



COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED BY THE DIOCESE OF EVO, CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) AT THE END OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE HELD AT EVO DIOCESAN SCHOOLS, OBIO/AKPOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, RIVERS STATE

PREAMBLE:

The Diocese of Evo, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) held the Third Session of its Fifth Synod at three Evo Diocesan Secondary Schools – Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls School (ACMGS) – Elelenwo, Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School (BCMSS) – Rumuobiokani

and Woji Town Word of Faith Group of Schools (WTWoF) – Woji from Wednesday 31st July to Sunday, 4th August 2024 under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP, DSSRS, Bishop, Diocese of Evo and President of Synod, with his wife Dr. Mrs. Chinyere Ordu, JP, FCAI, President of the Mothers' Union, Women's Guild, Sisters Forum and Girls' Guild. The Synod was preceded by a one-day Synod held at each of the schools on Saturday, July 20th, 2024. where reports from Churches, activity groups and units in the Diocese were discussed.

In attendance at the Synod were the Clergy and delegates from churches, activity groups, and chaplaincies, as well as other Bishops, Clergy, and Laity from other Dioceses within and outside Rivers State and the Anglican Communion. Among the dignitaries were; His Excellency, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, GSSRS, Governor of Rivers State; His Excellency, Alabo Sir (Dr.) Gabriel Toby, former Deputy Governor of Rivers State, and his wife; Her Excellency Dame (Dr.) Christie Toby, Managing Director Archdeacon Brown Education Centre, His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Blessing Enyindah, DSSRS, JP, Dean Church of Nigeria, Archbishop, Niger Delta Province and Bishop of Diocese of Ikwerre, and his brother bishops, The Most Revd. Dr D.B. Kala – Dokubo, Archbishop of the African Church, Rivers State, and Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Rivers State;; Prof. Patrice, Lumumba, Founding Trustee of the African Institute for Leaders and Leadership (AILL)/founding Chairman of the



Association of the Citizens Against Corruption, ACAC; Mrs. Julie Okeke, wife of Rt, Rev Henry Okeke, Bishop of Ideato and Pastor Segun Ogundipe, National Director ACSI. Also in attendance were Mrs. Joyce Ndigbara, National President, ACMGS Old Girls' Association, and other members of the association.

Goodwill messages were received from various Dioceses, Churches, Organisations, and individuals.

THE THEME OF THE SYNOD

The theme of the Synod was **"Education for National Development and Transformation: The Role of the Family, Church and State"** with scriptural references taken from; Deut. 6:4-9; Prov. 22:6 and Ephesians 6:4. Etymologically, the root of the word "education" comes from the Latin word "educare", meaning '*to lead out, draw out or bring forth*'. This implies that education refers to drawing out knowledge, skills, and abilities from students through organized questions.

At its core, education involves the transmission of knowledge, values, and skills from one generation to another, ensuring the continuity and advancement of civilizations. A good educational system is designed to provide the recipient with an all-round development of skills and potential to succeed in their future endeavours in society. It should focus on the moral, physical, spiritual, and intellectual aspects of life.

According to the Bible, education is to train (instruct) the child in ways they can never forget as they grow (Proverbs 22:6). In contrast to what the government school systems offer, true education is God-centered. Education is the key to life! Schools develop our knowledge skills, institutions develop our soft skills, and experiences develop our work skills.

The history of Nigeria, and in particular education in Nigeria can never be successfully written without mentioning the significant primary role the Christian churches and missions played in fashioning and giving direction to education and nation-building in Nigeria.



Education is part of our heritage in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Notwithstanding the foundation laid in the education sector by the early missionaries, it is quite sad to note that Christian education or church-based educational institutions in Nigeria appear to have been distracted and there is now an urgent need for the churches in Nigeria to recover this lost pride of place and role for the reengineering of our nation.

The example of the early Christian missionaries in their active involvement in the education of the citizenry should serve as a motivation to present-day Nigerian churches and their leaders in also actively engaging in the field of education as a way of contributing towards National development and transformation.

