

CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(ANGLICAN COMMUNION)

PROVINCE OF NIGER DELTA

DIOCESE OF EVO

SECOND SESSION OF THE FIRST SYNOD

HOLDING AT

SAINT PHILIP'S ANGLICAN CHURCH,
OROIGWE DISTRICT, OBIO, PORT HARCOURT.

**BISHOP'S
PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS/CHARGE**

DELIVERED BY

HIS LORDSHIP, RT. REV. INNOCENT U. ORDU, JP

BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF EVO

ON

SATURDAY, 16TH JULY, 2011

**THEME: "TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS WHATSOEVER I HAVE
COMMANDED YOU..." MATTHEW 28:20^a**

PROTOCOLS

- Your Excellency, the Executive Governor of Rivers State, Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi,
- Your Excellency, the Deputy Governor of Rivers State, Engr. Tele Ikuru,
- Your Grace, the Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Niger Delta, Most Rev. I. C. O. Kattey, JP,
- Your Graces/My Lords, All Visiting Archbishops and Bishops, Heads of churches,
- Your Excellency, Sir G. T. G. Toby, Former Deputy Governor of Rivers State,
- The Honourable Speaker of the Rivers State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Tonye Harry,
- My Lord, the Honourable Chief Judge of Rivers State, Hon. Justice Iche and Dame Ngozi Ndu,
- Distinguished and Honourable Members of the National and State Assemblies,
- The Executive Chairman of Obio/Akpor L. G. A, Hon. Prince Timothy Nsirim and other Chairmen,
- Members of the Federal and Rivers State Executive Councils,
- Learned Legal Officers of the Diocese,
- Brethren of the House of Clergy,
- The President of the Diocesan Mothers' Union, Women's Guild, Sisters' Forum and Girls' Guild, Mrs. Chinyere U. Ordu,
- Your Royal Majesties/Highnesses, Chiefs and Elders, Captains of Industry,
- Our Special Guests/Invitees to the Synod,
- Special Nominees of the Bishop to the Synod,
- Respected Knights and Ladies,
- Delegates to the Synod (House of Laity),
- Gentlemen of the Press,
- Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

GREETINGS, WELCOME AND GRATITUDE

On behalf of the Diocesan Board, accredited Synod Delegates and the entire Anglican faithful of the Diocese of Edo, I welcome you all to this Second Session of the First Synod of our Diocese.

We thank all of you who are gathered here today to honour our invitation especially the **Executive Governor of Rivers State, The Rt. Hon. Chubuikwe Rotimi Amaechi** and other top Government functionaries; Bishops of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and other heads of Churches and Christian groups, and our Royal Fathers for finding time in the midst of your busy schedules to grace this occasion. May the good Lord bless you abundantly in Jesus' Name. Amen.

We appreciate the moral, material support and the outstanding performances of the Cathedral, Archdeaconry, Deanery and Parish/Station Church Committees, Boards and Councils; the brethren of the House of Clergy, Diocesan Board, Chairmen and members of the various Diocesan committees, the Chaplains, leaders/coordinators and members of the various Diocesan Activity groups and ministries including members of the Council of Knights and their Ladies Auxiliary, individual parishioners and the friends of the Diocese since the last Synod in July last year.

We remain grateful to all those who have worked very closely and tirelessly with us, particularly during our recent three-weeks working trip to the United Kingdom. May God reward your faithful services and labours of love for His Church and us and grant you more grace to further excel in His service.

OUR SYNOD VENUE...

ST. PHILIP'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, ORO-IGWE DISTRICT, ORO-IGWE/ELIOGBOLO ARCHDEACONRY

Our synod this year is being hosted by the Oro-igwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry, made up of St. Philip's Anglican Church, Oro-igwe, Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Elingba Parish, Church of The Holy Spirit, Elioza Parish, Mount Zion Anglican Church, Eliogbolo, Church of The Advent, Rumuewhara, and The Upper Room Anglican Church, Elioza. The Archdeaconry was created by us in August, 2009 and Inaugurated on December 6th of the same year with St. Philip's Anglican Church, Oro-igwe Parish, the oldest of the churches as the Archdeaconry Headquarters and also assuming a District status. This headquarter church is today serving as the main venue of our Synod for this year. We hereby present a brief historical profile of the Church – St. Philip's Anglican Church, Oro-igwe.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE CHURCH

Sometimes in the late 19th century, Elder Ogbonda David Chinwo, one amongst the sons of Chinwo, had gone to visit his sister Diana who was married to Sokari in “OKWUJAGWU” in Okrika. In the process of his frequent visits, Late Ogbonda David Chinwo discovered that his brother “Omezuruike” who was sold as a slave within the same period resides in Okwujagwu. The reunion of the brothers opened a new chapter in the life of the said Ogbonda David Chinwo who became a convert to the Christian faith and a worshipper of the living God following in the steps of his brother, Omezuruike and the people of Okwujagwu.

On his return home, he began the practice of his new found faith by praying and singing in his house, an act considered by his brother, Messiah Chinwo and others to be ‘crying’. But David then explained to his brother who misunderstood him that he was not crying, rather that it was “Church”. Late Ogbonda David Chinwo then summoned his father “Chinwo” and some of the community Elders which included: Elders Benjamin Chukwu, Apollos Chukwu, Ebenezer Wopara, Moses Nkakini, Emmanuel Okene, Messiah Chinwo, Jacob Chinwo, John Ekwuebelem, Lazarus Nyeche, Enoch Ogele and others, to inform them of his “strange” experience in Okwujagwu. The word “strange” here is used to express the new method of worship which was quite alien to the people of Rumunduru who until then only appreciated “God” through the pouring of libations. He assured them that ‘Church’ will make wickedness disappear in the land, and those who kill others will no longer kill. The acceptance of this new found faith by the people gave birth to Christianity in Rumunduru and by extension, the establishment of what we today have as Saint Philip's Anglican Church, Oro-Igwe in 1911.

Those he invited gave him land in the Esezi – egelege (Play ground). The first converts were Ebenezer Wopara, Abel Ihunwo, followed by Enoch Ogele, Moses Nkakini. At a time the play ground could not accommodate the worshippers who also joined the Church from Rumuewhara and Elioza. This necessitated the movement of the Church from Esezi-egelege to Ahia – Okwu in a land given to them by Agaleze Family through Abel Ihunwo and Richard Ohuru. The Church at this time still answers ‘Rumunduru Church’. Later in 1934 there was a protest that the name should be changed to Oro-Igwe to accommodate the names of villages that make up the Oro-Igwe community. Thus the name of the church was changed to St. Philip's Oro-Igwe in 1934.

As a result of erosion which posed serious threats to the church, it was re-located to its present site in the year 1946. The land of the present site was donated by Nyeche, Chukwumati and Chinwo families of Rumunduru.

To supervise the new Church Station, the Parent Church at Okwujagwu posted the first “Agent/Teacher”, named LAZARUS DAKKA KALIO. The first church was named after Rumunduru as Saint Philip's Church, Rumunduru, by Late Rev. E. T. Dimiari. (Late Bishop Dimiari). May his soul rest in peace.

*****VARIOUS LOCATIONS/SITE OF THE CHURCH**

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The very first location and site of the then Church was on the ground of what is now the premises and family yard of the late Abraham Okene by Rumunduru play ground. The original church then was constructed and built with palm fronds.

The church later relocated to “Ohia Okwu” along the stream road where also, the church had its “Burial Ground”. Then, the church occupied a MUD HOUSE with thatched roof which was later removed and replaced with corrugated iron sheets.

EARLY MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

The early male members of the church were; Late Chief Messiah Chinwo, Apolos Chukwu, Ebenezer Wopara, Benjamin Chukwu, Moses Nkakini, Emmanuel Okene et al; all from Rumunduru Community. However, some persons from Rumuewhara and Eliozi Communities such as Late Francis Ejekwu, James Wopara (Rumuewhara) and Late Obadiah Woko, James Woko, Thomas Weli (Eliozi) etc, got converted and joined the Church.

WOMEN

The following women were the early women to join the church:- Madam Virginia Amadi, Madam Esther Wopara, Madam Elizabeth Chuku, Madam Diamaih Chukwu, Madam Augusta Okene, Madam Juliah Wobo, Madam Alice Woko, Madam Martha Ogele, Madam Mary Amaewhule, Mrs. Docas Wopara, and Mrs Leah Wopara.

ST. PHILIP’S CHURCH RUMUNDURU (1925) TO ST. PHILIP’S CHURCH, ORO-IGWE (1934)

In order to accommodate the new converts from the various communities of Oro-Igwe, Saint Philip’s Church Rumunduru was in the year 1934 changed and rechristened Saint Philip’s Church, Oro-Igwe; by Late Rev. S. N. Okagbue who was then the resident Priest at Saint Peter’s Church, Port Harcourt.

EARLY CHALLENGES OF THE CHURCH

Certain Elders of Rumunduru Community were opposed to the new and strange way of worship as they considered it a taboo and opposed to the laws and traditions of the land. To the average Rumunduru man, the usual weekdays of Mondays through Sunday, in which Sunday was/is strictly reserved for the worship of God Almighty was alien. What was common then was the traditional counting of days of the week in which Riagbo, Saragbo, Nnamake, Okwu, Inim were recognized.

Thus, the new way of worship was seen as interfering with this way of weekday counting and the consequent activities associated with the weekdays. The converts were considered lazy, disobedient, and sometimes seen as generally irresponsible.

History has it that one of the major opponents of the Early Church who challenged it was Late Chief Ewhorlu Wopara a.k.a “WADEE”, a palm wine tapper who felt he could no longer get the assistance of his younger brother EBENEZER due to the later’s new found love for the Church.

He considered his onetime active brother, now idle, lazy and generally irresponsible. The problems against the growth of the church escalated when the church started preaching against idolatry in the community. The community Elders hated the church the more and intensified the campaign against the growth of the Church. Then, it was not fashionable to be called a Christian. Consequently, the community leaders and Elders in their claims of protecting what they termed the “Laws of the Land” intensified pressures against their children and kinsmen to leave the church and their new found faith.

The father of Elder Ephraim Chika Chinwo, was a victim of the said pressures as he also succumbed and pulled out of the Church.

ELIOZU AND RUMUEWHARA CHURCHES

It is on record that the people of Rumunduru, Elioze and Rumuewhara maintained a cordial and brotherly fellowship throughout the period they worshipped together in St. Philip's Oro-Igwe Church. However, in the spirit of evangelism, expansion and Church Planting, and more so as a result of the bridge between Rumunduru and Elioze which made it almost impossible for the Elioze brethren to attend weekly activities especially in the evenings, there was the hunger and urge to have a church planted in Elioze. On the **21st day of May, 2000** following a crusade organized by St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani Parish (as it was then known) came the birth of Elioze Church on the said date and that marked the departure of Elioze brethren.

RUMUEWHARA CHURCH

The brethren from Rumuewhara left to their own Church on Sunday **20th December, 2009**, following the establishment of **Church of the Advent**, Rumuewhara on that date. The Venerable Chidi S. Worgu who was the then Archdeacon and Vicar, and also the Chairman of the Diocesan Missions, Evangelism and Church Planting Board, in consonance with the Church Council of Oro-igwe Parish initiated and planted the Rumuewhara Church after a crusade under the Mission and Evangelism Unit.

