

### **THE STATE OF THE NATION**

The situation of things in Nigeria has gone down for the worse in the last few years such that even little children if asked, would readily identify or mention some of these challenges.

Whereas other nations of the world (including a good number of those in Africa) are making giant strides in their political, economic, social, educational development, etc., the story cannot be said to be the same with Nigeria. After over sixty years of attaining independence, we are still struggling as a nation to make meaningful impact in several areas of our national life.

It is not that we do not have any positive thing at all to showcase since our independence, as saying so would amount to judging or assessing the nation most unfairly. The truth however, is that the challenges confronting us as a people have become so overwhelming and seemingly intractable to the extent that the little success stories we have recorded here and there are now too easily

rubbed, dismissed or totally go unnoticed.

The state of affairs has gone so bad in the country to the extent that many now see Nigeria as a scam, a fraud, a falling house - drifting apart irretrievably to disaster. Just as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrew believers lamented (against) their spiritual immaturity: *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe”* (Heb. 5:12,13), so also is every true Nigerian and members of the global community worried that we are not manifesting sufficient proofs or evidence of growth as a nation even with all our human and natural endowments from God. Nigeria as a nation is still struggling to catch up with her contemporary nations many years after independence because we have failed to embrace the basic standards of modern-day principles of nation-building just like a typical infant which survives only on milk because it is not mature enough to process solid food. In Nigeria we simply do not understand modern-day development and appear most unwilling to make progress.

Evils that other nations abhor, Nigeria has become notorious for condoning them. Such evils include:

- **Social Injustice** fueled by ethnic, regional and religious sentiments. In our country today, there are persons who are considered more or better Nigerians because of their ethnic or religious backgrounds than their counterparts from the other parts of the country. Nigeria therefore, is a land of inequalities – a nation lacking in equity and justice!
- **Nepotism/ethnicism/sectionalism** as being presently witnessed in the lopsided appointments by the government at the Centre. The present government of Nigeria headed by President Muhammadu Buhari is giving the impression that Nigerians who are not from the North and in particular, from the Fulani extraction, are not good or qualified enough to hold key positions at the Federal level. This is sad and stands condemned!
- **Religiosity devoid of true godliness**- We rank among the most religious nations/people on earth. But this has not reflected in our personal character, in the way we do things, in our attitude to one another and in the way we address national issues and matters of governance.
- **Collapse of moral and ethical values** which help in the building of nations even with many churches and mosques dotted virtually across every street in the country.
- **Corruption** in government, Church and every other sphere of our national life.
- **Armed robbery**
- **Oil theft** (bunkering)

- **Militancy, Banditry and activities of Unknown Gun Men, Area Boys/Miscreants, etc.**
- **Electoral malpractices**/violence and desperation to grab power
- **Kidnapping for ransom**, including the kidnapping of helpless school children/University students.
- **Insurgency** – emergence of jihadist terrorist organisations such as Boko Haram, ISWA, ISIS and Al-Quaeda seeking by all means to establish an Islamic state/rule under shariah law in Nigeria
- **Killings in droves** and large-scale violence by the above-named and other terror groups even against security agencies
- **Premeditated attacks and invasion** of communities and their farmlands by **armed Fulani herdsmen**
- **Rape of and sexual assaults** on women and girls
- **Cultism** and its associated blood sacrifices
- **Genocide against Christian communities** and sacking of churches. Forceful conversion of Christians to Islam and abduction of under-aged Christian girls for marriage to Muslims while the government folds its arms and watches
- **General insecurity and state of fear** across the nation
- **Proliferation of arms and ammunitions**
- **Poor infrastructure** in the health, education, transportation, oil sectors, etc.
- **A heavily weighed down economy due to debt burden**
- **Poverty and hunger**
- **Emergence of separatist/secessionist movements** like the IPOB calling for Biafra, Odua People's Republic, MEND, Arewa and the like and government's biased assessment of description of the operation of each of these groups. For instance, some of these groups are tagged “terrorists” and constantly haunted whereas others who openly carry arms and claim responsibility for several acts of mass abductions and killings of Nigerians are left untouched or trailed
- **Weak governmental institutions**
- **Poor or near zero, unconcerned, insensitive leadership** that prefers to play the ostrich in the face of many evil happenings in the land.

I have decided to list poor leadership as the last because I consider it as the biggest masquerade in this national procession of evils. Were Nigeria to have a quality, responsible leadership, these other problems would not have assumed their present worrisome proportions. John Maxwell, a leadership expert, has



said that a nation rises and falls on its leadership. Nigeria is hurting and bleeding so profusely at the moment because those entrusted with leadership tasks have simply abdicated their functions while shamelessly holding tight to the offices we elected them to. They have not left anyone in doubt as to their cluelessness and gross incompetence in the tackling of the above-listed challenges facing us.

Leadership in Nigeria since 1960 can best be described as a wasted generation that has failed to proffer lasting solutions to our numerous challenges. The worst natural disaster that any country can experience is that of BAD LEADERS. It is worse than hurricanes, worse than tsunamis, volcanoes, wildfires and floods.

With bad leadership, the Nigerian State appears to be in retreat and the state of anarchy is almost here with us. This is the reason for the widespread clamour by civil society groups, organised labour, religious bodies, some regional groups and even politicians themselves, for the convoking of a Sovereign National Conference to discuss principally how the nation can be peacefully restructured for better governance and development. In fact, some other Nigerians believe and are strongly advocating the non-violent breaking up of the country into several other sovereign states again for better understanding of ourselves and for rapid development. We do not see anything wrong or treasonable in these calls. We join several other concerned Nigerians therefore, to call for a fresh and urgent negotiation of our collective coexistence. Let us not wait until we are all consumed by the looming war. If our leaders feel offended by these calls, it means they are yet to feel what the rest of us are feeling; that they are insensitive and blind to all the pains and disadvantages most Nigerians are experiencing on a daily basis. They should interpret the calls properly - which is that they are to sit up to the duties of their various offices and also respect and guarantee the rights of all Nigerians to justice, even distribution of political appointments/positions, resources, amenities and safety of their lives and properties in any part of the country.

### **The present state of the Church and the way forward**

At this point, we would like to equally examine the state of the nation from the spiritual angle. With the consistent decline in the developmental fortunes of this country arising from weak leadership, one wonders if Nigeria is not actually labouring under some sort of Divine judgment!

Able, wise, godly and responsible leaderships are qualities required in those saddled with the affairs of any nation that aims for greater heights. Leadership therefore, is everything. When these qualities are lacking, one is forced to draw the conclusion that God may not be particularly happy with the nation that is unfortunate to have such leaders over it. Someone is quoted to have said that when God is happy with a people, He blesses them with a good leadership team; and when not happy with a nation, He punishes her citizens with bad leaders. With the kind of sleeping, insensitive, uncaring and self-centered leadership we have in Nigeria, it will definitely not be out of place if we say that the country is going through God's judgment. It can only take the deep/sincere intercession of the Church in Nigeria and of course, the mercy of God Himself, for Nigeria to come out of such divine indignation.

Regrettably, the Church in Nigeria which is required to go to God in prayers is not faring better than other institutions within the Nigerian state. In fact, it is believed that what is playing out today in Nigeria is a reflection or direct result of the very poor spiritual state of the Church. Moral, ethical values and godly principles have collapsed in all spheres of our national life as a result of the collapse of deep and true spirituality in the Church.

We are busy building earthly empires and kingdoms of our own as against focusing on our primary mandate of preaching the saving and life-changing gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; equipping men and women (Nigerians) not only to earn a place in heaven but also for a life of responsible citizenship while still here on earth. There is hardly any much difference between a so-called Christian in government (legislative and judicial arms inclusive), business, the academia, civil service, sports and entertainment, etc., and his/her non-Christian counterpart. All of them in most cases, are visibly at the same level/page of corruption and ineptitude.

