

**DIOCESE OF EVO, CHURCH OF NIGERIA
(ANGLICAN COMMUNION)**

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED BY THE DIOCESE OF EVO, CHURCH OF NIGERIA
(ANGLICAN COMMUNION) AT THE END OF THE THIRD SESSION OF THE
THIRD SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE HOSTED BY EVO SOUTH EAST
ARCHDEACONRY AT CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, ELELENWO
DISTRICT, OBIO, PORT HARCOURT**

INTRODUCTION: The Diocese of Evo, Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met for the Third Session of its Third Synod at Church of the Holy Spirit, Elemenwo, Evo South East Archdeaconry under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP, Bishop, Diocese of Evo and President of Synod, with his wife, Mrs. Chinyere Ordu, JP, President of the Mothers' Union, Women's Guild, Sisters Forum and Girls' Guild, from Wednesday, 1st to Sunday, 5th August, 2018.

The Guest Preachers at the Synod were the Rt. Rev. Sosthenese Eze, Bishop, Diocese of Enugu North; and the Rt. Rev. Dr. Duke Akamisoko, Bishop, Diocese of Kubwa. The Rt. Rev. Sunday T. Adewole, Bishop, Diocese of Jebba was also in attendance.

Other resource persons were the Rev. Dr. Steve Ogan, who gave a talk on "the Church as a Constantly Growing Community", and Pastor Akinwale Akinyanmi, who spoke on "Growing the Church through Parish and Members' Entrepreneurship Skill/Activities".

In attendance at the Synod were other Bishops, clergy and laity from within and outside the Anglican Communion. The Governor of Rivers State, Chief Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON, GSSRS, PoS (Africa) was represented by his Chief of Staff, Government House, Engr. Emeka Wokeh; the Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Hon. Prince Solomon Abel Eke, and other Government functionaries also attended the Synod.

Synod also received goodwill messages from sister Dioceses and other well-meaning organisations.

THE THEME OF THE SYNOD

The theme of the Synod was "Towards Wholesome Church Growth: Lessons from the Early Church". (Acts 2:41-47).

It x-rayed the Biblical patterns that abound in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles which members of the Early Church exemplified and which gave rise to their spiritual and numerical increase.

The Synod therefore:

1. Commends the Bishop of Diocese of Evo, the Rt. Rv. Innocent Ordu, JP, for the theme of the Synod which is aimed at repositioning the church in line with the vision of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, as propagated by the early apostles; and hopes that the entire Christian faithful will retrace their steps and follow the teachings of Christ.

2. Reaffirms prayer as an indispensable ingredient for the wholesome growth and sustenance of the church, and enjoins all Diocesan faithful and leaders across board to endeavor to cultivate the spirit and attitude of prayer and assign it its proper place in individual and corporate life of the Diocese.
3. Sees church growth to include increases in number of churches, knowledge and grace of the Lord, and influence of the church within the society.
4. Notes that the cause of indecency in our churches is due to lack of discipleship and unwillingness of most converts to imbibe teachings on how to follow Christ.
5. Decries the loss of thirst for souls in the church and its attendant consequences on church growth and urged all Christians to reinvent or recall the vision of the Early Christians.
6. Notes that the Early Church abhorred sin and so, expresses worry that some churches today condone sin, and insists on the need for the church to go back to the example of the early church.
7. Believes that church growth is not only about a numerical increase but about the quality of the spirituality of church members.
8. Observes that one of the reasons why the church is not growing is the loss of vision for soul-winning, adding that God's plan is to add members daily to the church.
9. Notes that the church can use modern communication channels like facebook, twitter etc, to add to the growth of the church.

COMMENDATION

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 guest speakers and resource persons for sharing with the delegates their knowledge and experiences.
2. Appreciates the Governor of Rivers State, Chief Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON, GSSRS, PoS (Africa), the Chairman of Obio/Akpor Local Government Council, Hon. Prince Solomon Abel Eke, and other government officials for their presence at the Synod.