THE EARLY WORKERS OF ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH

THE early workers of St. Philip's Church as Agents/Catechists include:-

1. Lazarus Dakka Kalio
2. Umewem
3. Nwafurume
4. Udomeze
5. Joshua Wogunka
6. Josiah Wopara

WORKERS AFTER THE WAR

Catechist: D. N. W. Achinike
C. N. Anamoji (now Reverend)

ORDAINED PRIESTS THAT HAVE SERVED TILL DATE

1. Rev. B. O. Aka
2. Rev. C. N. Anamoji
3. Rev. Godwin Eche
4. Rev. E. O. Oko-Jaja (now Rt. Reverend)
5. Rev. S. C. Dick
6. Rev. Dr. Prince I. Orafu (now Venerable)
7. Rev. Vicent Orlugbani
8. Rev. Canon Loveday Mbombo (now Venerable)
9. Rev. Canon Dr. Princewill Chinda
10. Rev. Samson Abada
11. Rev. Canon Chimobi Nwachukwu
12. Rev. Canon Chuka Opara
13. Ven. Chidi S. Worgu
14. Rev. Roland Benjamin (current Curate)
15. Rev. Canon Chukwuemeka Ogu (current Vicar)

THE CHURCH AND THE SCHOOL

The history of Saint Philip's Anglican Church, Oro-Igwe Parish will be incomplete if no reference is made to the advent of the community school.

Sometime in 1957/1958, the church through the aid of the Native Authority then, established what is now known as Community Primary School, Oro-igwe. The School, then, was known as Saint Philip's Primary School, Oro-Igwe.

It metamorphosed to "State School, Oro-Igwe" after the civil war in 1970. The School uniform then, was an immaculate white shirt upon Navy-blue short for male pupils while their female counterparts had a white shirt and a Navy-blue gown.

However, in the recent past, the school has been rechristened "Community Primary School, Oro-Igwe"; and now wears a red check-shirt and a Maroon/Ox-blood shorts. Same is applicable to the female counterparts in their likeness.

OUR SYNOD GUEST SPEAKERS

1. THE RT. REV. TUNDE ADELEYE *Bishop of Calabar Diocese, Cross River State*

Profile

The Rt. Rev. Tunde Adeleye is the Bishop of the Diocese of Calabar, Anglican Communion. He was born on the 12th of February, 1951 to late Rev. & Mrs. G. E. Adeleye, both of Uneme Osu of Akoko-Edo Local Government Area in Edo State. His parents were Teachers all their lives and taught in various levels of schools including the Teachers Training Colleges. (The mother is, however, from Ilara Mokin in Ondo State). He is married to Lady Dorothy Ahunsimere Tunde-Adeleye. Their marriage is blessed with five children (three males and two females). The children are: Tolulope Oshionamhe (United Kingdom), Bomi Esikhovue (Calabar), Femi Aimamoshi (Port Harcourt), Oore-ofe Onose (Calabar) Adelena Oshiorene (Calabar).

EDUCATION:

Bishop Tunde Adeleye attended Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure from 1964 to 1968 where he obtained his West African School Certificate. In 1970, he obtained his HSC (Higher School Certificate) in Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure. He also attended Mid-Western Polytechnic (Benin Campus) (now known as Auchi Polytechnic) where he obtained his Ordinary National Diploma in Secretarial Administration. In 1977 he went to Kwara state College of Technology for his Higher National Diploma but later had his Advanced Pitman Certificate 120/50. He is a trained professional Secretary and Administrator. With the zeal to continue his education, he attended the University of Calabar, Calabar in 1978 and graduated with an honours degree in English. He also attended the Haggai institute of Advanced Christian Leadership Training in Singapore, South East Asia in 1987. In preparation for the ordained ministry he attended Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan (an affiliate with the University of Ibadan), from 1988 to 1991 where he obtained a Diploma in Theology (Dip. Th.)

Rt. Rev. Tuned Adeleye worked in several places including being a Teacher at Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure in 1971, (after graduation from the School); Ipetu-Ijesha Grammar School in 1973. He became the Secretary to the General Manager of Bendel Pharmaceuticals in 1975. In 1976, he was the Secretary to Isoko Local Government Chairman in Ozoro. Later in 1976, he became the secretary to the Academic Secretary, Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi after graduation from the School; in 1983, after graduation from the University he became the National Coordinator, Nigeria Christian Graduate

Fellowship. In 1991, Bishop Adeleye was a Chaplain in the Chaplaincy Services of All Saints' Chapel, University of Benin. He later left the University of Benin for the University of Calabar in 1992 as the first full-time Chaplain.

Bishop Tunde Adeleye was ordained as a Deacon in Anglican Diocese of Akure on 1st of July, 1990. He was ordained as a full Priest in the same Diocese on 30th June 1991. Both ordinations were done by Rt. Rev. Dr. E. B. Gbobigi, the then Bishop of Akure Diocese. He was preferred a Canon in Diocese of Calabar in 1996; and later as an Archdeacon in Diocese of Calabar in 1998. He was elected, consecrated and enthroned Bishop of Calabar Diocese in 1999.

He also held various positions in and outside the Church. For example, he was Chapel Prefect, Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure (1967/1970); Coordinating leader, Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure (1968); member of Executive of the Scripture Union in Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure (1969-1970); Staff Adviser, Scripture Union, Oyemekun Grammar School, Akure (1971-1972); Township (1974); (The first ever Pilgrims Meeting of SU in Akure was held in his father's house); Staff Adviser, Student's Christian Movement (SCM) Ipetu-Ijesha Grammar School, Ipetu-Ijesha (1971-1972); President, Christian Union, Mid Western Polytechnic (Benin Campus) (1973); President, Christian Union, Mid Western Polytechnic (Benin Campus) (1974); Staff Adviser, Christian Union Pilgrims, Auchi (1975); Hall Representative, Christian Union, University of Calabar, Calabar (1979); President, Christian Union, University of Calabar (1979-1980); President, Christian Union, University of Calabar (1980-1981); National Chairman, Nigeria Fellowship of Evangelical Student (NIFES) (1981-1982); The first National Coordinator, Nigeria Christian Graduate Fellowship (1983-1992) (on full time); to mention a few.

As he moved into the ordained ministry, he was appointed Chaplain of All Saints' Chapel, University of Benin, Benin City (1990-1992). He is National Adviser, Nigerian Christian Corpers' Fellowship, (1984 to date); and was, Publicity Secretary, Christian Association of Nigeria (Youth Wing) (Edo State) (1985-1990). In 1992 he became the Chaplain, (full time) Chapel of Redemption, University of Calabar, a position he held till 1999 when he was elected the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Calabar, a position which he occupies since 1999 to date.

He is also the Chairman, Haggai Institute for Advanced Christian Leadership Training Alumni, Cross River State branch (1999 to date); He was recently elected in the United Kingdom as the National Director, sharing of Missions Abroad (SOMA) Nigeria (2004 to date). When the Province of Niger Delta was created he was elected the Episcopal Secretary, Province of Niger Delta, Anglican Communion, Church of Nigeria (2003 to date).

Bishop Adeleye has been awarded with numerous honours from numerous Churches and Institutions. Some include: Students' Union, University of Calabar, (1980 and 1981); Nigeria Christian Corpers Fellowship (1995); Calabar University Christian Union Pilgrims (2003); Cathedral Church of Christ, Lagos (2004); St. Stephen's Anglican Church, Rumueme Parish (2004) and many more.

Bishop Adeleye has written in many magazines, periodicals and publications such as *Sunday Observer*, *Challenges* etc. He has also published a number of books including, *Melody in my heart*, (1984); *Lord is it I?* (1996); *No Stranger* (1996); *My Neighbour*, (1996); *I am strong*, (1996); *The New Man*, (1999), *Be Strong, Do Exploits*, (1999) and *Evangelism Made Easy* (2009)

Bishop Adeleye's personal interests include Music, Preaching, Drama and Sports.

2. MR. JUSTICE KALIO

Meet one of Nigeria's leading authority on peak performance, leadership and sales effectiveness.

Justice Kalio is a dynamic professional speaker with a wonderful ability to inform and inspire audiences toward peak performance and high levels of achievement.

Justice Kalio addresses thousands of men, women and youth groups on the subject of personal and professional development including the staff and executives of many Nigeria's leading organizations. His exciting talks and seminars bring about immediate changes and long term results. He has the remarkable ability to capture and hold audience's attention with a fast moving combination of stories,

examples, humour and concrete practical ideas that get results fast. His overriding passion is to equip individuals and organizations to achieve their maximum best in any profession or services.

Justice Kalio hold a degree in accounting; he is the Managing Consultant of Fphoenix Project Resources, a company based in Port Harcourt. He runs a successful Business/Leadership Academy that has graduated over 3, 000 people, he is also a business coach with Quantum Business School.

Justice Kalio is a regular guest on Aunty KD show on Rivers State Television. He is the author and narrator of bestselling book and audio learning programmes which include:

Books

Developing The Mindset Of A Winner (Published)

Audios

Developing your personal brand

Developing your child's self esteem

Turning your passion into profit

His clients include:

Geomarine Nig. Ltd, Cash Craft Ltd, Morning Star Hospital, First Global Microfinance Bank, Garden City Micro Finance, Clock tower Hotels, Protea Hotels, Celas Memorial International School, City Code Trust, Eyinda International School, Rivers State Ministry of Youth.

Others include The Redeemed Christian Churches, Anglican Communion in Rivers State, Church of God Mission, Port Harcourt Bishopric, etc.

Justice Kalio currently holds speaking engagement with communities; he has been to several communities in Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta States. His programs run from nonprofit to profit making organizations, greatly empowering. His overriding passion is to create meaning, success and achievement through his personal development and peak performance programmes hosted by several organizations including churches.

Topics delivered by justice g. Kalio

1. **Leadership and creativity:** This programme encapsulates all the vitamins necessary for personal and organizational effectiveness. If you feel stagnated and your team seems ineffective. This program is designed to produce instant results. This seminar is a three days program with modules.
2. **Career and Business development:** your evolvement from pay check to profit thinking is fundamental to your career choice and business development. This programme is greatly empowering and has helped people find their perfect work and business. Through this programme, people are now finding fulfilment in life and financial independence. It is entrepreneurial driven. It is a 4 days programme with ten modules. The program is called Fphoenix Entrepreneurial Development.
3. **Financial and Investment Development:** the key to be financially independent is *Financial Intelligence*; the cure for poverty is financial intelligence. This program is designed to help people stop working for money but rather gets their money working for them. Its components starts with changing your belief about money, development investment mentality through giving as the real source of getting. It is a three days programme with eight modules. The program is called "Making the most of your money".
4. **Personal/Professional Development:** What is the secret towards getting a job? How do you sustain and grow on the job? Why do employers retain certain category of staff and sack the rest, the answer is in this highly motivational program with hundred and one topics to get you employable and successful in any career as well as in life. Each module is specifically designed to meet the need of the client, each module last for 1-2 hours.

5. **Building a strong Family:** This is a family values development seminar properly designed to help men provide the right leadership and women a supportive leadership. It provides the master key to effective parenting and training children to be value driven for future leadership. A must programme for every parent. It's a two days seminar with twenty five modules.

3. **MRS. CHRISTIE JUMBO**
Principal, Royal Girls' Academy, Port Harcourt

Christie hails from Buguma in Asari-Toru Local Government Area in Rivers State. She is a committed Christian; married to Mr. L. F. Jumbo, a Chartered Accountant and they are blessed with five children who are accomplished in their various fields of endeavour. She is an old girl of Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elenwo, Port Harcourt and holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education/English from the University of Port Harcourt. She was employed by the Rivers State Post Primary Schools Board in 1985 and taught in Baptist High School, Port Harcourt and Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elenwo. She has more than twenty-five years of teaching experience and is currently the Principal, Royal Girls' Academy, Port Harcourt.

Qualities:

- Has a sound understanding of the education sector and takes pride in mentoring and grooming young minds.
- Quality focused with a passion for continuous improvement in all facets of life.
- Confident, pro-active and innovative.
- Attentive to details, planning, and organization and possesses strong monitoring ability.
- Has entrepreneurial flair and self-motivating attitude.
- Dedicated to maintaining high quality standard in business and in personal goals.