The reason for all these failures can be found in our failure as Christian leaders to intentionally/effectively disciple our members and nurture them unto Christian maturity such that they are able to manifest as sons and daughters of God wherever they find themselves. We appear to be more after the number of worshippers and the size or capacity of our places of worship than the quality or depth of the faith of our members in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In seeking solutions to the problems of our Nation, the Church in Nigeria must begin with herself. We have to look inwards, i.e., examine ourselves all over again to be sure we are still contending for the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ which was once delivered unto the Saints (Jude 3-4). Paul admonished in 2 Cor. 13:5, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves...". The Church in Nigeria must consider her ways as in the words of the Lord Himself through prophet Haggai: 1:5-7;

*"Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough: ye drink, but ye are not filled with milk; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus, saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways" (Haggai 1:5-7).*

As church leaders and followers in Nigeria, we have greatly sinned and equally contributed to the rot we are experiencing and crying against presently. The problems of Nigeria are traceable to the failure of the Church among other causes. Let us therefore go to God in genuine repentance over our personal and Church sins (Num. 22:34; Josh 7:20; 2 Sam. 12:13) before we begin to contemplate proffering solutions to the problems of our nation.

The Church in Nigeria has long lost her honour, respect and the dread of her by others which she once enjoyed. A time was when the words of the scripture in Deuteronomy chapter 2 verse 25 were true concerning Christians in Nigeria:

*“This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee, and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee”.*

We were dreaded and feared in the past, not because of our number, edifices, vestments, education, but because of our godly, righteous disposition on every matter. Today, anything goes for a good number of Christians out there in the public sphere, whether they be ministers or Church members. Why is it that with the rise in our number as Christians, our education, big church buildings, etc., we are not respected or dreaded anymore? Should these advantages not be intimidating enough to those who have made themselves our foes? Unfortunately, they appear not to be moved or carried away by these. In fact, they are eagerly looking forward to the day our big buildings will be converted to other non-church uses. After all, they have achieved that in places like North Africa and Turkey and rather than be dreaded and feared, church leaders (pastors, priests) and members are publicly disgraced in some parts of this country, gruesomely murdered and our places of worship mindlessly desecrated and destroyed; with the government not bothering to apprehend and penalise the perpetrators of these evils.

In all these happenings, it seems as if our God too has abandoned or forsaken us. God does not actually take pleasure in abandoning His people. It is not in His nature to do so. He will however be forced to do that if His people choose the path of rebellion or play harlotry before Him. God will distance Himself from anyone, group and even from His Church if they choose to compromise His set standards. We should not forget the scripture that says: *“Whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him”* (Eccl. 10:8).

Each time the people of God break the hedge of His protection around them through sin, they expose themselves to His wrath which manifests against them in a number of ways:

- (1) He could decide to incite the leadership against the people as He moved David to conduct a census of Israel and Judah when His anger was kindled against Israel because of their sins against Him. He was to later punish the nation of Israel because of this step by David. (2 Sam. 24:1-25). He considered the census exercise by David as sin. Could God be inciting our leaders in Nigeria to embark on wrong steps against the people and the church because of our evil ways?
- (2) God could decide to send famine on the land for a period. In Nigeria today, famine is being experienced in a number of ways: Hunger and starvation, high cost of food items, poor exchange rate of the Naira against other national currencies, non-payment of workers' salaries and pension of retired officers leading to hunger and untimely death on the part of the victims, lack of jobs for our young school leavers, collapse of

many companies/businesses as a result of unfavourable economic and security climate, mass exodus of our professionals to other nations for greener pastures thus weakening our local institutions.

- (3) He could send enemies against His people to invade, devastate and send them running away to other places for refuge and safety. Today, many Christian communities across the country have been sacked by Fulani herdsmen. Victims are now taking shelter in IDP camps while their ancestral homes are taken over and renamed. The government is silent about all these. Could God be possibly weakening our political leaders and strengthening the Fulani herdsmen and other bandits against us?
- (4) Lastly, God uses pestilence in the land against the people. This would normally devastate farmlands leading to food shortages, hunger and deaths. Could the Boko Haram fighters, Fulani cattle herders and other bandits presently ravaging our forests and farms and turning them into killing fields be the biting serpents and pests sent by God to punish us for our many wrong doings?

Members of our Armed Forces and Police have become so weak, disoriented, confused, fearful and vulnerable that they are no longer able to defend the people and territorial frontiers of Nigeria. This is reproachful! Truly, *“righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”* (Prov. 14:34). There is no gainsaying the fact that Nigeria and the Church in Nigeria are suffering from or reaping the wages of our unrighteous deeds.

How do we come out of our present woes and begin all over again to enjoy God's favour, acceptance, peace and protection?

- (1) We are to respond in personal repentance to God as earlier suggested. God's word assures us of His forgiveness: *“I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin”* (Psalm 32:5).
- (2) Politicians and Civil Society Groups are busy making all kinds of calls –restructuring of the Nation, Sovereign National Conference, devolution of power to the states and regions, etc.; the Church on her part should be convening a united **Solemn Assembly**, a corporate fast where every Christian is led to sincerely rend their hearts and not just their garments for our sins and the sins of all Nigerians. This should be so well planned and coordinated such that (where possible) no true part of the Body of Christ in this country is permitted to go against it.

We should be so committed to it as the people of Nineveh did and averted God's wrath upon their city as a result of their pride and Jonah's pronouncement of judgment against them- Jonah 3:10.

We should do this so as to avert the looming destruction of this nation or its falling into the hands of the ungodly, and Christians totally wiped out just like Esther and the Jewish community of Shushan fasted for 3 days and nights and the planned annihilation of the Jews was averted.

When God's people pray in humility, unity and righteousness, great results are bound to follow “... *but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him*” (Acts 12:1-5);

If there is tremendous power when two people pray, what about the whole assembly of God's people? Read Acts 4:24-31.

*“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”* (2 Chron. 7:14).

- (3) As Christians, let us begin to be concerned, care for and identify with one another in our times of travails and persecutions instead of keeping quiet because we are not immediately on the receiving end of the attacks, or because those going through such unsavoury experiences do not belong to our particular denomination or Church “family.”
- (4) Let us begin to explore some strategic action plans to counter and destabilise the wicked plans of the blood-thirsty and expansionist terrorists already in our midst.  
We can begin to go into some form of espionage activities, not with the aim of engaging in any form of violent operations but strictly for information and intelligence-gathering which will enable us combat their evil activities.
- (5) As Church leaders, let us be louder in our advocacy with governments within and outside this country and with other relevant Bodies using every legitimate tool – press conferences, TV/Radio debates/interviews, press releases and other means of communicating our concerns about the present state of affairs in our country.



### **Conclusion/Prayer**

May the Lord grant us true repentance, a time of amendment of life; have mercy on His Church, forgive our sins and the sins of our nation Nigeria, both those of our leaders and citizens alike.

May the Lord bring healing and restoration to our land; bless us with godly leaders and defend us from the activities and operations of every enemy of the Church and our nation and grant us victory over them in Jesus' name.

May He bring every counsel of the heathen and enemies of this nation and the Church of God to naught, and make their devices of none effect (Psalm 33:10; Isaiah 8:10). May the Lord continue to build and strengthen His Church in Nigeria to do valiantly and tread down every gate of hell that seeks to prevail against it (Psalm 60:12; Matthew 16:18); and the blessing of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be among us and remain with us always – Amen.

Thank you for listening. May the Lord bless you and continually reward all your sacrifices made in His Name. Long live Diocese of Evo! To God be the glory!

**†Innocent U. Ordu, JP**  
Evo

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## **CHURCH OF NIGERIA** **(Anglican Communion)**

**THE MOST REV'D HENRY C. NDUKUBA, MA, BD, MA (Ed.)**  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD AT ALL SAINTS' CATHEDRAL CHURCH, ONITSHA, DIOCESE ON THE NIGER, ANAMBRA STATE, FROM MONDAY, 8TH TO FRIDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 2021**

**PREAMBLE:** The Standing Committee meeting of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) which was held from Monday, 8th to Friday, 12th February, 2021, was presided over by the Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), accompanied by his wife and National President of the Mothers' Union, Mrs. Angela Eberechukwu Ndukuba, attended by 153 Bishops, 155 Clergy, 72 Lay delegates and 241 delegates of the Mothers' Union. The Standing Committee received Guests at its Opening Ceremony, including the Governor of Anambra State, His Excellency, Chief Dr. Willie Obiano, represented by His Excellency Dr Nkem Okeke, the Deputy Governor; His Excellency Peter Obi, former Governor of Anambra State, Her Excellency Dame Virgy Etiaba, first female Governor in Nigeria and other prominent dignitaries.