The purposeful involvement of the church in the education sector will not only hasten the mission of the church, which is primarily the proclamation of the saving gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ but will also contribute immensely both now and in the future to the moral, spiritual, socio-economic and political transformation of the society which the nation is in dire need of. The time is now for the church to be the moral anchor of the nation to remind men and women that education is only education that transforms people in a positive way.

Synod therefore notes:

1. That education holds the key to the development, maturity, and transformation of an individual, community, and nation.
2. With concern the deplorable state of education in Nigeria worsened by the poor funding of the sector across all levels of government.
3. The pervasive erosion of values, especially the worrisome situation of exam malpractice, and restates its position of zero tolerance for examination malpractice in all its mission schools.
4. With concern the nonchalant attitude of the government towards the debilitating challenge of out-of-school children and lack of access to quality education.



5. That the responsibility for raising the young lies mainly with the parents. Civil governments, schools, and the church are meant to play supportive roles.
6. That education is the basic channel for the moral and practical teaching of children (Deut. 6:6,7).
7. With thanks, the completion of the abandoned 43-year-old flagship project, Majorie Hill Chapel, ACMGS, Elelenwo by the Old Girls Association of the school. Synod especially commends the role played by Her Excellency, Hon. Justice Suzette Eberechi Nyesom Wike, JCA, an old girl of this school and wife of the immediate past Governor of Rivers State and the present FCT Minister, Chief Barr. Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, CON, who mobilized resources from her friends and family associates, and personally supervised the critical stages of the work in this chapel project up to the eve of its dedication.
8. With sadness that notwithstanding the foundation laid in the education sector by the early missionaries, Christian or church-based educational institutions in Nigeria have been distracted, losing their pride of place and role in the reengineering of our nation.
9. With concern and condemns the increasing incidences of Gender-Based Violence in the country with its attendant social problems and public health challenges, especially HIV/AIDS.

In light of the above, Synod urges the government:

1. To commit to the proper financing of the education sector in keeping with the UNESCO recommendation of 26 % of budgets for the education sector. Teachers at all levels should be promptly paid their salaries.
2. Provide functional school facilities and quality teaching resources.
3. Update the country's education curriculum so that education will be tailored towards self-independence and attainment of set goals and equip graduates from our school system with the requisite knowledge and critical thinking skills to cope with the competitive dynamics of a global economy.



4. Provide functional guidance and counseling services in schools run by the State as it is obtainable in most privately-owned schools.
5. Pay special salary scales to teachers to make teaching more attractive and competitive as in other clime.
6. Extend the school feeding programme of the Federal Government to all Nigerian school children in all parts of the country irrespective of political consideration.
7. Encourage the education of the girl-child by paying some stipends to girl pupils in educationally disadvantaged parts of the country.
8. Furthermore, Synod urges the Rivers State Government to lend the critically needed financial support to mission agencies involved in education since the State (government) is endowed with greater financial resources than the church.
9. Synod urges the Rivers State Government to consider giving annual grants to mission schools to upgrade their facilities and assist in the payment of teachers' salaries or adopt the teachers in such mission schools and pay their salaries.
10. Synod urges the church to take the lead in transformational education, creating global leaders and citizens with critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

STATE OF THE NATION

RIVERS STATE

The Synod

1. Notes with thanks the continuous enormous support to ACMGS Elelenwo by His Excellency, Sir, Siminalayi Fubara, GSSRS in the provision of funds for critical infrastructural development and mobility needs.
2. Notes with sadness the unhealthy political situation in Rivers state and calls on all aggrieved persons to toe the path of genuine reconciliation and peace in addition to other godly steps in resolving the present seemingly unending political impasse in the State.
3. Appeals to everyone to help the current government of the State to stabilize and deliver on their programmes and promises to Rivers people. We should not allow



mundane interests either based on ethnicity, sectional, political, or even religious affiliations cloud our sense of reason and judgment.