Relationships:

- Has the ability to build positive mutual working relationships.
- Able to influence and persuade others to achieve set targets.
- Excellent communicator with ability to effectively create understanding.

Professionally:

- She has very strong intuitive insight about what ought to be done as well as the direction that will be fruitful.
- She is optimistic and believes that the best can be achieved.
- Has a good sense of timing.

OUR SYNOD THEME

In choosing our Synod theme for now we have to consciously address the Key themes contained in the Motto of our Diocese as chosen by the founding fathers. That Motto is 'To love, teach and preach Christ'.

In the first session of our first Synod we addressed the subject matter of love under the theme "Walking and serving in love". In it we emphasized the need for our love for God to form the basis (foundation) of whatever we are doing in the service of His church and society (His world). In the same vein our collective service to God and man will be best appreciated by Him if it is done in loving consideration by the one for another.

In summary, we are called to render service to God sacrificially, without holding back ourselves and whatever we claim to own which God requires us to give up for the furtherance of His work on earth. It is only by our unfeigned love towards God and His church that such services can be rendered.

In the words of Father Andrew, a 17th century monk and devotional writer, 'The highest love of all finds its fulfilment not in what it keeps but in what it gives'. Similarly in the words of Rev. Canon Igbamerun,

a priest of our Diocese and an inspirational GSM minister, “Love for a fellow Christian is the best identity a disciple of Christ can present. It is valid on earth and in heaven too”.

Our synod theme this year is drawn from Matthew 28: 20^a, “**Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...**”. This theme seeks to address the second critical subject matter contained in our Diocesan Motto: ‘**Teaching**’, that is, discipling unto christian maturity through systematic instruction, those who join the fellowship of the church by their confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In God’s perspectives, only three things are eternal. These are **God Himself, His Word** and the **souls of men and women**. These three eternal things are best stated for us in a command that Jesus gave to His disciples. Today we call that command, ‘**The Great Commission**’. This commission demands that we disciple men and women of all nations. The way we disciple is by teaching all that Jesus commands, which is found in the Word of God. Consequently, the three eternal things are best understood by us in the light of the Great Commission:

“Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee,
to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.
When they saw Him, they worshipped Him; but some doubted.
Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and
earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:
and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
(Matt. 28:18-20).

The passage opens with Jesus meeting His disciples on the top of a mountain after His resurrection. Matthew says that some of them doubted. Jesus tells them He has all the power in heaven and on earth. On the basis of that authority (resource) they were to go and disciple all the nations. They were to make disciples by teaching others all Jesus had commanded them. He closes by saying that He would be with them always.

The objective of the Great Commandment is to go and make disciples of all nations, and this is the main idea of the passage and this also is where the emphasis is focused. Jesus was saying, “this one thing you must do, MAKE DISCIPLES”.

HOW TO MAKE DISCIPLES

Jesus said, “teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you”. To make disciples we must teach people not to just observe but obey. Observe in our day means to see, understand or watch. And this was definitely not the level Jesus was asking His disciples to bring new converts to. Jesus was actually commanding them to instruct His would-be followers to endeavour to obey, i.e. to do all they are taught. To obey means application to the principle must take place. This allows principle to become a reality. A disciple learns with the intention of application, not mere retention of knowledge. Jesus taught the eleven how they were to live if they were going to be His disciples. Now He commands those same eleven to teach their followers everything that He had commanded them, thus making them disciples.

This is where we find a direct link between this year’s synod theme and that of 2010. Last year, the emphasis was on love. This year, it is on making people (those taught) obey all things commanded. It is in obeying the teachings of Christ that our love for God and the church is demonstrated (John 14: 23).

When Peter saw three thousand converted at Pentecost, he realized his job had only started. Jesus said make disciples, not converts.

“Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and in Prayer.” Acts 2: 41, 42.

It is of little wonder the next verse says the converts continued in the apostles' doctrine. What was the Apostles' Doctrine? It was all the things Jesus had taught them. The apostles were commanded to teach the doctrine to the 3, 000 in an effort to disciple them.

CHRIST'S LEADERSHIP GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

After dying for our sins on the cross, our Lord Jesus ascended (up) to heaven to be enthroned at the right hand of God, our heavenly Father (Acts 1: 9-11; Eph 1: 20-22). From that place of authority He gave leadership gifts to the church. He gave:

1. **Apostles** to GUARD the church from false doctrine and practice
2. **Prophets** to GUIDE the church in evangelism and missionary outreach,
3. **Evangelists** to GATHER in the unbelievers through preaching the Word with the accompaniment of healing, exorcism (deliverance) and miracles,
4. **Pastors** to GROW believers until they reach spiritual maturity,
5. **Teachers** to GROUND the believers on the solid rock Christ Jesus.

Teachers are enabled (anointed) by the Holy Spirit to teach/help others (saints) understand God's word (the Bible) and God's plan. The gift of teaching is often combined with the role of pastor or elder (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1: 9).

JESUS OUR MODEL

In all of these leadership gifts, the scriptures present Jesus as our model.

He is called:

- (a) Apostle (Hebrews 3:1),
- (b) Prophet (Luke 24: 19; John 4: 19; Acts 3: 22-26)
- (c) Evangelist (Luke 4: 18)
- (d) Pastor (John 10: 2; Heb 13: 20; 1 Pt 5: 4), and
- (e) Teacher (John 3: 2)

JESUS, THE GREAT TEACHER

All gospel writers present Jesus as a great teacher – Matthew 4: 23; 5:2; 7:29; Mark 6:34; Luke 4: 15; 5: 3 and John 3:2; 7: 14; 8:2.

Through teaching Jesus was able to raise faithful disciples, those intent upon becoming like Him who continued with His earthly ministry after His ascension.

From the gospels we identify four methods Jesus employed in conveying His teachings.

1. First, He taught through His *many speeches*, Jesus would usually sit down like a teacher and then His pupils would come round Him because they knew he was going to say something wise and memorable. He delivered His speeches slowly and thoughtfully and usually interspersed with occasional silence. See the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5).
2. His second method of teaching was allied to the first. It was to utter one single *important piece of wisdom*, and then fall silent again. Such a remark struck His pupils as important because He had evidently thought over it for a long time or because it expressed His character very completely. They felt that no one else could possibly have said it: so they remembered it. Sometimes again Jesus would give a lesson by *telling a story* (parables) Mark 4:2. The story was usually interesting for its own sake, and it always illustrated a religious and moral lesson. But He did not explain the exact application of the lesson: sometimes He told only His pupils in their closets (Matt. 13: 37; 24: 33; Mark 4:34; Luke 8:11; 24: 27); sometimes He left it all for them to work out themselves.
3. Thirdly, like all great teachers Jesus knew that a picture is worth a thousand words and that people learn most quickly by doing something or seeing something done. Therefore He punctuated all His teaching by *performing a number of acts* (miracles) which meant something. They were symbols, or they were rituals. For example, He said little about marriage, and little

about drink. But the first miracle told of Him in John's gospel was the turning of water into wine to help the festivities at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. He would not have said more plainly that He approved of both marriage and drinking of good "wine" (John 2:10). And the last lesson He taught His disciples before His arrest was the ritual of sharing a meal of Bread and Wine, to which He gave a deep and deathless meaning. There are many of these gestures in His life. Many of them are as clear to us as though we had seen them; and the ritual of Jesus' last supper is celebrated every hour somewhere in the world.

4. Jesus' fourth method of teaching was *propaganda*. After His pupils (disciples) had learnt what they could, He sent them out to travel all over Palestine and spread His teaching. Not many teachers do this, even when they have a godly message. Jesus' teachings had enormous effect due largely to His training teachers to spread it and to reach other teachers.

GOD, ALSO A TEACHER

God the Father is also presented to us in scriptures as a teacher. Deut.4: 36, He is presented as an instructor. In Exodus 4:15, He promised to instruct Moses and Aaron on what to tell Pharaoh, King of Egypt and give them utterance.

The Psalmist presents Him as One who shows others their chosen paths; a guide and adviser (Psalm 25: 12; 32: 8); and an early Teacher (Psalm 71: 17) – from childhood.

Both prophets Isaiah and Micah portray Him as One who teaches men His ways, what is good and leads us along the paths we should follow (Isaiah 2: 3; 48: 17; Micah 4:2).

WHO ARE TO ENGAGE IN TEACHING?

Reading through the scriptures we find that the following are enjoined to engage in the teaching ministry of the Church;

1. The Priests and the Levites (Leviticus 10: 11; Ezekiel 44: 15ff)
2. Parents and god-parents (Deut 6:7)
3. Pastors and Bishops (1Timothy 4: 11)
4. Leaders at all Church levels, (2 Timothy 2: 24). Church leaders/ministers whether they be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, lay readers, children/youth ministers, singers, church council members etc are God's special gifts to His Church. Their responsibility or duty as ministers is to equip God's people to do His work and build up the Church, the Body of Christ.
5. Everybody who is a believer in Christ and has received the teachings of Christ has a duty to impart that knowledge of the gospel directly or indirectly by example to another person. This is one quick way they can start attaining maturity in the faith of Christ (Col 3: 16; 2 Tim. 2: 1, 2; Psalm 78: 6).

Our church and individual Christian missionary endeavours must concentrate on teaching the Word. The emphasis of the apostles was clearly upon teaching:

- i. The Jewish authorities directed their opposition at the apostles' speaking and teaching in the name of Jesus (Acts 4: 18);
- ii. Miraculously released from prison, Peter and John were in the temple again teaching the people (Acts 5:25);
- iii. The apostles taught in Jesus name so effectively that the opposing authorities said that they had filled Jerusalem with their teaching (Acts 5: 28);
- iv. Every day in the temple and at home the apostles did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as Christ (Act 5:42)
- v. Following the conference at Jerusalem, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and stayed there, "where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord" (Acts 15: 15);
- vi. Having received the assurance from the Lord that He was calling out many people, Paul continued in Corinth for eighteen months "teaching them the word of God" (Acts 18: 11);
- vii. At the end of the Acts of the Apostles we find Paul confined to his lodgings, but he "preached the Kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 28: 31).

A right balance is clearly necessary between teaching and preaching (Acts 8: 5; 25, 35, 40, 15: 35; 28: 31).

The apostolic pattern was to deliberately entrust Christian teaching to faithful men who, in turn, would be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2: 2). They learnt this pattern from Christ Himself. And the present day church is not expected to do any less.

WHAT SHOULD WE TEACH?

Part of the holy ordinances God set for the priests that kept the charge of His sanctuary in the time of prophet Ezekiel was that they were to teach His people “the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean” (Ezekiel 44: 23).

The men from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim who were placed in the cities of Samaria by the conquering King of Assyria in the stead of the children of Israel were identified from the beginning of their dwelling there to be a people who “feared not the Lord”, and “know not the manner of the God of the land” (i.e. God of Israel), against whom the Lord sent lions to slay some of them. The King of Assyria responded to that challenge by sending one of the exiled priests to go back to Samaria to teach the foreigners dwelling there “the manner of the god of the land” and “how they should fear the LORD” (2 Kings 17: 20 – 28). In other words, we are to teach people to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts (Titus 2:12).

Jesus, while responding to the Jewish religious leaders who queried the authority behind His teachings, said, “I am not teaching my own ideas, but those of God who sent me” (John 7: 16).