**THEME:** **COSTLY COMMITMENT: THE IMPERATIVE IN FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST (LUKE 9: 23 - 27):** The Theme is a reminder to the faithful that the calling of the church and its members requires absolute and sacrificial commitment devoid of any distraction in following Christ. This calls for total submission to the Word of God and leading of the Holy Spirit, requiring God's people to deepen their personal and corporate commitment to the Lord Jesus in such a way that their lives are totally rooted and built up in Christ. Believers are reminded to be mindful of their calling not to compromise their faith and not to allow the pleasures of the present time to distract them from following in the will of God. This is important in the age in which Christianity now appears to be a bread and butter issue, especially given the prevailing Prosperity Gospel of our day. The Christian calling requires commitment in carrying the Cross whatever that may bring. The present day situation in Nigeria is frail and Christians are called to be dedicated and committed to their calling without fail.

**COVID-19 AND PUBLIC HEALTH:** The Church commiserates with those who have lost their loved ones to the deadly global pandemic and commends the courageous health workers attending to infected members of the public at great risk to their own health. The Standing Committee appeals to the Government to exercise strict control over the importation of vaccines to avoid adulteration and racketeering of the product. The Church encourages the citizens to comply with



Government recommended actions at stemming the tide of the ravaging pandemic. It urges the Government to give serious attention to the health sector following the Pandemic that has exposed the weakness of the sector, in order to prepare for any unforeseen similar future occurrence.

**ENDSARS PROTESTS:** The Standing Committee laments the unfortunate hijack of the protests by hoodlums which resulted in the destruction of properties, untold hardship on the masses, and sadly, loss of lives. It commends the efforts of some State Governments in establishing the Panel of Inquiry into the ENDSARS Protests, with Lagos showing a good example. It urges the Government to ensure that the Panel completes its Inquiry and the delivery of its report before the Lekki Gate is returned to its managers. It further calls that the handling of the ENDSARS protest should not become an opportunity for witch-hunting and blame game. Those who have been sanctioned for participating in the legitimate protest should be relieved of such actions such as the seizure of their international passports, while all Court orders must be respected and obeyed including the unfreezing of accounts of those linked with the protest as is befitting of modern democracy. It calls on Nigerians in general and members of the security agencies in particular to be responsible in the use of their positions in handling the Nigerian people.

**NIGERIA AND INCESSANT INDUSTRIAL ACTIONS:** The Standing Committee laments the incessant industrial actions that leave our tertiary institutions closed for a long period of time and thus disrupt their academic calendar. It calls for sincerity between Government and Union leaders, for agreements to be honoured and implemented, and for workers' welfare to receive adequate attention, so that the education of our youths, and indeed their future, is not jeopardized.

**INSECURITY:** The Church is concerned about the spate of attacks and insecurity that now characterize the Nigerian State. That the Fulani herdsmen operate with such arrogance and disregard for their host communities and the safety of people in particular is a red flag, indicative of the precarious state of the nation. It commends the Federal Government for finally yielding to the yearnings of the masses in appointing new Service Chiefs. It calls on the new Service Chiefs to focus on eradicating the insurgency and bring lasting peace to the land. The church appeals to all and sundry to work together to support the efforts of the Service Chiefs in dealing with all forms of insecurity in our land and ensure the safety of the precious lives of the citizens.

**SECOND NIGER BRIDGE:** The Church commends the Federal Government on the construction of the Second Niger Bridge, whilst appealing for speed to see that the work is complete in record time.

**APAPA WHARF:** The Church notes with utmost concern the gridlock at the Apapa Port with its untold hardship on the people. It calls on the government to speedily reopen other ports and make functional to reduce the pressure on Apapa Port.



**NATIONAL IDENTITY NUMBER:** The Standing Committee notes with utmost concern the difficult circumstances under which Nigerians are being asked to register for their National Identity Number in a way that the protocols of the Pandemic are being compromised. It appeals to the Government to always ensure that such programmes are planned with consideration for the people so that their human dignity and health are not compromised. Such things should always be done with little difficulty for the Nigerian people while there should be many centres so that people are not subject to strenuous movements and travelling before they can register.

**ECONOMY:** The Church is worried about the bad state of the Nigerian economy with its attending harsh effects on the citizens. It recognizes the Government's efforts at helping those at the lower level of the economic ladder through its survival funds scheme. It appeals to the Government to do more to improve the national economy by diversifying and creating more employment opportunities for the teeming population of its youths, for a long lasting impact. Governments at all levels should provide robust and hitch free enabling environments for small and medium enterprises to thrive.

**ELECTION:** The Standing Committee calls on Christians and citizens of Anambra State to take active part in the electioneering of the forthcoming gubernatorial election. It encourages believers to play an active but responsible role in the election. It calls on Nigerians to register in any party of their choice and be involved in party activities from the grassroots to national levels.

**CONCLUSION:** The Standing Committee calls on all Christians to show dedication and personal commitment that is both sacrificial and genuine, looking beyond self-gain that now characterizes the common approach to faith. This manifests in both Nigerian politics and Church as people have become more concerned with selfish motives and corrupt practices.

**The Ven. Dr. G. Paul Dajur,**  
General Secretary, Church of Nigeria.

**The Most Rev'd Dr. A. B. Lamido,**  
Dean, Church of Nigeria.

**The Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba, MA, BD, MA (Ed)**  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria





## CHURCH OF NIGERIA (Anglican Communion)

**THE MOST REV'D HENRY C. NDUKUBA**, MA, BD, MA (Ed.)  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

### **PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM MONDAY, 8TH TO FRIDAY, 12TH FEBRUARY, 2021, AT THE ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL CHURCH, ONITSHA, IN THE DIOCESE ON THE NIGER, ANAMBRA STATE**

Dear People of God,

We bring you greetings in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;  
Amen.

The Standing Committee meeting of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) held from Monday, 8th to Friday, 12th February, 2021 at the All Saints Cathedral Church, Onitsha, Diocese on the Niger, Anambra State. The theme was, "COSTLY COMMITMENT: THE IMPERATIVE IN FOLLOWING CHRIST" (LUKE 9:23).

The idea that God uses ordinary, broken human beings as vessels of his grace, and delights in us is not only awe-inspiring, it is something we must be thankful to Him for. However, Christ demands genuine commitment from these vessels and those who are his followers. This is not possible without the willingness to pay some price. The theme and the text of the Standing Committee addressed this issue.

The Text drawn from Luke 9, a very rich chapter in the New Testament. There we see Jesus Christ sending the twelve Disciples on Mission. He CALLED them and GAVE them power and authority over demons and to cure/heal diseases. Then He SENT them to preach the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He also instructed them on what was expected of them. Jesus Christ said to them "take nothing for the journey". Stay in the home that receives you. Expect rejection from the people but know that there are consequences for rejecting the Gospel and those who serve God. Jesus Christ demanded, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" – Luke 9:23. There are three major demands that arise from this. Firstly, the desire to follow shall be a response of a whole life from the heart; secondly is the demand "Take up his cross daily" and third demand for Total costly commitment is His call, "Follow me." To this end we cannot relent in our efforts to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth in His name. May the Lord himself help us to be faithful at this.

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The Church of Nigeria Missionary Society (CNMS) is being repositioned to assist the Church in achieving this. It will be built into both a Mission Agency and Institution. Her core mandate will be “to evangelize, disciple and plant churches among the identified unreached peoples. Recruit, train, and send Missionaries in the country and areas of need across the continent and the world”. The thrust of this Mission will largely centre around African countries but also to other parts of the world. Our desire is that the Church of Nigeria shall intentionally stir up the Universal Church unto World Mission and take the lead in preparing the Church for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The youth are not left out. A taskforce on the Children and Youth Mission of the Church of Nigeria was inaugurated during the Divine Commonwealth Conference in November, 2020. The aim is to galvanise a Children and Youth Mission that will mobilize our young people to be committed to the Word, Prayer, Worship, Witness and Outreach. We desire that God will raise from amongst them, a Joshua Generation that God will use to reach the rest of that generation for the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Maiden Youth Mission Conference will hold from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The Theme is *LIVING WITH A PURPOSE (ROM. 8:27-30)*. Prominent servants of God will be ministering to the Youth. We request for your prayers and support to make this conference a success. There will be Pre-Conference Regional Mobilization Meetings. It is estimated that four Thousand Youths will attend and we are budgeting N10,000.00 per person in running the Conference. We enjoin all to pray along, while Dioceses and individuals are encouraged to sponsor delegates.