4. Urges its parishioners in the political scene not to jettison the spirit of brotherhood at the slightest misunderstanding bearing in mind that in politics there are no permanent foes but permanent interests.
5. Notes with joy the pronouncement of the Governor of Rivers State, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, GSSRS, that his government will focus on Education, Agriculture, and Health.
6. Urges the Rivers State Government to ensure close monitoring and supervision of all public and private schools to guarantee the relevant quality control in the sector.

NIGERIA

The Synod:

1. Commends the Federal Government for the resolution of the minimum wage imbroglio and urges the Federal Government to ensure its speedy implementation.
2. Notes with sadness the level of hardship in the country and urges the Federal Government to take proactive steps to ameliorate the suffering of Nigerians.
3. Urges Government to address the escalating cases of insecurity and corruption all over the country.
4. Cautions our youths to be careful and properly guided in their response to the many challenges confronting the nation of which they appear to be the most affected. Even in the face of the coming/ongoing protests, they must not resort to crime.
5. Observes that while the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru is a strategic leadership and policy formulation academy, there is a need to review its processes such that anyone who aspires to leadership may go to that school and be properly groomed.



6. Notes that the church can also bridge the gap in leadership by grooming those who desire to take leadership office intentionally such that when that time comes, they don't constitute an embarrassment to the church.

GLOBAL ISSUES:

The Synod

1. Condemns unequivocally the World Economic Forum (WEF) for engaging a witch doctor to make invocations at its 54 annual meeting and cautions world leaders against exposing themselves and their nations to satanic initiatory rites and invocation of spirits.
2. Encourages the Church to consider the LGBTQIA+ 'community' as a mission field and be intentional about harvesting of all such into God's glorious kingdom, through crusades of righteousness and salvation of the souls of men, to lovingly counter their crusades. We must intentionally address the matter in our sermons, Bible studies, Sunday Schools, Children's and Teenagers' sections of our churches, and schools.

COMMENDATIONS

The Synod:

1. Thanks God Almighty for His grace which was made manifest all through the period of the Synod and also expresses appreciation to the Synod Guest Speakers: Revd Timothy Otuka, Pastor Segun Oludipe, National Director, ACSI, Mrs. Ngowari Ezepue, Ven Chimoaobi Chieme, Prof. Patrice Lumumba, Revd. Canon Ebenezar Owhor, PHD, Dr. Mrs. Chinyere Ordu, Dame Ibim Semenitari, and also the Synod Bible Study Leader, Mrs. Julie Okeke for honouring the call to share with the delegates and the entire Christian faithful the world over the word of God as well as their knowledge and experiences.



2. Appreciates the Governor of Rivers State, Sir Siminalayi Fubara, GSSRS; Rt. Hon. Martins Amaewhule, DSSRS; Hon Chijioke Ihunwo Chairman, Interim Caretaker Committee, Obio/Akpor Local Government Area; Hon Ezeunwo Ichemati, Chairman, Interim Caretaker Committee, Port Harcourt Local Government Area, and other government officials for their support and presence at the Synod.
3. Commends the traditional rulers and people of the host communities of the Third session of the Fifth Synod of the diocese of Evo; HRM King Amb. Sir Leslie Nyebuchi Eke, JP – Eze Ohna Evo III – Head Chief of Evo Kingdom; HRH, Eze, Amb. Sunny Weli Chukwu, JP, - Eze Elemenwo – Etor, the Paramount Ruler of Elemenwo; and HRH, Eze Amb. (Barr.) Temple N. Ejekwu, JP – Eze Iji n'Ede, the Paramount Ruler of Rumuogba, their Council of Chiefs and Elders.
4. Commends the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) for installing solar lights in our churches, as well as ACMGS, Elemenwo, and BCMSS, Rumuobiokani, as part of its light-up the Niger Delta project.
5. Commends its Diocesan schools for their superlative performance in the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board examinations as well as the very successful hosting of this year's Synod.

Rev. Canon Ebenezer U. Owhor, PhD
Clerical Synod Secretary

Sir Barr. Nlerum Amadi
Chancellor

The Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP, DSSRS
Bishop/President of Synod