In the light of the above, we the clergy, lay readers, evangelists, Sunday school and Children’s Ministry teachers, church leaders and Christians at large are called upon to use our ‘pulpits’ to generally teach people:

- to fear (reverence) God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12: 13; Exodus 20: 1-17; Matt 19: 18-19, 21),
- to love God (Deut. 6:5; 10: 12), His Church (1John 3:14), one’s neighbour (Matt. 5: 43), and nation (Neh. 2: 3).
- to have faith and trust in God (2Chron. 20: 20, Psalm 37: 3),
- to be holy and peace-loving (Heb. 12: 14),
- to be prayerful and studious (Luke 18: 1; Isa. 34: 16),
- to be charitable, good and support God’s work with part of the resources (blessings) he has bestowed on them (1Pet. 4: 8; Ps. 34: 14, 2Tim 6: 18),
- to respect their Christian leaders, parents and those in secular authority ((Heb. 13: 7; 1Tim. 5: 17; Lev. 19: 3; Prov. 23: 22; Rom. 13: 1),
- to be sincere, honest and just in all their dealings within and outside the church (Eph. 4: 25; Lev. 19: 35;)
- to show themselves trustworthy,
- to imbibe the virtues of hard work, diligence, industry and sacrificial/humble service to God and man (Matt. 20: 20-28),
- to be content and avoid greed (1Tim 6:7; Lk. 12: 15), and
- to have respect for human lives (Ex 20: 13, Gen. 9: 6; 2Sam 12:9).

Many have chosen to be Christians but do not know what true faith in Christ is all about; What the Lord requires of them and the challenges that abound on the ‘way’. It is our duty as Christian teachers to help them understand what is involved in the path they have chosen.

We are advised to teach people sound doctrine (Titus 2:1), to obey, i.e. to practice everything the Lord Himself has commanded that we do. We are not permitted to propagate our private ideas which may be spiritually destructive or injurious. We should prayerfully depend on the Holy Spirit who Himself guides and leads us into all truths and not to wander from the teachings of Christ (2John 9).

We are to teach people how they ought to behave or generally comport themselves in and outside the church, (Titus 2: 1-10).

WHOM SHOULD WE TEACH?

Following the example of God who is presented to us as an early teacher (Psalm 71: 17), we are to pay serious attention to our children at home, church and at schools from infancy up to their adolescent years. This is the best time to teach, instruct and impart godly knowledge into them. Whatever they receive at this early stage of their lives will never depart from them. (Gen. 18: 17-29 Amp)

“Train up a child in the way he should go:
and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”
(Proverbs 22:6) –KJV

Let us teach them godly precepts and values which will guide them through life (Deut. 6: 6 – 7; Proverbs 6: 20 – 23); which they in turn will be proud of and courageous to constantly tell others (Ps. 71: 17b).

We are to teach the aged men and women (Titus 2: 2, 3); the young men and women (vs 4-8); and even our servants (vs 9) in our various churches and homes. We should teach the educated and the uneducated (Lk 5: 17;) the rich (1 Tim 6: 17, 18; Matt. 19: 16-21) and the poor (Matt 5: 3).

WHERE AND WHEN SHOULD WE TEACH?

During His earthly ministry Jesus taught people in several places and on different occasions. He taught openly in the temple (John 7:10), in the synagogues and on the Sabbath days(Lk 13: 10; 4:16, 31, 44; 6:6), in a desert place (vs 42), by the sea/lake shore (Lk 5: 1) out of ships/boats (vs 3), in the cities and villages (Lk 4: 43, 5: 12; 8: 1-4) in homes and at meals (Lk 5: 29); in the plain (6: 17; 7:36; 10: 38-42), on the high seas amidst raging storms (Lk 8:22-25) when the disciples were losing their faith, from mountain tops (Matt 5: 1); in public places, to the multitudes, when with children (Matt. 19: 13-15), and one on one (John 4: 5-26).

Paul and the other apostles of Christ taught at homes, in public gatherings, temples, market places, town halls, Synagogues, etc.

“And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). KJV

We too should explore all avenues available to us to teach people faith in and the faith of Christ and the practice of the same. Such places would include all weekly services and activities of the church, special preparatory classes for baptism, confirmation, induction and admission of baptized members into groups of the church, marriage counselling sessions, weddings, funerals, home fellowships, city, village/street outreaches (2nd Chron. 17: 7), during visitation and at pastoral counselling session, in parsonages and homes (Acts 28: 23a).

WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE FROM TEACHERS OF HIS WORD IN ORDER FOR THEIR MESSAGE TO IMPACT ON THE CONGREGATIONS?

In order for our teaching ministry to produce results,

1. God requires that every teacher of the Word should spiritually prepare himself as Ezra did before going to teach God's people (Ezra 7:10). This preparation should come in the way of thorough study of God's word (2Tim. 2: 15), meditation on it and of course, self purification and consecration through prayer to God (2Timothy 2: 21; 2Chron. 29: 15; Luke 1: 17). The teaching of God's word is a spiritual task. And in the realm of the spirit preparation will always precede blessings. No farmer expects harvest until the ground had been broken up (Hosea 10: 24). Teachers must strive to first hear the message from God before going to teach His people. If we make it a habit to withdraw into God's presence in prayer, we shall always come out with a message for the people (Deut. 5: 27-33).
2. Ezra did not only seek the law of the Lord and to teach Israel God's statutes and judgement but also sought to do it (Ezra 7:10). God expects clergymen, church leaders, parents and every Christian teacher of His word to be doers of what they teach. God demands from us obedience (practice of what we teach) which is better than the sacrifice of teaching (Joshua 11: 15; 1Sam 15:

- 22). We shall be raising worthy disciples of Christ if we purpose and actually live by example just as Christ and other biblical brethren of old did (John 13: 15; Heb. 3: 1; 12: 2; 1Cor. 4: 16; 7: 7; Phil. 3: 7).
3. God desires that we teach His word intending that those we teach understand (Neh. 8: 7) and later become God's vessels of honour in the overall ministry of the Church. Pastors and teachers are ordained or commissioned to carry out a servant-ministry in the Body of Christ. One of the ways we can exercise this ministry is through teaching. It is our duty to identify those within the church who are burning with godly zeal, like Apollos, but lack deep knowledge and understanding of the things of the spirit and explain the scriptures more accurately to such persons. This was the part a couple by name Aquilla and Priscilla played in the life of Apollos at Ephesus (Acts 18: 24-26). Every teacher like this couple should be fully committed to his/her ministry and show diligence in the way he/she goes about the task of instructing others. Paul admonished the Christians in Rome in these words "...if you are a teacher" (and every pastor and church leader should be apt to teach), "do a good job of teaching" (Rome 12: 7b).
 4. Our teaching ministry will be effective if we go about it "with all confidence" (Acts 28: 31). Jesus' teaching ministry was remarkably different from that of the Scribes and Pharisees because of the confidence, power, authority and holy boldness (from the power of the Holy Spirit) with which he taught (Matthew 7: 28, 29; Luke 4: 32). The apostles also manifested this holy boldness throughout the period of their ministry among the Jews and gentiles. Those who saw them attributed their confidence and boldness, despite being "unlearned and ignorant men", to their having been with Jesus (Acts 4: 13). At another occasion "they spake the word of God with boldness" after they had prayed" and "were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 4:31). If our teaching ministry will ever impact on people's lives then we must cultivate a living relationship with Jesus, the Great Teacher Himself. We must be prayerful and full of the Holy Spirit.
 5. The teaching that produces results is sometimes associated with frustration and pains arising from the poor response or attitude of the taught. The teacher should not give up on the class or flock. He should be motivated by the patience and perseverance of the Divine Teacher Himself and continue to exercise his ministry (Jer. 32: 33; Heb 10: 36; James 5: 7) "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2Timothy 4: 2 – KJV).

THE GOALS OR AIMS OF THE TEACHING MINISTRY

When we stand in our various offices to instruct others from the Bible we should be aiming at achieving the following:

1. Sharing our knowledge of Christ and His gospel with those who do not yet know Him with a view to bringing them to the level of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20: 21),
2. Showing the people in the manner of Samuel to Saul, the word of God (1Sam 9:27),
3. Encouraging people to live a responsible, christian (Christ-like) life on a daily basis, in accordance with God's will,
4. Preparing all God's people for the work of christian service, thus building up the Body of Christ, the Church (Eph 4: 12). Realizing that no one pastor or team of pastors can do all the various aspects of church ministry alone, clergymen should train people in their congregations to assist them in the teaching and other ministries of the Church. Because we are aiming at equipping the saints for christian service they should not be allowed to wallow in ignorance of any aspect of the

Church's doctrine. Pastors, teachers should encourage people to ask them questions on areas of the day's/week's lesson or sermon they do not understand,

5. Making people to "know God's Wisdom in all its different forms" (Eph. 3: 9, 10); thus systematically and progressively moving them from being mere professing Christians to practising ones. (Malachi 2: 7)
6. Teaching men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, while looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (Titus 2:12, 13).

THE VALUE OF TEACHING

What will be the result of effective teaching in the Church and society?

1. The Church stands to gain when the Word of God is effectively taught. There will be increase in spiritual knowledge and understanding particularly to those who love and gladly receive it (Prov. 1: 5-7; 12: 1).
2. At the home level there will be filial honour and obedience toward the parents from a child that is well instructed.
3. The Word of God is a light (Psalm 19: 8; Prov. 6: 23).

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path". Ps 119:105

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth
understanding unto the simple". Ps 119:130

Anyone, Church or society that is guided by the Word of God will not walk in the darkness of sin and corruption but will be divinely restrained from evil (Prov. 6: 24 – 26).

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CHURCH OR SOCIETY LACKS GODLY INSTRUCTION AND/OR TEACHING PRIESTS/LEADERS?

The Priests' lips should guard knowledge and people should go to them for instruction (Malachi 2: 7). They should receive the message, i.e. the law, from the mouth of God Himself and in turn open their own mouths and teach the people as Jesus did:

"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,..."
(Matt. 5: 2)

Part of the duties of parents is to nurture (Eph. 6: 4), train (Prov. 22: 6), teach (Deut. 6: 7) their children, imparting into them godly knowledge, and unfeigned faith with good example (2Tim. 1: 5).

When clergymen, Christian elders, teachers, leaders and parents fail in this divinely ordained duty of teaching, and in a society where people despise godly instructions, the Church, family and society at large will only be left with a number of disastrous results to contend with:

1. Both Church, family and society will be made up of spiritually ignorant folks who rather than walk by God's righteous standards, will go about to establish their own righteousness, not having been taught or submitted themselves to God's righteousness (Romans 10: 3). 2Chronicles, chapter 15 verses 3, 5, 6 present us with a very clear picture of what the Church and society will look like when God and His Word are forsaken and godly teachers/instructors lacking:

“Now for a long season Israel hath been without the true God, and without a teaching priest, and without law... And in those times there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the countries. And nation was destroyed of nation, and city of city; for God did vex them with all adversity.”

A people without the Word or who reject it will be spiritually destitute. This explains why most churches/denominations, families and societies have found themselves in their present state of adversity and misery.

In the words of apostle Paul, when people are not exposed or receptive to godly instruction, they operate with “darkened understanding” and “blinded hearts” (Eph. 4: 18). What follows is that violence, robbery and corruption in all its forms will take over the land (Amos 3: 10).

Teaching preserves the future of the family, Church and society. It was those taught by Jesus that continued His earthly ministry after He ascended into heaven. If we fail to teach NOW we shall be destroying the family values, Church and society of tomorrow.

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this discussion on our theme, we charge all clergymen, Christian leaders and teachers to see their call to teach God’s people as a sacred mandate. They should go about this commission “with humility of mind, keeping back nothing” that is to be profitable to the hearer (Acts 20: 19, 20). A Christian teacher who fails in this duty sins against God (1Sam 12:23). He helps to promote ignorance which itself exposes men to sin.

The word of God which the Church teaches purifies and possesses the power to save the soul of the hearer. Consequently, those who are taught are to receive it gladly (Acts 2: 41) and with meekness of heart. (James 1: 21) like Mary of old (Lk. 10: 38-39).

Like the Disciples and the Ethiopian Eunuch, they should be teachable (Acts 2: 41; 17: 11; 1Thes. 2: 13; Lk. 11: 1; Acts 8: 31).