St. Matthias Collection continues to be a great source of funding for helping to grow some of our Dioceses and the different bodies that are beneficiaries in driving the work of mission in their different contexts. We appreciate the Dioceses for their contribution and urge every member of the Church to participate in the same. We plead with Dioceses to faithfully remit their collections. The next collection would be on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2021. The Bishops during the Retreat at Agbarha Otor resolved that in the meantime, the St. Matthias Fund will be used to meet the needs of the weaker Dioceses, Organizations and Institutions of the Church of Nigeria. Education and Human Development also remain integral parts of the Mission of the Church. Dioceses and Provinces are encouraged to continue and expand their work and investment in education at all levels from Nursery to Tertiary education. The Ph.D Scholarship programme, which is funded by the St Matthias Collection, will continue as a way of training the Clergy and empowering future leaders of the Church and Society.

A new constitution was approved at the last General Synod in September, 2020. It is now in use and we encourage Diocese and Provinces to enlighten the parishioners on the 2020 Constitution of the Church of Nigeria in conjunction with their legal officers for easy understanding of its contents and workings.



On the national scene, we want to continue to call on the Church not to shrink from the demand of Jesus Christ in the face of the unabated attack and destruction of human life and property that we are currently experiencing in our nation. The abduction, wanton killings, and other evil acts are glaring. There seems to be no respect for human dignity anymore as human lives are terminated indiscriminately almost daily in Nigeria by fellow human beings. We must seek the face of God concerning this despicable act of man's inhumanity to man in our nation and we must continue to trust God to raise a leadership after His own heart for our nation.

We counsel that we must all perform our civic duties by ensuring that as the General Elections come up in 2023, we see it as divine opportune time for the citizens to exercise their right to choose their leaders. Politics is God given process in the ordering of His world and society. Politics is not dirty as has been perceived by some people in the past, even though some people have hijacked the political processes for their personal agenda. We encourage all citizens to be involved in the political process of our States and Nation. Christians should register in any Party of their choice and be involved in the activities of the Party from the Ward level to the National.

There is beauty in unity. Jesus passionately prayed that His followers would be one (John 17:21). Therefore, there is a need to move as a National Church in our use of the tools that have been provided for leading worship amongst us. Dioceses are encouraged to use of the Church of Nigeria Book of Common Prayers; the Hymnal; the Bible Study Outline and other publications of this Church. We encourage our Regional Translators to commence full translations of these publications into Nigerian languages for the use of our people. Therefore, we must endeavour to see that our growth and expansion is not as a result of conflict. During the General Synod in September, 2020, the existing Moratorium on the creation of Dioceses, whether Full-fledged or Missionary Diocese, was extended by three years. This will be reviewed at the next General Synod. A Committee has been put in place to set the modalities and requirements for the creation of Dioceses. This Committee will submit their report in the next September Standing Committee meeting so that the guidelines will be clearly spelt out.

On the global stage, the Coronavirus continues to ravage the world, especially with the reported cases of its mutation, and different parts of the world announcing a second wave as cases surge. The Church of God must rise up to these challenges spiritually in fasting and prayer, not leaving out socio-educational actions. More so, the poor health care delivery in our country offers us a great opportunity for Compassionate Ministry. The Church needs to play more key roles in the Health Care delivery of this Nation. To this end, we urge our Dioceses and Provinces to establish Colleges of Nursing and Midwifery and Health Technology. The training of health professionals must be a Mission to rescue our Health Care and nurture the Youth in professions that will put them in service to humanity in or outside of Nigeria.



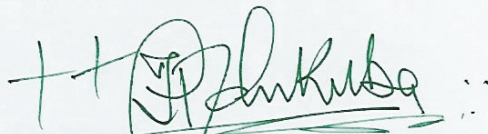
We commiserate with all who lost their dear ones. In the period under review we lost some fathers in God namely, the late Rt. Rev. Jacob Ajetumobi (retired Bishop of Ibadan South Diocese), Rt. Rev. Foluso Taiwo (Diocese of Oke Osun), Rt. Rev. Godson Echefu (retired bishop of Ideato) and Lady Grace Iwuagwu (Wife of retired Bishop of Aba). We commiserate with the family of the late Dr. G.T.N. Ajakpo (the Galadima of Lokoja) the former Chairman of the CON Relief Committee and member of the ACNN Governing Board, and some other Church officials in our Dioceses. May God comfort their families. May the souls of the faithful departed rest in perfect peace.

We thank the Rt. Rev. Dr. Owen and Dr. Mrs. Elsie Nwokolo and the Diocese on the Niger for hosting the Standing Committee. God will reward our members and bless the Diocese. We also appreciate the Most Rev Dr. Alex and Mrs Martha Ibezim for their support during the Standing Committee. On behalf of the Church of Nigeria, we express our profound gratitude to the Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas and Mama Nkasiobi Okoh for the bold and godly leadership they sacrificially gave to the Church of God. Their legacies will be sustained and in their retirement they will enjoy robust health. We thank all our retired fathers in faith who were present and assure them of our prayers and support. We also appreciate all our Committees and Taskforces for your labour of love for the Church of God.

As we conclude, we need to remind ourselves again that genuine COMMITMENT to the Lord and the pursuit of kingdom growth must of necessity cost the true disciple something. As true disciples, we must recognise that though we live in the world, we have been called not to conform to the standard of the world (Rom 12:2) but as people with the citizenship of Heaven (Philippians 3:20) we are called to set our minds on things above, and be transformed by the renewal of our minds (Col. 3:1-2; Rom. 12.1). God's goal is for us as disciples to be made into the image of Christ our Master, this is only possible if we are willing to deny ourselves and take up our cross daily to follow Him.

May the grace of God be with you all; Amen.

Your Most Reverend Father in God,



**The Most Rev'd Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba, MA, BD, MA (Ed)**  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



# CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

**THE MOST REV'D HENRY C. NDUKUBA**, ma, bd ma(Ed.)  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 2021 ANNUAL EPISCOPAL RETREAT, CHURCH OF NIGERIA, ANGLICAN COMMUNION, HELD AT IBRU ECUMENICAL CENTRE, AGBARHA-OTOR, DELTA STATE FROM MONDAY, 4TH TO FRIDAY, 8TH JANUARY, 2021**

## INTRODUCTION

The House of Bishops of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met under the guidance and protection of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of **The Most Rev'd Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba**, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria, for their Annual Retreat at Ibru Ecumenical Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State from January 4-8, 2021. One hundred and forty-one (141) serving Bishops were present. The retreat presented opportunity for fellowship together in prayer, worship, and learning. Bishops addressed their minds to the issue of "**Servant Leadership: The imperative of Jesus Christ**" taken from Matt. 20:20-28. The keynote address was delivered by **The Most Rev'd Dr. Joseph Akinfenwa**, Bishop of the Diocese of Ibadan, while the Bible Study was led by **The Rt. Rev'd Dr. Blessing Enyindah**, Bishop of the Diocese of Ikwere. Goodwill messages were received from former Primes of the Church, **The Most Rev'd Peter J. Akinola** and **The Most Rev'd Nicholas D. Okoh**.

Rising from the retreat, the House of Bishops considers the theme very apt and timely and therefore:

- (i) enjoins leaders to see themselves as servants who should be humble, sacrificial and devoted in their privileged position of serving humanity.
- (ii) acknowledges that position is God given, and therefore, leaders should be faithful to the trust committed to them.
- (iii) calls on leaders to pursue integrity rather than material wealth which has promoted corruption, nepotism and incompetence, thereby impoverishing the people.
- (iv) expresses concern over the current trend in Christendom where primordial and selfish interest are promoted above Christ's Kingdom priorities.
- (v) counsel Christian leaders to always do a thorough examination about their behavior using the word of God as the manual of life.
- (vi) appeals to leaders to render selfless service as a prime mover of influence rather than indiscriminate use of power.



## **MESSAGE TO THE NATION**

### **ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF UNIVERSITIES (ASUU)**

The Flouse of Bishops commends the Federal Government and the Academic Staff Union of Universities for reaching an agreement leading to the calling off of the industrial action which lasted for over eight months.

The House also implores both parties to prevent future ASUU strike actions by showing commitment to the implementation of agreement reached and by being proactive in engaging in early purposeful dialogue to avoid extreme action which are detrimental to our Educational system and the future of our children.