3. Commends the Chiefs, Elders and entire Elenwo and Iriebe Communities as well as the Archdeacon and his team of clergy, District Church Council and congregation of Church of the Holy Spirit, Elenwo, Evo South East Archdeaconry for the successful hosting of the Third Session of the Third Synod of the Diocese of Evo.

RIVERS STATE

The Synod:

1. Appreciates the love of the Governor of Rivers State, Chief Barr. Ezenwo Nyesom Wike, CON, GSSRS, PoS (Africa) for the Diocese of Evo and congratulates him on the celebration of the third year of his administration.
2. Commends Governor Nyesom Wike for the numerous people-oriented projects which he has undertaken and which were commissioned in the course of his third year anniversary and urges him not to relent even as elections loom on the horizon.
3. Advises that in addition to roads and other infrastructure, the governor should also turn his searchlight more to the environment and sanitation, in addition to security of lives and human capital development because whatever he does is for Rivers people and posterity will certainly not forget him.

State of the Nation

The Synod:

1. Regrets that while other nations that gained independence with Nigeria about the same period have recorded impressive developments, Nigeria is derided as a nation lacking in leadership and developmental direction.
2. Holds that it is sad and painful that in the different fields of Nigeria's national life, the testimony has been that of a nation fast drifting into a state of anarchy and failure.
3. Condemns the rot in education in the country which has led to very poor and low standards, particularly in those institutions owned and run by the different tiers of government. This, the Synod therefore notes, has led to the exodus of many Nigerian students to foreign lands even to some less-endowed neighbouring countries in search of quality education.
4. Regrets that in 58 years, Nigeria is yet to develop political, social, judicial and economic institutions that meet internationally-acceptable standards because of poor leadership and corruption.
5. Expresses concern over the prevailing atmosphere of violence, thuggery, vote buying (i.e. cash-at-hand politics), rigging and declaration of false results, compromised

electoral umpires and security personnel, leading to imposition of wrong persons on the masses as leaders, as the nation marches towards the 2019 elections.

6. Condemns the attitude and double-standards of the Federal Government in handling the menace of Fulani Herdsmen who have been on a killing spree in parts of the country; while government is quick to brand agitations in other parts of the country that are largely non-violent as terrorism, the same government fails to speak out against the killings by the herdsmen and indeed exonerates them of terrorism. Synod is therefore worried that Nigerians have continued to endure governments that lack a fair sense of justice, equity, soundness of mind and sufficient leadership acumen in arresting the menace of criminality in the land and bringing the culprits to book.
7. Expresses concern that after 58 years of independence, Nigerians are still subjected to daily groaning and sufferings due to bad leadership, poor state of the economy, health-care delivery and infrastructure and mindless killings of Nigerian citizens at home by fellow Nigerians and outside the country by their hosts.
8. Believes that while the salvation and deliverance of Nigeria will come from God, Nigerians have very critical roles to play in order to partner with Him because as greatly religious people, although stinking in our iniquities, we must return to God in prayer and genuine repentance.
9. Urges Nigerians to use the opportunity presented by the 2019 elections to rescue the country from the hands of all those who have been pretending to be leaders but are in real sense, enemies of the nation. Synod therefore calls on every Nigerian to get the Permanent Voter Card (PVC) and use it to flush out of office all the present leaders at all levels who have failed to satisfy the yearnings and expectations of millions of our countrymen/women.
10. Warns Christians not to carelessly entrust power into the hands of those who will finally wipe out what is left of the church of God in this country. The Synod advises that Party association should no longer be the consideration for voting in the coming year, rather it should be based on candidates who are seeking to serve as sacrificial servant-leaders, God-fearing men and women, incorruptible, defenders of all, who will be just and equitable in their distribution of our commonwealth.

Rev. Can Gospel Onuchuku
Clerical Synod Secretary

Sir Barr. Emma C. Izuehie
Lay Synod Secretary

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