In addition to hearing the Word, they should be doers of it without which they will be guilty of self-deception (James 1: 22). Every hearer should strengthen his spiritual foundation through obedience. Obedience to the teachings of Christ presents the hearer as “a wise man”, while disobedience presents him as “a foolish man”. Hear what Christ Himself said:

“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.” Matt 7:24-27KJV.

The scriptures tell us (and these are promised blessings from God) that those who do, i.e. obey God’s word “shall be justified” (Rom. 2: 13); they shall be unto God “a peculiar treasure... above all people” (Ex. 19: 5); “it shall be well with them and with their children forever” (Deut. 5: 29); they will enjoy length of days (1Kings 3: 14); shall be “blessed in their deed” (James 1: 25); and lastly, they shall have right to the tree of life, and enter into the city through the gates (Rev. 22: 14).

Finally, the taught should grow up unto Christian maturity and not remain perpetual babes in the things of the spirit. They should justify the quantity of the “sincere milk of the Word” which

they have constantly taken over the years by the level of their spiritual growth (Heb. 5: 12 – end; 6: 1-2; 1Pet. 2: 2).

****PROGRESS REPORTS****

1. APPROVAL AND INAUGURATION OF NEW PARISHES

Two of our church stations which applied to the Diocesan Board to become Parishes were approved after due inspections and recommendation by their Archdeaconry Boards and a committee of the Diocese headed by The Venerable F. N. Akah, JP.

The churches are **Bethel Anglican Church, Rumuibekwe Parish**, inaugurated on Sunday, 26th September, 2010 and **Church of The Epiphany, Azumini – Rumuokwursi Parish**, inaugurated on Sunday, 23rd January, 2011.

2. EPISCOPAL FUNCTIONS CARRIED OUT FROM AUGUST 2010 TO JULY 2011.

From the beginning of this Synod year in August last to this month of July 2011 we have carried out a number of functions within the Diocese as part of the duties of our office as the Diocesan. These include Dedications, Foundation Stone laying, Confirmations, Inaugurations, Christening of newly established churches, amongst others.

Below is a tabulated summary of Episcopal functions carried out within the period under review.

S/N	DATE	CHURCH/INSTITUTION	E V E N T S			
			DEDICATION	INAUGURATION	FOUNDATION STONE LAYING	CONFIRMATION
1						
1	5/9/10	Evo South-East Archdeaconry				26 Confirmed Men: 12 Women: 14
2	25/9/10 6/3/11	ACMGS, Eledenwo	Hostel Block Renovated by Evo Council of Knights Dedication of New Classroom Blocks Renovated by the CGK, Eledenwo			
3	26/9/10 2/7/11	Bethel Ang. Church, Rumuibekwe Parish	Church Bus purchased by the women, Toilet facility, Marble Altar Table, Bishop's Throne, Marble Credence Table, Pulpit, Borehole with storage facilities & Baptismal Font.	Parish Inauguration		6 Confirmed Men: 3 Women: 3
4	26/9/10 13/5/11	Evo Diocesan MU/WG	Diocesan Women's Bus	2011 Diocesan women's Conference Planning Committee		
5	23/10/10	Diocesan Missions and Evangelism Board	Diocesan Volunteer Missionaries			
6	31/10/10	New Covenant Anglican Church, Eliminigwe, Eledenwo			Church Building	
7	31/10/10	St. Mark's Ang. Church, Eledenwo Deanery	Refurbished Children's Hall by		Hall and Chalets	

			MU/WG.			
8	14/11/10 12/2/11 21/4/11	St. Michael's Ang. Church, Rumuomasi Deanery	Church Bus Official Car (Jeep) donated by Eze W. W. Onunwor's family 65 KVA Gen. Set Donated by Obio/Akpor Chairman		Multipurpose Hall	40 confirmed Men: 16 Women: 24
9	21/11/10 4/12/10	Anglican Youth Fellowship	Diocesan AYF Patrons/Patronesses	Evo Diocesan Council		
10	4/12/10 4/12/10 5/12/10 20/2/11 3/4/11	Anglican Church of the Pentecost, Ahia-Woji. St. Nicholas' Anglican Church Woji District.	Church Building 75 KVA Gen. Set Donated By The Women		Church Building New Parsonage Building	65 Confirmed Men: 28 Women: 37
11	12/12/10	Oro-igwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry First Anniversary Celebration.				62 Confirmed Men: 28 Women: 34
12	23/1/11	Church of the Epiphany, Azumini Rumuokwurusi Parish		Parish Inauguration	Parsonage/Hall	23 Confirmed Men: 2 Women: 21
13	4/2/11	Rivers State Judiciary	New High Court Complex			
14	6/3/11	Chapel of Grace & Knowledge, ACMGS, Elenwo.	Evangelism Bus			
15	10/4/11	Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Elimgbu Parish	Marbel Lectern Donated by Chief Sir Nelson Wali (A Catholic)			
16	15/4/11	Bishop's Office		2011 Diocesan Synod Planning, Protocols, Harvest and Education Infrastructural Dev. Fund Raising Committees		
17	17/4/11	King of Glory Anglican Church, Mini-Ewa, Rumuobiokani	Altar Table, Bishop's Seat, other Clergy Seats, Reading Desk, Pews, Book Shelf, Cupboard			
18	8/5/11	Christ, The Redeemer Anglican Church, Eliogbolo	Dedication of Worship Centre			
19	15/5/11	Holy City Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi	Altar, Altar Table, Bishop & Clergy Seats, Lectern			
20	15/5/11	Bethany Anglican Church, Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi	Church Building, Musical Instruments, Generator			
21	22/5/11	St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery	Dedication of Sacrament and Church A/C units			36 Confirmed Men: 15 Women: 21
22	27/7/11	Church of the Holy Spirit, Elenwo District	Church Women's Bus Dedication			
23	3/7/11	Holy Ghost Anglican Church, Iriebe housing Estate Parish				36 Confirmed Men: 16 Women: 20

CHURCHES CHRISTENED

The following Churches were christened by us during the period under review. They are:

S/N	OLD NAME/DATE PLANTED	NEW NAME/DATE CHRISTENED
1	Anglican Worship Centre – 07/02/ 2010	The Great Physician Anglican Church, Atali – 19/12/2010
2	Anglican Worship Centre, Eliowhani, Okporo – 29/08/2010	Faith Community Anglican Church, Eliowhani, Okporo – 27/02/2011
3	Anglican Worship Centre, Mini-Ewa, Rumuobiokani – 30/11/2008	King of Glory Anglican Church, Mini-Ewa, Rumuobiokani – 17/02/2011
4	Anglican Worship Centre, Eliogbolo – 07/11/2010	Christ, The Redeemer Anglican Church, Eliogbolo – 08/05/2011
5	Anglican Worship Centre, New Jerusalem Estate, Azumini, Rumuokwurusi – 10/05/2010	Holy City Anglican Church, New Jerusalem Estate, Azumini, Rumuokwurusi – 15/05/2011
6	Anglican Worship Centre, Azumini, Rumuokwurusi – 02/05/2011	Bethany Anglican Church, Azumini, Rumuokwurusi – 15/05/2011

2011 HOLY WEEK VISITS TO CHURCHES

We worshipped with some of our upcoming and older churches during the commemoration of the Holy Week this year. The churches visited included the Anglican Worship Centre (now King of Glory Anglican Church), Mini-Ewa, Rumuobiokani on *Palm Sunday*, 17th/04/2011 for formal Christening; St. James' Church, Iriebe Parish on Wednesday, 20/04/2011 for the *Service of the Eucharist, Church of The Resurrection, Rumuomasi* on 21/04/2011 for *Maundy Thursday Service of the Eucharist and Washing of Feet*; Immanuel Church, Ogbatai – Woji on *Good Friday*, 22/04/2011 for the service of the *Liturgy of the Word* and at the All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi on the same day for the *Liturgical Three-Hour Service*.

We worshipped at the Cathedral again on *Easter Day*, Tuesday, 24/04/2011.

These visits afforded us the opportunity to appraise the work being done by the pastors, teachers and leadership of the churches visited, encourage them in their faith in Christ, teach the lessons of the season and prayerfully bless them.

SPECIAL DIOCESAN SERVICES/CONVOCATIONS

Maiden Diocesan Harvest

The Clergy and laity of our Diocese converged on St. Nicholas' Church, Woji District with grateful hearts to appreciate God on Saturday 27th November, 2010 for the *Maiden Diocesan Harvest Thanksgiving Service*. It was a colourful and bountiful outing though the turnout was not too impressive. We look forward to better participation in subsequent harvests. We commend the Chairman of the Diocesan Harvest Committee, Sir Silas Nnodi and the members for a job well done.

Rededication Service

We began the year 2011 with a Rededication Service on Sunday, 16/1/2011 at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Elelenwo District, where we also unveiled our theme for the year “**ABUNDANT HARVEST**”. The attendance was quite impressive and we commend everyone for the effort made to be part of the service.

Cathedral Lecture

As part of our low-key celebration of our Diocesan Second Anniversary, we again converged on the Cathedral Church of All Saints', Rumuokwurusi on Thursday, 7th July, 2011 for the second edition of our annual CATHEDRAL LECTURE, on the topic: **Contending For The Faith In A Pluralistic Society** which was delivered by the Venerable Obioma Onwuzurumba, the Chaplain of the Aso Rock Villa Chapel in the Presidency, Abuja. We were all blessed by his presentation. We thank the Canon Residentiary, The Rev. Canon Chris Chukuwmati and the leadership of the Cathedral church for undertaking to host the event for the Diocese.

Service of Induction and Admission into MCA, MU/WG,

The doors of Bethel Anglican Church, Rumuibekwe Parish were opened to us on Saturday, 2nd July, 2011 for the second Diocesan Service of Induction and Admission of new members into the Diocesan Men's Christian Association (DMCA), Women's Guild and Worldwide Mothers' Union respectively. A total of **53** men were inducted into the Diocesan MCA, **118** women into the Diocesan Women's Guild and **72** into the Mothers' Union. We congratulate these brothers and sisters and admonish them to live up to the aims and objectives of their various groups and the oath of their induction. We are pleased with the efforts of the Vicar, Rev. Cephas Okarefe and members of the Rumuibekwe Parish in hosting the event.

Service of Ordination, Installation and Collation

On Sunday, 10th July, 2011 we were again at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Rumuokwurusi for the Diaconate Ordination Service of Ordinand Anderson Owbor (Now Reverend), the installation/institution of the Rev. Chris Chukwumati as Canon and Canon Residentiary of the Cathedral, and the Collation of Rev. Canon Alex Usifoh as Archdeacon in the Diocese of Edo. We congratulate them and wish them many years of fruitful service in God's Vineyard.

CONFERENCES, TRAININGS AND RETREATS

As a young Diocese we believe strongly that if we expose the clergy and laity to the right kind of training they will be in a position to render quality services to the Church and become stronger and more deeply rooted in their churchmanship.

Consequently, capacity building was emphasised at the Diocesan, Cathedral, Archdeaconry, Deanery, Parish, Ministry/Activity groups' levels.

As part of our strategy to achieving our goal in the area of capacity building, we have engaged the services of Glory Educational and Management Consultants for a period of three years to assist us in the Sensitization of groups and unit leaders towards Diocesan programmes; Supervision and Development.

A **Diocesan Discipleship/Revival Conference** was held at St. Nicholas' Anglican Church, Woji District from Wednesday 6th to Sunday, 10th October, 2010 with the theme: "Following in the steps of Christ". The conference was a timely one as it called on believers to return to the sound christian and apostolic doctrines of life in Christ from which so many have departed. Activities of the conference included special prayer sessions, ministers' conference, expositions, seminars, Bible studies and School of Ministry on different topics. Speakers included the Most Rev. Edmund Akanya, the Archbishop of Kaduna Province, We, the Chief host, Rt. Rev. Innocent U. Ordu, JP, The Venerable Chris Okeke of Owerri Diocese and a host of others.