## **CREATION OF JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

The Retreat commends the Federal Government's initiative to create 774,000 jobs in the 774 Local Government areas in the Country, as a right decision considering the huge challenges of insecurity and uncertainties associated with the increasing rate of youth unemployment. However, the bishops warn that the job opportunities should not be used as compensation for party patronage, adding that it is Government initiative to help ameliorate the suffering of Nigerians irrespective of party affiliation, sex, tribe or religion. Furthermore, the House of Bishops encourages the Federal Government to use this initiative to jump start a more comprehensive job creation programme to solve the problem of youth unemployment in the country.

## **COVID 19 PANDEMIC**

The Retreat acknowledges the reality of Corona Virus and its multiple attendant effects on humanity. It also commiserates with families of those who have lost their loved ones and offers prayers for quick recovery of those who are hospitalized. The Retreat enjoins the Church and the general public to always observe all COVID 19 protocols and further appeals to Nigerian Government to ensure that the Vaccines being brought to the country are healthy and suitable for Nigerians.

## **HIKE IN ELECTRICITY TARIFFS**

The Retreat notes that, in the light of the prevailing economic realities in the country and the suffering of Nigerians, Government should reconsider its position on the recent hike in electricity tariff.

## **INSECURITY**

The Retreat notes with grave concern that there is nowhere in Nigeria that is currently safe, either from the paths to the highways, from the home to the school, from the street to the market place, or from the office to the farm due to the unabating killings by the Boko Haram insurgency, the untamed Fulani Militia attacks, kidnappings, banditry, armed-robbery and ritual killings. The Retreat, therefore, calls on Government to tighten up its security noose so as to guarantee the security of life and property in the country.

### **PLACES OF WORSHIP DESTROYED BY TERRORISTS**

The House of Bishops observes with great concern that since the insurgence by Islamic fundamentalists and other militias, many monumental buildings and structures have been destroyed. While Government has intervened in the reconstruction of many structures destroyed by these unpatriotic elements, many Churches are still left in ruin. The House, therefore, calls on Government to rebuild those Churches to provide a spiritual fulcrum-place of gathering for Christians in the affected areas.

### **ENDSARS PROTESTS**

The Retreat notes with grave concern, the struggle for survival of an average Nigeria which triggered the National Mass protest called #ENDSARS and condemns the brutality of the military on harmless youths, some of whom were carrying the National flag. It also notes with dismay that the protest, which initially was peaceful became violent because it was hijacked by hoodlums and this led to loss of lives and inestimable economic losses. While commiserating with the families of the victims, the house demands for the immediate implementation of the requests as contained in the document; “Taking back our country” which includes, among others, reformation of the Nigeria Police, eradication of all forms of corruption, oppression, bad governance, expensive lifestyle of public office holders, etc.

### **RAPE**

The House considers rape as the sign of a wide spiritual chasm, a deep moral decay and a monster inflicting sexual assault on innocent Nigerians. The Retreat joins the rest of well-meaning Nigerians to condemn the increasing wave of this menace in our society, and therefore, as a panacea implores Government to quickly consider the reintroduction of Moral and Religious Education in our public schools and ensure appropriate punishment for culprits.

### **NATIONAL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (NIN)**

The House of Bishops welcomes the idea of the on-going linking of SIM with the NIN of individual subscribers but cautions that the process must not bring untold hardship and stress to the people. Therefore, the House calls on the Federal Government, its relevant agencies and stakeholders, to create a simplified platform, using modern technology/approach to help Nigerians. Meanwhile, the Bishops call on Government to extend the expiration date to enable all and sundry take advantage of the exercise.

  
**The Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba,**  
*Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria*



# CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

**THE MOST REV'D HENRY C. NDUKUBA**, ma,b,d,ma(Ed.)

Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

**THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD AT ITS SECRETARIAT, ST MATTHIAS' HOUSE, GUDU DISTRICT, ABUJA FROM MONDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> TO FRIDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020**

**PREAMBLE**

The 13th General Synod of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), which was held from Monday, 21st September to Friday, 25th September, 2020 was presided over by the **Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba**, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), accompanied by his wife and President of the Mothers' Union, **Mrs. Angela Eberechukwu Ndukuba**, attended by 161 Bishops, 171 Clergy, 191 Lay delegates and 191 delegates of the Mothers' Union. The General Synod received Goodwill Messages from former Primates of the Church, namely The Most Rev'd Dr Peter Jasper Akinola and The Most Rev'd Dr Nicholas D. Okoh. It also received many distinguished guests, including the Secretary to the Government of the Federation represented by Mr. Olakunle Fasina; the Governor of Taraba State, Arc. Darius Ishaku, represented by the Bishop of Jalingo, The Rt. Rev'd Nedison Foreman; former Head of State, General Dr Yakubu Gowon and General T. Y. Danjuma, both represented by Professor Jerry Gana; Her Excellency, Mrs Adejoke Orelope Adefulire, and other eminent dignitaries.

**THEME OF SYNOD: The Priority of God (Matt. 6:33)**

The Theme of the Synod was The Priority of God, a further elucidation of the focus of the Primacy of the Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba which had been declared as The Decade of the Reign of God. In his maiden address to the General Synod of the Church, the Primate calls on Christians to give priority to seeking God, knowing Him more and proclaiming Jesus Christ faithfully until He returns in glory and power to judge the world. This entails seeking the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, abandoning all forms of distraction and living godly life that is characterized by discipline and the fruit of the Spirit amidst the corrupt, depraved and perverse society.

Synod further calls on believers to be mindful of all forms of Satanic ambush and distractions including material possessions, harmful traditional cultures and worldly philosophies and rules. It calls on all to make God's priority their own priority despite the cost of its pursuit, and to be committed to the re-evangelization of the world and the discipleship of believers.

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**ST MATTHIAS HOUSE:**

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It finally reaffirms its vision as a church that is resolute and committed to being a Bible based Church that shall not tolerate homosexuality and all sexual aberrations, and also will not accommodate or support ungodly practices.

#### **THE CHURCH AND COVID-19**

The Synod is grateful to God for the opportunity to meet following the gradual easing of the lockdown, occasioned by the Global Pandemic that has killed close to a Million people worldwide. It sympathizes with people who have lost their loved ones within Nigeria and all over the world, while intensifying prayers for those who are infected worldwide for recovery and the return of normalcy. It, however, cautions all to take the Pandemic seriously by maintaining the recommended precautions to stem further spread of the disease.

It appreciates the efforts of both the Government and the Church in minimizing the negative impacts of the lockdown by offering palliatives and care to the people at the height of the Pandemic. Synod is disappointed at the manner Covid-19 was also exploited and appeals to Nigerians to desist from taking undue advantage of people at every opportunity because of monetary gains.

#### **THE CAMA LAW**

Synod appreciates the importance of the Company and Allied Matters Act 2020 to regulate the appropriate sectors of the society and to maintain probity in all incorporated and non-incorporated bodies in Nigeria. It, however, views with curiosity and grave concern the excessive power allocated to the commission as subject to mischief and abuse. A situation whereby the commission can unilaterally suspend church leadership or group of Trustees and appoint independent managers is itself an abuse and weakness of due process. It calls, therefore, for an immediate review of the law to take care of the concerns being expressed by the relevant groups. However, Synod challenges church groups to avoid corrupt practices and be open and show due accountability in its operations. This is the way to show the light to the world.

#### **REMOVAL OF OIL SUBSIDY, INFLATION AND POVERTY**

The removal of oil subsidy, increase in electricity tariff, and tenement rates at the same time in the current socio-economic climate can only be an indication of Government's insensitivity to the plight of the citizenry. This has further increased inflation rate and the suffering of the common man and is making life more unbearable for the teeming population of the unemployed in Nigeria. To increase stamp duty and tenement rate for pensioners whose monthly pensions are not regular and the largely unemployed masses is ill-conceived and a recipe to sending some people early to their graves.

Synod calls on the Government to, as a matter of urgency, revisit these actions and take urgent steps at reversing their decision. It calls for concerted efforts at industrialization of the country as a major solution to the high rate of



unemployment and sufferings. Government should be mindful that anger and frustration are building up in the land.

### **RAPE AND DRUG ABUSE**

The alarming rate of the twin crimes of rape and drug and substance abuse is a deep cause of worry for all. The rate of drug consumption is worrisome as it goes on to lead to further perpetuation of crime including rape. The Synod observes that the increase is not unconnected with desperation among perpetrators of the crimes. Government should do something about this urgently while the agency vested with the responsibility to deal with rape cases should employ the best practice of reducing this horrific crime.