We commend the great work done by the Rev. Cephas Okarefe, the Chaplain of the Diocesan Sunday School and Discipleship Ministry and other officers and members of that ministry in hosting that rich conference for the Diocese.

Third Lausanne Congress On World Evangelisation, Cape Town, 2010

Six of our Priests – Ven. S. C. Opara, Ven. Alex Usifoh, Rev. Canon Godwin Chinda, Rev. Canon Charles Mordi, Rev. Cephas Okarefe and Rev. Kingsley Ohajianya and a Church teacher – Collins Daniel, were among the 4000 Christian leaders from across the world that participated in the 3rd Lausanne Congress on World evangelization which held in Cape Town, South Africa from the 16th to 25th October, 2010. This congress which initiates plans for global missions and evangelism holds every ten years since 1974. It was organized by the Lausanne movement led by the world renowned evangelist, Dr. Billy Graham and Dr. John Stott, a notable theologian and priest of the Church of England (Anglican Communion.)

We trust that our participants at the congress must have received some insights into how to go about their Church mission, evangelism and development vision.

They were sponsored by their Churches and some very good-spirited friends and well wishers at our request. We thank them.

All Africa Anglican Bishops' Conference, AABC 2, Uganda

The city of Entebbe, Uganda played host to over three hundred and fifty Archbishops and Bishops from the Anglican Provinces of Burundi, Central Africa, Congo, Egypt, Indian Ocean, Kenya, Nigeria, Southern Africa, Sudan, Tanzania and host, Uganda from 24th to 30th August, 2010. It was the second All Africa Anglican Bishops' Conference. The conference had as its theme “**Securing our future, Unlocking our Potentials**” (Hebrews 12: 1-2).

The Ugandan President, Yoweri Museveni, his Prime Minister and Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev. Rowan Williams addressed the conference. Papers were presented by various speakers and extensive discussions held on the numerous political, socio-economic and religious challenges/crises facing African nations; and how these can be pragmatically addressed by both government and Church, particularly through the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations.

Delegates were hosted to a Banquet at the State House by the President and also went on a guided tour of some historical sites, including the Uganda Christian University. On Sunday, 29th we worshipped in several Anglican churches within Entebbe, Kampala city and outskirts. We were at St. John's Church, Entebbe.

Church Of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Bishop's Retreat

We took part in the beginning-of-the-year Bishops Retreat which held at the Ibru Retreat Centre, Agbhara-Otor, Delta State from 3rd to 9th January, 2011. The theme was “**A Living Sacrifice**” (Rom. 12: 1). We were challenged even as Bishops to continually offer ourselves to God as living sacrifices in order to be able to offer Him reasonable and acceptable services.

Diocesan Bishop, Clergy And Wives Retreat

In our continued effort at exposing the clergy and their Wives to the skills they need to carry out their ministerial duties more efficiently, a special retreat with the theme: “**The Priest, A Messenger To God's People**” (Isaiah 6: 8) was held for them with the Bishop participating fully from Monday, January 31st to Thursday, February 2nd, 2011 at the Archbishop Peter Akinola Retreat Centre, Rumuobiokani. Speakers at the Retreat included the Venerable Michael Nwoko of Trinity College Umuahia, Mr. Kiki Briggs of The Glory Educational and Management Consultancy, Barrister Bernard Dienye, Sir Dr. Bon Eneh, and they treated such topics as ‘**The Priest: a messenger, His Message and Missionary calling**’, ‘**Tips on godly Fund Raising**’, ‘**Understanding the psychology of the youth**’, ‘**Building the congregation through effective home fellowships**’, and ‘**Health Matters**’, etc, etc.

There was also a special time with the laity during which the Bishop and clergy interacted with some founding fathers of our Diocese and key members of the House of Laity. Those present were Sir Chief S. A. Wutche, Sir Collins N. Amadi, Sir Silas Nnodi, Mr. G. I. Ebenezer, and Mr. John Okene.

*****Alpha Course In The United Kingdom*****

Post Vestry Meetings Diocesan Leadership Training/Workshop

Following the emergence of new leaders at the 2011 Church Vestry meetings, a special training/workshop was organized by us in three modules for all those elected into the various Deanery, Parish and Church Station Councils between March 11 – 26, this year.

Speakers at these trainings/workshop included Bro. Kiki Briggs of the Glory Educational Management Consultants, Bro Steve Adindu Ogamba of the Wesley Methodist Church, Harbour Road, Port Harcourt, Dame Meg Orianwo, Rev. Cephas Okarefe, Dr. O. N. Iragunima of St. Matthew's Church, Nkpogu/Atinu Critical Care Hospital, Elelenwo, Ven. Dr. B. A. Obuoforibo of the Diocese of Okrika, Rev. Clement Emekene of the Glory Reign Assembly and we, the Bishop, Rt. Rev. Innocent Ordu, JP.

These speakers treated such topics as 'The essential qualities (Characteristics) of a true Christian Leader;

"Leadership Attitudes",

"Fostering team-spirit through a healthy clergy/laity relationship",

"Modern Church growth techniques and challenges",

"Leadership in the Anglican Church: Things worth knowing",

"The role of leadership in the Church's Missionary enterprise".

The trainings were organized to equip all church leaders including those of the various Diocesan activity groups for better understanding of their church leadership roles and more effective service to the Church of God. We pray that knowledge acquired will be put into more beneficial use by participants for the good of their respective churches and our Diocese.

Training For Diocesan Lay Readers

The Diocesan Council for continuing Education organized training programmes in three zones to bring our lay readers up to a new working horizon and better understanding of their spiritual and liturgical roles. The training which commenced on Saturday, 19th February was concluded on Saturday, 14th May, 2011. Over 200 lay readers took part in the training.

Training For Diocesan And Parish Clerks And Other Office Staff

For more efficient performance on the part of these categories of our Diocesan Workforce, a special three-day Training/Workshop was organized by our office for them in conjunction with FPHOENIX PROJECTS, Port Harcourt from Wednesday, 25th to Friday, 27th May, 2011 at the Diocesan Women's Work Office, ACMGS, Elelenwo.

The speakers – Mr. Justice Kalio and the Fphoenix Projects team, Sir Christian Egbunefu and Ven. Sunday C. Opara presented papers on the following topics:

- Administrative Structure of the Church
- Managing Your time on the job
- Inter-personal skill
- Becoming an indispensable staff
- Church Accounting System
- Becoming an effective Church/personal Secretary
- Effective office system
- Building a stakeholder mentality

- Secretarial Ethics
- Diocesan Income generation strategies, remittance and salary administration.

Huge amount of money went into this human capacity building programme. We demand improved performances from all our office staff at all levels to justify their participation in the training/workshop. We thank the Churches that heeded to our directive to sponsor their clerks and secretaries to this training.

Training For Diocesan Education Board Members And College Teaching Staff

As part of the overall commitment to training, the Diocesan Education Board successfully executed three training modules for its members, the Principals and teachers of our three secondary schools – Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani, Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls’ School, Elemenwo and Word of Faith Group of Schools, Woji, in collaboration with the Glory Educational and Management Consultants team.

MISSION, EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING

We would like to repeat some of the points we made last year on this subject matter. That: “The Church is not an end in itself. Just as fire exists by burning, so also does the Church exist primarily for and by mission and evangelism.

If there is no mission, then there is no Church. God’s Plan for the world is not that the Church will be saved. His plan is rather to use the Church for the salvation of the world.

The Church that is turned in upon itself is not the Church of the self-emptying Lord Jesus Christ.

Our salvation as Christians will remain meaningless until it is linked to the salvation of all mankind beginning with those within our reach”.

We concluded by charging the clergy and congregations in these words: “Our clergy and their congregations should reach out, i.e. empty themselves to their immediate communities with the message of salvation in Christ and Him alone. They should intensify their local and primary evangelism activities by taking the gospel from house to house, embark on neighbourhood crusades and indoor revival meetings”.

It is with a heavy heart therefore that we lament the indifference, lukewarmness and poor performance of some clergymen and their congregations in this sector of our Diocesan ministry. The result is that all other sectors are being negatively affected in those churches. According to the report of Ven. Chidi Worgu, Chairman of the Diocesan Missions, Evangelism and Church Planting Board, “It is sad to note that some Churches, their councils and pastors are not making any concerted effort towards the issue of evangelism and soul winning”.

In order to arouse the culture of outdoor evangelism activities, we came up with a special quarterly outreach programme tagged “***On the Highways and Hedges***” which should run simultaneously for seven days in all our churches. The goal is to bring into God’s church those who are presently out of it because of sin and unbelief.

The clergy are to mobilize church members to go from house to house, public, business places and along the streets to pass on the message of the gospel and bring the lost to Church. So far, this outreach has held twice from ***Monday 28th February to Sunday 6th March; and from Monday 20th to Sunday 27th June, 2011*** and we direct all churches to take this exercise seriously. It is the major reason for which we are still here on earth. Archdeacons, Rectors, Vicars and Supervising Priests are hereby reminded that it is mandatory that they submit reports of this outreach programme to the office of the Bishop so soon after it is held. We will no longer welcome any further disregard of this directive on the part of any clergy man

On the planting of new churches we hereby announce the performance of the various Church Units and groups on the specific targets set for them by us at our last Synod.

DIOCESAN UNIT	NO. OF NEW CHURCHES ASKED TO PLANT	NO. ACHIEVED
All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi	2, one of which must be a youth church	NIL
Rumuomasi Deanery	1 new church	1, (a Youth church)
Rumuobiokani Deanery	2 new churches	2 new churches, (1 by the MU/WG)
Elelenwo Deanery	At least 1 new church	1 new church
Woji Archdeaconry	2, one which should be a Youth church	NIL
Okporo Deanery	2 new churches	1 new church
Evo South-East Archdeaconry	2 new churches	NIL
Oro-igwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry	1 new church	NIL
Diocesan A. Y. F.	1 new church	NIL
TOTAL	14 new churches expected	5 new churches planted

% performance: 35.7%

The above chart confirms the report of the Diocesan Missions, Evangelism and Church Planting Board. We are not pleased with this very poor performance. Our older and bigger churches would need to redouble their efforts. As at today the number of churches in Evo has however risen from 28 at our inauguration to 38. What this means therefore is that we have established 10 new churches within two years of our existence.

We are grateful to the Rumuomasi, Rumuobiokani, Elelenwo and Okporo Deaneries for their efforts in opening new congregations.

We commend particularly the Mothers' Union and Women's Guild of Rumuobiokani Deanery for their initiative in planting a new church at the Azumini (Pipeline) area of Rumuokwurusi as their 2011 Mothering Sunday gift to the Diocese. It is also worthy of note that the said new church was single-handedly built up from scratch to finish and furnished by Sir and Lady Ama Hart in support of Rumuobiokani women. We have since dedicated the new church and named it **BETHANY ANGLICAN CHURCH, PIPELINE-Rumuokwurusi**.

We commend and Bless Sir and Lady Ama Hart and family for this great contribution towards the growth of the Diocese. Others are hereby called upon to emulate them.

Our target is to grow up to at least fifty (50) thriving congregations by our fifth anniversary as a Diocese. If we all work harder, this target could be achieved long before the set date despite our constraints.

DIOCESAN ACTIVITY GROUPS AND MINISTRIES

1. Men's Christian Association

The men of our Diocese are carrying on with their programmes and activities slowly, but steadily.

A successful first session of the first Diocesan Conference was held at the All Saints' Cathedral in November 2010 with the theme, "Here I am, send me" (Isaiah 6: 8b);

The Association (our men) also participated actively in the 2011 Niger Delta Provincial Men's Christian Association Conference held at the St. Paul's Cathedral, Diobu, Port Harcourt from----- to ----- and emerged winner of the golden trophy in the first PMCA/Ven. E. C. Illogu Bible Quiz Competition.

It was a thing of joy to be present at the occasion as the representative of His Grace, Most Rev. I. C. O. Kattey to both present the trophy to our victorious Evo men and also receive it as the Diocesan Patron.

We congratulate our men on this achievement.

It is our conviction that the men of this Diocese comprising of those in the DMCA, Councils of Knights and Lay Readers Association have what it takes to play key roles in the all-round

development of this Diocese. We therefore charge the leadership and indeed all our men to rise up to this challenge individually and collectively and begin to shoulder some of the burdens of the Diocese as the Lord may lead them. *Our Diocesan MCA is hosting a One-Day Provincial MCA retreat on Friday, 26th August, 2011 at the All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi.*

2. Women's Ministries

The Women's Ministries of our Diocese comprising of the Mothers' Union, Women's Guild, Sisters' Forum and the Girls' Guild with the Bishop's wife, Mrs. Chinyere Ordu, JP) as President have achieved quite a lot in the last one year.

They held the first Diocesan Women's Conference in October 2010 at St. Michael's Church, Rumuomasi Deanery.

They also held the maiden Church of Nigeria Women's link and Diocesan Prayer Conference in March 2011. At the end of this conference, a team of prayer warriors was raised to be praying for the Diocese.

A leadership workshop for the Sisters' Forum and Girl's Guild was successfully held in May 2011.

Other achievements of the women in include the purchase of a brand new Toyota Bus for Women's Work Office; renovation of a classroom block at the Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elelenwo; periodic supply of appreciable quantity of food items to our three Diocesan schools to assist in the feeding of the students, the publication of the maiden edition of the Women's Magazine "Cinnamon"; and support to the Diocese to the tune of N3m towards the purchase of some plots of land for a proposed Literacy/Vocational training Centre.

The women are making efforts to purchase another piece of land for the planting of a new church in keeping with the directive of the Diocesan.

3. Youth And Children's Ministries

i) The AYF

The Anglican Youth Fellowship of our Diocese has taken off fully and also gained national recognition. The Diocesan Council of the AYF was formally inaugurated on Saturday, 20th November, 2010 and We, the Bishop invested as a National Patron of the AYF Nigeria. This was during the hosting of the meeting of the National Executive currently held at St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery from Friday 19th to Sunday, 21st November, 2010.

The Diocesan Council also held the First and Second Diocesan Bible Study Conferences from August 5th – 8th, 2010 at Rumuobiokani Deanery and from June 30th – July 3rd, 2011 respectively.

One Hundred and twenty-two (122) delegates from our Diocese attended the National Bible Study Conference in Mina, Niger State also in August 2010, and received the 3rd Best individual Prize in the Bible Quiz Competition.

Our Diocese sponsored some of our youth and children teachers to the Church of Nigeria-organized National Youth Leadership and Children Teachers' Summit which held at Abuja from 27th -31st October, 2010.

The 2011 National Youth Week was celebrated with a three-Day Business/Career Seminar and a special ministration by the Diocesan Bishop at St. Simon's Church, Okporo Deanery from Monday 2nd to Wednesday, 4th May, 2011.

While we commend the zeal and enthusiasm so far displayed by the present leadership of the AYF, we however wish to draw their attention and indeed the attention of all to the resolution of the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee on age limit for membership of youth ministry at Parish, Archdeaconry and Diocesan levels of our Church. By the resolution, 40 years is the age limit for all those who wish to take part either as members or leaders of our youth ministry. Therefore we charge all those who are over 40 years of

age and are still in our Diocesan AYF either as leaders or members to immediately leave the fellowship for the younger ones and prayerfully join other ministries of the church where they can function better and derive spiritual satisfaction. We thank them for their years of service and active participation in the activities of the youth ministry.

The following persons were in December last year inaugurated as patrons and patronesses of our Diocesan Youth Fellowship: Eze Sir S. C. Wokoma JP, Lady Joy Emeruem, Mrs. Sylverline Majebi, Dr. Mrs. Lolomari Braide, Sir Chief, Dr. Emeka Ihunwo, Dame Emily Wodim, Lady Chibuzor Anyabele, Mr. Lawrence Chinda, Dr. Mrs. Ndidi Utchay, Chief (Comr.) Charles Eleto, Sir Godwin Adele, Sir Godfrey Ohuabunwa, Elder F. A. Weli, Mr. Christian Obidi and Mrs. Oris Gaius-Assor

ii) Anglican Corpsers' Fellowship

To ensure the healthy spiritual development of youth corps members worshipping in Evo Diocesan Churches, a monthly fellowship has been initiated and this is going on well.

iii) Anglican Communion Brigade

The Diocesan Council of the Anglican Communion Brigade has done quite well in the last one year. Programmes aimed at enhancing the spiritual and academic status of Brigade members were organized between November 2010 and May this year. These include Bible Study Conference, Retreats, Easter holiday Camp, Battalion Council Band Competition, Academic Summit, the hosting of the South-South Zone fellowship of the Boys Brigade and Patrons/Patronesses Summit. New companies have also been established in some churches.

We charge the Diocesan Chaplain, Rev. Moses Anyaefena who has performed very well so far to liaise with vicars and priests of all our churches to ensure that Boys Brigade companies are established in churches where they are presently not in existence.

iv) Anglican Children's Ministry

We commend the leadership of our Diocesan Children's Ministry with the Rev. Canon Olufemi Igbamerun as Chaplain. So far the ministry has been able to coordinate very effectively the activities of our children in the Diocese.

The maiden Diocesan Teachers' Conference/Children's Bible Quiz competition which was won by Oro-igwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry was held from 23rd to 25th July, 2010 at Elelenwo Deanery. Trainings and retreats were also held for the teachers.

A Diocesan Children Christmas Party took place in all churches on the 19th of December 2010.

Our children/teachers actively participated in both Provincial and Church of Nigeria Children's Conferences and trainings. Our Diocese took the second position for the second year running during the Quiz Competition held as part of the Provincial Conference at Ahoada in August 2010. A strong delegation of our Diocese participated at the National Teachers' Conference at Orlu Diocese in September and the National Youth Leadership summit organized by the Primate's office in October 2010.

4. Diocesan Council Of Knights

Like other groups in the Diocese, the Council of Knights has tried to meaningfully contribute to the development of the Diocese in the last one year. We thank and commend Eze Sir W. W. Onunwor, the President and members of the Council for renovating and handing over to us a dormitory block at the ACMGS, Elelenwo in September, 2010.

There are several other ways Knights and Ladies of our Diocese could continue to assist us in our developmental strides. For instance, we have since asked all the Knights to adopt the Chapel of Grace and Knowledge, ACMGS, Elelenwo as their Home Mission Field and support that congregation in their efforts.

We the Bishop and indeed the entire faithful of Evo are expecting the Knights and their amiable Ladies to rise to the occasion and offer the much needed support to us, the Bishop and the clergy in our march towards greater physical and spiritual development of our local churches and the Diocese at large.

We have in the spirit of christian brotherhood and unity of the church extended our hand of fellowship and recognition to all the knights in the Diocese irrespective of where they were knighted. It is expected that they in turn should demonstrate commensurate reciprocity in being supportive to this Diocese given that this is where they live, worship and are spiritually nurtured. While we commend their support for their home Dioceses and others, we remind them that this Vineyard known as Evo Diocese is equally in dire need of attention. We the Bishop may not have the tradition and practice of pestering people; we however expect that people should be aware of and respond appropriately to their God-assigned responsibilities.

5. Lay Readers Association

The Lay Readers Association has remained the only group at the Diocesan level that has complied with our directive on planting of new churches. The new church opened by the Body has moved from its old site along Igbo-Etche Road to the New Jerusalem Estate in Pipeline, Rumuokwurusi and has also been Christened **Holy City Anglican Church** by us on Sunday 15th May, 2011. The sacrificial efforts and contribution of some lay Readers with the Chairman and Chaplain, Mr. C. B. Obidi and Rev. Canon G. I. Anene are hereby commended. Other lay Readers who have remained apathetic to the activities, trainings and Missionary Assignment of the Association will soon discover that they do not have our license to continue in that office.

6. Sunday School And Discipleship Ministry

This Diocesan ministry has continued to excel in the promotion of quality teaching of the Word with a view to raising Christ-like Christians in all churches of our Diocese. The First Diocesan Discipleship/Revival Conference was held in October 2010 at St. Nicholas', Woji; series of trainings have been held for Sunday School, Foundation Bible Studies and Home Fellowship teachers on '*How to interpret Bible passages*', '*Writing good Bible Studies*', '*Leading and Managing Bible Study Classes*' and '*The Art of Teaching*'.

We are happy with the activities of the Chaplains, Reverends Cephas Okarefe and Reginald Chinweze. Particularly in producing and distributing quality and doctrinally balanced Sunday School and Discipleship/Follow up manuals; the downloading, compilation, printing and distribution of the Church of Nigeria Bible Study outlines.

Discipleship will remain a cardinal focus of our ministry in the Diocese and it is our hope that all clergy who are now superintendents of this ministry in their parishes will share with us in this vision. We are not comfortable with the apathy and slip-shop arrangement the Sunday School is experiencing in most of our Churches. Our charge on how the Sunday School ministry should be handled in every congregation of our Diocese is contained in our last year's address. Pastors should please refer to it and comply with it accordingly.

7. Special Ministry to Royal Fathers, Chiefs and Elders of Evo.

Our mission in Evo is primarily to make Jesus known to everyone, class or group of persons within the Diocese. To this end, we established the Chaplaincy to Cater for the spiritual needs of all Royal Fathers, Chiefs and Elders of Evo Kingdom.

So far this chaplaincy has performed very well. We commend the Reverend Canon Godwin Chinda, the Chaplain, for the spiritually enriching summits organized for these senior citizens in December 2010 and April 2011. We thank our Chiefs and elders for their heart-warming and encouraging response to our invitations so far. Our aim is to give every Chief and Elder in Evo an opportunity to personally encounter Jesus and experience the love and grace of God revealed to all through Him.

We are fully aware of the divisions, clashes and tussles over chieftaincy stools in some parts of Evo Kingdom. Our aim is not to meddle into traditional matters or take sides with anyone or group but to use the instrument of the gospel to promote peace, unity, understanding and love in every community and enthrone Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, King of love, Prince of Peace and the Great Shepherd of the sheep in the heart and life of every leader of God's people and the in the communities where such men hold positions of trust.

It is God alone who chooses captains over His people. As a Church we do not consider our ministry fulfilled in Evo if the people are not united in Christ and the peace of God reigning in the land. Our chiefs have been quite supportive and this chaplaincy is our own way of assisting the traditional institutions stand on very godly foundations. From now onwards the burden of hospitality during these summits for the royal Fathers should be borne by the Churches appointed to host them. Archdeacons, Rectors, Vicars and Church Councils should take note of this.

As part of activities marking the Second Anniversary of our Diocese this year, we paid special courtesy visits to some notable chiefs, elders and opinion leaders of Rumuokoro and Rumuodomanya communities all within the Evo Kingdom. We thank them for receiving us, and may the Lord continue to bless those communities.

Traditional Ruler of Rumuibekwe,

8. Retired Clergy

We recognize the great contributions our fathers in God, now retired, have made in the service of the Church over the years. Through our Chaplaincy for Retired Clergy and the Welfare Ministry, we are reaching out to these respected servants of God both spiritually and materially.

The practice in the past had been for the Church to use people and dump them after their years of active ministry. We are determined to end the trend. One day those of us who are now in active service will retire and would expect to be well taken care of.

As we try to do our little best to support these senior citizens of the Vineyard, we call on individuals and churches where these men have now retired to, to endeavour to make provision for their monthly upkeep as much as they are able. It is the duty of local parishes to sponsor those of them who wish to attend the annual synod meetings of our Diocese.