The Synod calls on the teeming population of Nigerian youths not to be hopeless by resorting to using drug as a way to deal with the frustration of the prevailing unemployment and economic situation. Such acts could only destroy their lives and take their future away completely. The youths should exercise hope and trust in God, who will surely not abandon them.

### **INSECURITY**

The Synod laments the increasing level of insecurity and associated crimes in Nigeria. It calls for an urgent effort to synergize by the various levels of government and layers of security Agencies to fight against insecurity that is almost overtaking every part of the country. It calls for respect for the laws enacted by states to ensure the security of lives and property of their citizens and that this should not be undermined by any political consideration. Security is too important to be subsumed under political game. It calls for a radical overhauling of the security architecture, to allow community policing and other security initiatives to compliment the government effort. The state of insecurity is becoming so hopeless that one is curious as to whether Government has a reason for allowing the current insecurity to persist.

### **CORRUPTION AND ITS DANGEROUS DIMENSION**

It is a matter of grave concern to see the new dimensions that corruption is taking today, even by those who are expected to fight it. Synod calls on Nigerians at every level, especially those in positions of responsibility, to show sincerity and commitment by avoiding corruption and abuse of power in whatever dimension it seems to show up. It calls on those who are given the responsibility of fighting corruption to do so without favouritism or any ulterior motive and abuse of their position. Synod calls for families and communities to prevail on their representatives in government to shun corrupt practices.

### **NIGERIA AND OIL COMMONWEALTH**

Nigeria is naturally endowed by God, and this cannot be overstated. Synod is disturbed that in spite of this, the Nigerian masses have constantly suffered all forms of economic hardship in the midst of these provisions. It is disturbed by the incessant strike actions by some national bodies, including ASUU, owing to

lack of appropriate financial provision. It regrets this situation whilst many individuals are enjoying and benefiting immensely from our common (oil) wealth. It calls on government to revisit the issuance of oil block to individuals at the expense of collective ownership. It canvasses the allocation of specific oil blocks for the purposes of solving the perennial problems and instability being experienced in various sectors of our country, especially in education among others.

### **CHURCH OF NIGERIA AND OVERSEAS MISSION**

Finally, The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) reaffirms its commitment to its Overseas Mission and partners. It shall continue to review its policy to ensure that it is in line with its vision.

### **CONCLUSION**

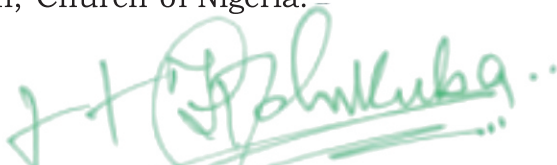
Finally, we urge everyone to make God's priority your priority by determining to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you as well. (Matthew 6:33)



**Ven. Dr. G. Paul Dajur**  
General Secretary, Church of Nigeria.



**The Most Rev'd Dr. A. B. Lamido,**  
Dean, Church of Nigeria.



**The Most Rev'd Henry C. Ndukuba,**  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



# CHURCH OF NIGERIA

## (Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REV'D HENRY C. NDUKUBA, <sup>ma,b,d</sup>, MA(Ed)  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

### PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE THIRTEENTH GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM MONDAY, 21ST TO FRIDAY, 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2020, AT ST. MATTHIAS' HOUSE, CHURCH OF NIGERIA NATIONAL SECRETARIAT, GUDU, ABUJA

Beloved in Christ,

Greetings in the name of the eternal Trinity: Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The 13th General Synod of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) was held from Monday, 21st to Friday, 25th September, 2020 at St. Matthias' House, Church of Nigeria National Secretariat, Gudu, FCT, Abuja. The theme was **The Priority of God** (Matthew 6:33).

We are indeed very grateful to our Almighty God for the grace and privilege of gathering as a people despite the realities of the time in which we live. The COVID 19 Pandemic and the subsequent lockdown have tried our faith, both as a Church and as individuals. We thank God for His protection that has preserved us, giving us a rare opportunity to refocus our lives and make the most of the time.

Jesus points out the priority of God, which is the kingdom and its righteousness. This should be sought with all our heart and soul, and should take our time and resources. It is, therefore, imperative and a timely reminder for Bishops, Clergy and Laity of our church, to review our lives and actions in this direction, so that nothing else in the world will struggle with the place of Kingdom essentials in our lives. We need to look up to Jesus Christ, who came to mediate salvation to humanity. He is the righteousness of God, and when we accept Him as Lord of our lives, He becomes the standard of our living. Jesus Christ embodies the kingdom of God such that wherever His rule is received and acknowledged, there is the kingdom. We must, therefore, labour not to be distracted from this priority.

After our presentation on the 25th March, 2020 as the 5th Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate, We, under God declared our tenure **The Decade of the Reign of God**. This is because, the Gospel we proclaim, the ministry we exercise and our prayer are all focused on the kingdom of God, thereby making it imperative for His will and purpose to be done in His world and His church. This decade will therefore be dedicated to growing the church in faith, membership and engaging in pragmatic evangelism. Mission, Evangelism and Discipleship therefore will remain core to the ministry of our church. We implore everyone to be involved as our church is broad enough to accommodate everyone who is called and ready to serve the purpose of God. It is also our candid desire, towards a sustainable holistic growth of our church, to raise a kingdom thrust of **Five Billion (N5b) Naira Mission Fund**. Our church needs to grow and ensure a stronger National Church. This will help to carry through the mission and ministry of the church, sustain her institutions, so that our church will continue to grow in every aspect of her life. We implore every member of our church to pray along with us and participate

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actively to realize this vision to the glory of God. Meanwhile, we have placed moratorium on the creation of Dioceses, whether full-fledged or missionary, in order to consolidate the existing Dioceses. This will be reviewed by the next General Synod.

Beloved, we have sincerely observed the challenges faced by some Dioceses. It is obvious that the growth of our church can only come when we decide to make sacrifices. The unity of our church is paramount for our existence. We, therefore, need to identify the danger signs that can lead to breakdown of peace among us, and work together to resolve our differences. The provisions of the Constitution and Canons must not be thwarted for our interest or convenience. This Church belongs to God, and it is not right for any group of people to take laws into their hands. We must allow the priority of God to take precedence. Join us therefore to pray for the peace, unity and growth of our church.

We are grateful to God for the gift of the youth and children ministry of our church. We have also observed various challenges faced by these ministries and are committed to addressing these challenges. There is need for the children and youth ministry of our church to be turned into a mission with intentional discipleship as a core task. We call on all members of our church to wake up to the realities of this challenge with a sincere desire to empower our young people spiritually. We further appeal to the well placed members of our Church to empower the youths economically and help them out of poverty, and unemployment, as an idle mind is a devil's workshop. This will help them channel their energy to profitable ventures that will secure their future. We also call on all our people to be mindful of the dangers of these evil times in which we live. There is an increase in the incidence of rape, murder and sexually-based violence. This has been linked to the increasing trends of drug abuse, cultism and other vices. There is need for all our members to be at alert, and help our youths not to take to evil life style because of hunger, hardship and unemployment.

We thank God for his protection and deliverance as we pass through the most trying times in recent human history. God is indeed our refuge and strength, an ever present help in time of trouble. He is indeed our hope for the unknown tomorrow. Our prayers are with our brothers and sisters who have passed through various experiences, and those who are still struggling with the severe effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic. We also remember those who are victims of kidnapping, armed robbery, rape and other losses of various kinds. We pray God, in his mercy and grace, to bring healing unto their troubled hearts.

We appreciate our Churches and Dioceses for your responses during the COVID 19 lockdown. You all prayed and supported the needy among us. Your generous contributions helped to cushion the effects on our brethren and other members of the society in these trying times. Let us continue to observe the NCDC COVID 19 protocols of regular washing of hands, wearing of face mask/shield, using of hand sanitizers, and maintaining of physical distance as our way to reduce the spread of this evil, while trusting God for perfect solution.

We shall continue to bear one another's burden, as we sincerely respond to our tradition of making contributions towards Relief Funds, St. Matthias' Day Collections, Ajayi Crowther Projects and GAFCON Support. This will help us towards our sustainable growth as a Church. We commend those who have responded well for their sincere efforts, while observing the downslide in the contributions of some Dioceses. We appeal to all for better performance in the future. This will help us to achieve the vision we have set for ourselves unto God's glory in this decade of the reign of God.



We are grateful to God for the success and testimonies recorded so far in the Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON). This year's edition will hold from 16th to 20th November, 2020, with the theme: **We are more than conquerors** (Romans 8:37). We are trusting and believing God for grace towards its planning and implementation as we contend with the challenges of COVID 19. We expect a greater attendance and participation.

We thank God and rejoice with you all for the blessings bestowed upon all of us, especially, the success of this 13th General Synod of our Church, held at our new National Secretariat (St. Matthias' House) and the very first in our Primacy. We pray God to reward all faithful labours towards the expansion of His kingdom. We congratulate all the newly Presented Archbishop and Consecrated Bishops of our Church as they serve God faithfully in their various Province and Dioceses respectively. We also commiserate with those who lost their loved ones, especially, the families of Rt Rev. Ayo Awosoga (Bishop of Ijebu Diocese), Rt Rev. Prof. Anthony Nkwoka (Retired Bishop of Niger West Diocese), Rt Rev. Samuel O. Ajani (Retired Bishop of Egba West Diocese), Dame Jane Efobi (wife of Retired Archbishop of Province of the Niger), Hon. Justice Kariby Whyte (former Chancellor of the Church of Nigeria). May the Lord grant them the comfort of His Holy Spirit.

We remain grateful to the good people of the Diocese of Abuja, for the successful hosting of the 13th General Synod of Our Church, despite the realities of the time. We thank the Clergy and their wives, the LOC and the entire Laity for their labours of love, and sincere efforts towards the overall success of the General Synod. May the Lord reward your sacrifices.

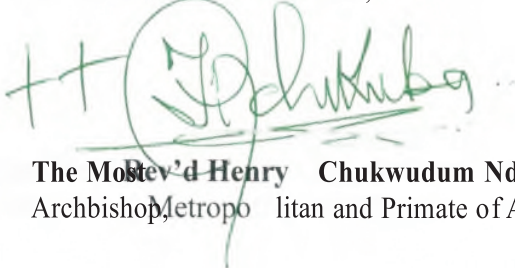
Beloved in Christ, we appreciate you for your prayers and support in this our first Synod as the Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate. We sincerely thank God for His enabling grace towards the journey in this **Decade of the Reign of God**. Indeed, God is calling his Church back in order that we will give ourselves to His Priority. As His people, we must know that anyone who does not have any compelling sense of Mission given by God will live an unfulfilled life.

In conclusion, we need to remind you that, worldly possessions and positions are best used to support the work of God's Kingdom, and help people realize their purpose in life. Material blessings are added blessings to human life, meant to be servant and not master of our lives.

Therefore, brethren, we charge you to "take no thought, saying "what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or what shall we wear, for the gentiles seek after these things, and your heavenly father knows that you need them all, but seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

May the Grace of God be with you all.

Yours in the service of Christ,



The Most Rev'd Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba, MA, BD, MA (ED)  
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



# CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) *Office of the General Secretary*

**The Rt. Hon. Ahmed Idris Wase,**  
The Chairman,  
House of Representatives Special Committee on Constitution  
Review,  
Room H331, HR White House, NASS Complex,  
Abuja.

Sir,

## **RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) FOR FURTHER ALTERATION OF THE 1999 CONSTITUTION (AS AMENDED).**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The objectives and principles of the Church of Nigeria\* (Anglican Communion) include but are not limited to evangelism and promotion of the knowledge of God and adherence to the teaching and examples of Jesus Christ; to promote Christian education values and morals, to assist in the care and welfare of the people particularly the poor, aged and the needy.

Embedded within these aims, objectives and principles are the inherent responsibilities as a Church to ensure that these ideals are promoted, championed among members of the Anglican Communion but within the larger spectrum of the society such that the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ can be sustained.

The forgoing being the basis for our response as a corporate entity and major stakeholder in the corporate governance of Nigeria to the call for Memorandum from the House of Representatives on the proposed review of the 1999 Constitution as amended. The views expressed below serve as our contributions:

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**GENERAL SECRETARY: THE VENERABLE GERSHINEN PAUL DAJUR, PhD**

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## 1) Federal Structure and Power Devolution:

Nigeria by arrangement is a Federation; meaning a group of States with a Central Government but independent in internal affairs.

Section 2 (1) and (2) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 underlines the fact that Nigeria is a Federation as well as a Republic meaning that the entity called Nigeria shall be public matter, ruled by representative of the people as against a Monarchy. However, the reality is to the contrary. There is therefore the need for more powers to be given to the State Government while the Centre should only co-ordinate National activities and control only the Military to maintain our territorial integrity.

A cursory look at the Exclusive Legislative list contained in the Second Schedule to the 1999 Constitution as amended indicates very extensive powers given to the Federal Legislature which can be revised to be conferred on the State legislature to ensure good and equitable development and governance across the country. It is therefore our recommendation that; we practice true Federalism in Nigeria.

Part II of the Second Schedule of the 1999 Constitution as Amended

Specifies in clear terms, the concurrent powers of the National Assembly to equally legislate <sup>any</sup> on the list. The irony of this arrangement is aptly captured in section 5 of the same Constitution which states that *"If law enacted by the House of Assembly of a State which is inconsistent with any law validly made by the National Assembly, the law made by the National Assembly shall prevail and that other law shall to the extent of the inconsistency, be void"*. It appears that the Constitution gave the State's power on one hand but further subjects those powers to the overriding powers of National Assembly to take precedence. The recommendation is that the Concurrent Legislative List in Part II should be exclusive for the State Houses of Assembly.



## **2) Public Revenue, Fiscal Federation and Revenue Allocation:**

We strongly recommend that States should be allowed to control their resources and pay a certain percentage to the Centre. This will help grass-root development and healthy competition amongst states in the area of Innovation and Revenue generation.

Item 62. On the Exclusive List, deals with Trade and Commerce, paragraphs (b) (c) (d) and (e) should be on the Concurrent Legislative List especially as the produce emanate primarily from the States and Local Government levels.

## **3) Nigeria Police and Nigerian Security Architecture:**

We recommend that in view of the ever growing insecurity in our Country and all over the world, that the issue of 'self-defense' should be properly spelt out in our Constitution in favour of the law abiding citizens. The issue of Gun license; purchase and control of Fire Arms should be liberalized. Reputable Citizens with good character and Community Leaders who can afford Gun; All licensed Paramilitary Organizations and Security Groups should be allowed to bear Arms for the defense of our society.

Police as an item should now be moved to the Concurrent Legislative List to support the desire by all for 'State Police'. This is more so that some conglomeration of States within the same geographical spheres are now establishing "Regional security outfits" with the support of their State houses of Assembly.

S. 214 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, provides that There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, known as the Nigeria Police Force, and subject to the provisions of this section, NO Other police force shall be established for the federation or any part therefore.

The emphasis on "NO" in our Constitution is to reinforce the fact that it is the Law in the Federation that only one Central Police Force is prescribed for the whole Nation comprising of 36 States and The Federal Capital Territory with a Population of about 200 million people.



The United Nations recommends one police officer for every 450 citizens. From available records there are currently about 371,800 police personnel in Nigeria meaning that we are yet to meet the United Nations threshold.

With an area of 923,768 Km<sup>2</sup> occupied by over 250 ethnic groups, it would be a herculean task for the Federal Police to adequately and effectively cover the whole Nation.

Secondly, the country is constituted by 36 federating states with each Governor purported to be the Chief Security Officer. It is therefore a mockery of some sort, when the so called Chief Security Officer does not have control over the Police saddled with the responsibility of ensuring the security of life and property.

Our Suggestion is that like the USA, every State should have her own Police Force unique to it and responsible to the Executive Governor of the State and the Chief Security Officer.

This will provide useful hands with in-depth knowledge of the terrain of each State and enhance improved security of lives and properties

The Federal Police if there will be any, will then look after items of common interest to the Federation

The Army should remain under the Federal Government to protect the territorial integrity of the Nation.

#### **4) Immunity:**

We recommend that 'Immunity Clause' should be reviewed in our constitution. It is this immunity that has engendered corruption and Executive recklessness in governance. With Immunity Clause, Leaders are allowed or given freehand to do major damage to the society and after leaving office, we only engage in a goose chase which is indeed a chase after the wind. By then, they would have amassed so much wealth to buy justice for themselves.

According to Section 308 of the 1999 Constitution which is here below reproduced, the President and his vice as well as

the the Governor of a State and his deputy are excluded from both civil or criminal proceedings during the pendency of their office. Except, where they are sued in civil matters in their official capacities.

Section 308 Subsection (1):

Notwithstanding, anything to the contrary in this Constitution but subject to Subsection (2) of this Section -

a. no civil or criminal proceedings shall be instituted or against a person to whom this section applies during his period of office;

b. a person to whom this section applies shall not be arrested or imprisoned during that period either in pursuance of the process of any court or otherwise; and

c. no process of any court requiring or compelling the appearance of a person to whom this section applies, shall be applied for or issued: Provided that in ascertaining whether any period of limitation has expired for the purposes of any proceedings against a person to whom this section applies, no account shall be taken of his period of office.

Subsection 2

The provisions of Subsection (1) of this Section shall not apply to civil proceedings against a person to whom this Section applies in his official capacity or to civil or criminal proceedings in which such a person is only a nominal party.

Subsection 3

This section applies to a person holding the office of President or Vice President, Governor or Deputy Governor; and the reference in this section to "period of office" is a reference to the period during which the person holding such office is required to perform the functions of the office.

It is our opinion that, while it is will be disturbing to expose such office holders to indiscriminate litigation, the constitution should be reviewed to allow certain degree of

investigation when it is obvious that they have committed a crime such as suspected homicide or theft of public property.

There should be express provision for judicial waiver or voluntary waiver of the said immunity.

Secondly Executive immunity should be limited like diplomatic and legislative immunity to actions taken legitimately in the normal course of duties for which they are elected and not actions taken in furtherance of personal gratifications.

These views are premised on our National experiences of widespread and callous misappropriation and maladministration of public funds and properties occasioning abject poverty and underdevelopment.

#### **5) Comprehensive Judicial Reforms:**

Our recommendations on this topic are that, the current state of the Judiciary in Nigeria does not portray any substantive level of independence of the Judiciary.

A situation where the Judiciary's budget is subjected to the whims and caprices of the Legislature and Executive is an indication that there is no independence as such. Worst still is the current dangerous trend at the Federal and in some States where the professional norms and constitutional requirements on the appointment of Justices, Chief Judges and Judges are being abused by the Executive with the connivance of the legislature. Allocation of funds to the Judiciary should in the true sense of the word, be a first line charge on the Consolidated Revenue Fund at all levels of governance.

#### **6) The National Assembly:**

The Bi-cameral/Uni-cameral system of democracy that we currently operate in Nigeria is indeed an aberration and should be reviewed urgently.

The huge financial expense of running the affairs of the National Assembly as full time members coupled with the additional running cost, etc far outweighs the benefits of this type of Legislature.

Our recommendations are;

- i) To have a Uni-Cameral Legislative Arm of government. This should be enshrined in the Constitution. House of Representative should be retained, while the Senate should be scrapped. This will impact positively on the cost of governance in Nigeria.
- ii) To have the National Assembly and the State equivalents run on part time basis in such a way that Members are paid 'Siting Allowances' only while support paraphernalia would be made available to run those meetings.

#### **7) State Religion:**

Section 10 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA 1999 says; The Government of the Federation or of a state shall not adopt any religion as State a Religion. From the above what then is Shariah as it is been practiced by some section of this country? Oxford Dictionary defines Shariah as follows: "Islamic canonical law based on the teachings of the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet (Hadith and Sunna), prescribing both religious and secular duties and sometimes retributive penalties for lawbreaking". According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Shariah is the religious law of Islam seen as the expression of God's command for Muslims and, in application, constitutes a system of duties that are incumbent upon all Muslims by virtue of their religious belief. Known as the Shari ah (literally, "the path leading to the watering place"), the law represents a divinely ordained path of conduct that guides Muslims toward a practical expression of religious conviction in this world and the goal of divine favour in the world to come

Looking at the foregoing, it is obvious that the Federation of Nigeria by including the Sharia legal system in the Constitution of the FRN 1999, has adopted and officially recognized a State Religion.

Furthermore, states like Zamfara and Kano had adopted the same shariah in varying degrees.



The common but unacceptable argument is that shariah is the customary law of the Northern Nigeria, to this, we make bold to say no. There is no community indigenous to Nigeria without its unique native custom and culture before the Advent of both Islam and Christianity.

Furthermore, it is an open fact that The Federal Capital Territory Abuja does not belong to any region or state in the federation, the ownership of its land is vested in the Federal Government and the National Assembly makes laws for it. Sections (297 to 304).

In spite of these, Sections 260 to 264 of the Constitution of the FRN 1999 deals extensively with the Sharia Court of Appeal of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. Are we saying then that Abuja is for the Northerners only? The argument of shariah being the custom of the North would hold waters.

Sections 275 to 279 of the said Constitution deal extensively with the Sharia Court of Appeal of a State.

In our own candid and informed opinion, no one is competent to alter the definition of shariah as an Islamic Canon law to now mean the custom of a people in Nigeria.

We therefore propose either that the sections dealing with shariah be expunged from the constitution of the Federation of Nigeria or in the alternative, a system of Christian Canon Law be established and included in the same Constitution to balance the equation.

The Customary law as contained in the said Constitution should be made applicable to every part of the country. This is because in real terms, no part of Africa lacks its own indigenous or native law and customs.

It is a smokescreen to say Shariah is the customary law of an indigenous people of any part of Africa.

For teasers, is Argungu Fishing Festival an Islamic Festival or the culture of flogging Young man to know who is qualified to marry a damsel prevalent in some parts of the North? The

use of horses for festivals known as Durbar is a native festival not an Islamic festival.

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 earlier on cited prohibit the adoption of any Religion in the Federation or in any constituent State. This should be effected by removing any provision relating to the said Shariah Law because it is religious law not a customary Law.

It should also be noted clearly in our Constitution that sharia should no longer be employed in matters concerning Christians or adherents of any other religions since it is the law of Muslims for Muslims. Fundamentally, every citizen should have the right to be tried according to their own belief.

### **8) Local Government and Local Government Autonomy**

In our polity there are three tiers of GOVERNMENT viz: The Federal Government, The State Government and the Local Government. Each of them having its own unique system of administration. Albeit there are similarities, for example there are three arms in each tier of government and they all derive shares from the federal revenues.

The above is the ideal but in reality, the system is not followed.

For many years, local government allocation has been hijacked by the various state governments because of absence of a truly local government system in our practice of democracy.

Section 7 (1) of the 1999 constitution allows for an elected administration in the councils but in practice, most of the councils in Nigeria are administered by appointed Chairmen or Caretaker Committees; appointed by the State Government.

Only very few can be said to be under democratically elected officials.

Even in those with elected administrations, their finances are under direct control of the state government.

The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria also stipulated the legislative power over public funds, especially on S/LGA, in section 162, Sub-section 8. Specifically, Subsections 5-8 of the constitution states:

(5) The amount standing to the credit of local government councils in the federation account shall also be allocated to the states for the benefits of their local government councils on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the national assembly.

(6) Each state shall maintain a specific account to be called "state joint local government account" to which shall be paid all allocations to the local government councils of the state from the federation account and from the government of the state.

(7) Each state shall pay to the local government councils in its area of jurisdiction such proportion of its total revenue on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the national assembly.

(8) The amount standing to the credit of local government councils of a state shall be distributed among the local government councils of the state on such terms and in such manner as may be prescribed by the House of Assembly of the state.

In most States these amounts are not distributed as prescribed herein, but State Governments execute projects on behalf of the councils and just release paltry sums to the Local Government Councils.

In our Opinion Federal Allocations to the Local Government Councils should be disbursed directly and not through any intermediaries.

This will give fillip to the provisions of Section 7 (6) (a) & (b) of the 1999 Constitution of FRN.

Which states as follows:

(6) Subject to the provisions of this Constitution -

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(a) the National Assembly shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local government councils in the Federation; and

(b) the House of Assembly of a State shall make provisions for statutory allocation of public revenue to local government councils within the State.

We suggest that the Constitution drafters should take cognizance of what currently obtains and provide in clear and unambiguous terms that the Local Government being Third Tier of Government be made to be fully autonomous, and its shares of revenues be paid directly to it.

### 8) Other Matters:

The issue of Nepotism should be criminalized in the constitution to prevent what we have today; where one tribe now controls all Federal Agencies and Security. This New trend is not good at all for a multi- ethnic Nation like Nigeria.

**Conclusion:** We made these submissions, with the strong hope that they will be given deep thought and applied for the good of the Nation Nigeria.

**The Venerable Gershinien Paul Dajur, PhD,**  
*General Secretary, Church of Nigeria*