May the Lord continue to preserve and flourish them even in old age in Jesus name.

9. Clergy And Church Workers' Children's Unit

This unit caters for the spiritual concerns of the children of serving and retired clergy and other church workers. Through periodic retreats, seminars and conferences family unity is being established amongst children of those who work in the Vineyard. Sound godly values and moral ethos are being inculcated into them and they are rapidly beginning to identify with and respect the ministry/calling of their parents. We encourage those older sons and daughters of the clergy to feel free to associate with the activities of the unit. Their experiences and success story despite their parents' material handicaps will definitely motivate the younger children of today's church workers.

10. Diocesan Music Ministry

This ministry coordinates the activities of the Diocesan Choir Council and Diocesan Band. The two groups have featured prominently in all Diocesan services and carried out other special programmes such as the Service of Nine Lessons and Christmas Carols held in December 2010 at the Bishop's Court where the *Nativity of Christ* was performed and the Easter Cantata featuring the *Beautiful Saviour* on Easter Day, 24th April, 2011 at St. Andrew's Rumuobiokani Deanery. Perhaps the most outstanding achievement of this ministry for the period under review is the composition of a Diocesan Anthem for Evo through the efforts of Mr. Jolly Nnodi, the Diocesan Music Director and Choir Master with the support of other Choir Council Members, Venerable F. N. Akah, Engr. Odinigwe Mokelu (now late) and Sir Silas Nnodi. We commend their efforts and welcome comments or positive reactions that will help us perfect what we are now using as our Diocesan Anthem.

The other outstanding achievement is the staging of the First Diocesan Singing competition held first at three group levels on the 25th of June and final stage involving only the group champions on Saturday, 9th July, 2011. ----- Church emerged the overall winner of this maiden competition held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery. The second and third positions went to ----- and -----.

It is to the glory of God that we here acknowledge and commend the single-handed and sacrificial sponsorship of this competition at all levels by our beloved Professor Joe-Amadi Echendu of the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He donated the trophies for the First, Second and Third positions and other cash prizes/awards to participants; compiled the guidelines for participation in the competition, took full responsibility for the welfare of all judges both local and those from South Africa.

We appreciate this huge sacrifice and effort at developing the music ministry of our Diocese by the renowned Professor of Electrical and Electronics Engineering who is so passionate about church music. Let other sons and daughters of Evo and members of this Diocese emulate this exemplary act of support to the Diocese.

11. Industrial Chaplaincy

In Evo we are aware of the immense presence of numerous industries, companies and business concerns. Their existence within our Diocese offers us a good opportunity to pass on to them (i.e. management and staff), the message of the gospel.

Our establishment of this ministry is predicated on the scriptural injunction in Jeremiah 29: 7: "But seek ye the Welfare of the city where you make a living ... and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your own welfare".

This unique chaplaincy under the Venerable Azubuike Ugoha has carried out a strategic spiritual mapping of the Oil Mill Market for future market crusades and outreaches.

Members of the ministry have visited quite a number of Banks, Transport Companies, markets, Supermarkets, Fast Food industries and even to a Police Cell for evangelism and prayers. These include GTB Plc – Aba Road, First Bank – Rumuomasi, Diamond Bank – Aba Road, UBA, 312 Aba Road, Eagle Line, Agofure, ABC, Keke Napep Riders Association, NURTW Motor Park – Rumuibekwe, Oil Mill Market, Rumuokwursi, Elingbu and Tank Markets, God's Heritage Supermarket, Diamond Supermarket, Genesis, Mr. Biggs, Bouvetti Fast Foods industries; Slot Engineering Ltd, Crush Rock, Pentagon Securities, Coca Cola, Timber Market – Oyigbo and the Elingbu Police Cell amongst others.

We realise that the Lord has opened unto us an effectual door of ministry into these industries and companies and we all must make the most of it.

The Diocese will appreciate individual, group and church support in meeting the challenges confronting members of this ministry in the execution of their mandate. Gift of an Outreach Bus and/or cash support to enable members transport themselves to their destinations, Band Set, Laptops, Public Address Equipments including Megaphones, Microphones, etc.

The Chaplaincy has also written some gospel tracts to enhance industrial evangelism.

We commend the great efforts of members of this chaplaincy and wish them many years of fruitful industrial evangelistic activities. May the Lord give abundant increase and prosperity to all industries, companies and business outfits operating on Evo soil now and in the years ahead in Jesus name. Amen.

12. Hospital/Visitation Ministry

The ministry of Jesus on earth catered for people in all conditions. He has left us with an example that we should now follow in His steps.

Through the Diocesan Hospital Visitation Ministry we are endeavouring to touch the lives of those vexed with sicknesses. Members of the Ministry are visiting those sick in the hospitals and clinics to pray for them for divine healing and to bring them God's word.

For effective Outreach to all hospitals and clinics within the Diocese, the Diocesan Hospital Visitation Ministry has inaugurated fifteen functional groups in fifteen churches and members are visiting hospitals and clinics within their parish jurisdictions.

We have testimonies of answered prayers and those who have joined our churches as a result of the activities of this ministry.

13. The Prayer Ministry

This is the spiritual engine room of the Diocese. Members have been consistent in holding monthly night vigils across the churches.

Two Diocesan Night Vigils have also been held here at St. Philip's Church, Oro-igwe District on Friday 25th February 2011, and at St. Nicholas' Church, Woji District on Friday 1st July, 2011.

In prayer we bring our petitions to God and show our dependence on Him. Every member of our Diocese is encouraged to regularly pray for the Diocese.

In order to provide guidance to every willing intercessor, we have directed the Diocesan prayer Ministry under Reverends Samson Abada and Bright Welekwe to publish and distribute quarterly Diocesan Prayer Bulletins. The process is already on and the materials will be shortly made available.

Despite progress so far made we urge the Diocesan and all church prayer squads to put in more prayers for our Diocese. We need the prayers to make some more steady progress.

14. Diocesan Guild of Stewards

The Executive Committee of this unit was inaugurated on 28th November, 2010 during the Diocesan Harvest at St. Nicholas', Woji.

Members of this unit have continued to participate in major Diocesan services and events including this Synod. We hereby approve a dress code of Black/Wine suit and light Blue shirt for use at Diocesan services and events as recommended by the leadership of this service unit. Deaneries, Parishes and Station churches are at liberty to adopt any dress code suitable to them.

People's Wardens should ensure that their local stewards play active roles in the activities of the Diocesan Guild of Stewards.

15. Diocesan Sports Ministry

An active sports ministry now exists in the Diocese. A Diocesan Sports Council is in place with Bro. Lucky Amachree as the Coordinator, Mazi Enyioma Onuoha as the Assistant and Bro. Frank Dike as the Secretary.

A Youth Football Competition was organized in the last quarter of 2010 for the cathedral, Archdeaconries and Deaneries. The Youth team of St. Jude's Church, Oginigba Deanery emerged winners and carted home the first-place trophy and gold medals. The second and third placed positions went to Elenwo and Okporo Deaneries respectively.

To celebrate the 2011 Fathers' Day, the Sports Council also organized yet another Football competition with teams from the Cathedral, Archdeaconries and Deaneries participating. At the end of the competitions on Saturday 18th June, 2011 honours were shared as follows:

1. First Position (Champions) – All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwursi MCA Team.
2. Second Position (1st Runners up) – St. Andrew's, Rumuobiokani Deanery
3. Third Position (2nd Runners up) – St. Jude's, Oginigba Deanery.

We congratulate all the teams for their participation and the Cathedral, Rumuobiokani and Oginigba teams for their victory.

At this point we would want to announce that there is only one sports unit at the Diocesan level and it has been mandated to propose a sports agenda for the Diocese covering every activity group. No group is allowed to form a parallel sports council or committee, particularly at the Diocesan level. Head priests and sports chaplains at the Cathedral, Archdeaconries and Deaneries should ensure that their administrative blocks register and participate in sporting competitions organized at the Diocesan level.

Groups are in addition charged to make significant financial contributions towards the organization of sporting events for their groups. The MCA in particular, should take note of this.

The sport ministry should explore the possibility of organizing competitions in other games and sports in addition to football.

We thank and commend the chaplains, coordinators and executive members of a good number of Diocesan groups and units for their commitment and efforts and pray God to enlarge their coasts and bless them.

However, we have noted that there are some unit chaplains and leaders who appear not know how to go about their duties. They are ever on the planning stage and wait until the eve of synod to start running around for what to do. We are monitoring such officers and wish to make it clear that we do not have the patience to wait for those who despise great trusts committed to their charge.

OUR DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

We are still very much committed to our vision in the area of education despite the increasing challenges. We are convinced that as a church, we can effectively contribute to national development through the running of quality-based educational institutions.

Our three secondary schools have continued to do well. With the commitment, zeal and sacrificial services of the management and staff of the colleges, we believe that it will not be long before they attain enviable heights. ACMGS Elenwo emerged the winner of the 2011 Children's Day Match-Past in Rivers State in the secondary schools category.

So far the schools have been able to fund their projects and activities with their internally generated revenue. The ACMGS, Elenwo has since taken delivery of a brand new Toyota Hiace Bus at a cost of over Five Million Naira. It is almost completing the renovation of a staffroom and classrooms

block, fresh erection of a one six classrooms block for the Nursery, Primary school; development of a sporting arena etc.

Bishop Crowther Memorial Secondary School, Rumuobiokani has equally embarked on a few developmental projects. We have been interfacing with some companies within our Diocese to assist us in the upgrading of the infrastructures in these schools. While we wait for a possible positive outcome from all our contacts, we have decided to dedicate this synod to raising funds to enable us provide new classrooms, Dormitory, administrative blocks and laboratories for these schools particularly those of them with more critical needs. We had earlier in the year constituted a committee headed by The Ven. F. N. Akah, JP to source funds for infrastructural development in these schools. The efforts of that committee and those of the Local and Diocesan Synod Planning Committees have brought a good number of you to this event. We welcome you most heartily and urge you to generously support our worthy cause: that of providing basic infrastructures in these institutions. Our take off target is **Five Hundred Million Naira**. Please give and trust God to reward you most abundantly. Churches that have been assigned projects in these schools should immediately move to site while we encourage individuals, families and groups to immortalise their names by taking up projects in these schools – ACMGS, Elemenwo, BCMSS, Rumuobiokani and Woji Town Word of Faith Group of Schools.

By the grace of God we are very much accountable. Therefore we assure you of the proper utilisation of every donation made here for the development of these schools.

INVESTMENTS

Our stance on investments is still strong. Our conviction is that Diocesan investments, if properly managed could serve as credible sources of income generation to enable us address the numerous needs of the Diocese.

We have adequately provided needed funds to the Diocesan Printing Press. The Press is our project, our investment and therefore our duty it is to make it succeed. Churches, groups and individuals are hereby directed to take their programmes to the Press. Those who do otherwise will be seen as working against the Diocese. It is the tradition in Church families everywhere for parishioners to proudly identify with their own by patronizing such promising investments. Our story here in Ewo should not be different.

Whatever the shortcomings of the Press may be at the moment, we urge members to still encourage it to grow instead of wanting it to die. We expect the management of the Press to do more than it is doing now and ensure that the much needed revenue accrue to the Diocese.

In compliance with the Diocesan strategies on investments we have acquired more lands for further Diocesan investments and developments in the future.

They are as follows:

- i. 20 plots of land at Atali
- ii. 24 plots of land at Iriebe
- iii. 6 plots of land at Iriebe
- iv. 4 plots of land also at Iriebe.

We thank the Diocesan Women for supporting us pay for the Atali land. We hope to support them in return in the future with some plots for the establishment of their proposed Vocational Training Centre.

To support our dream of establishing a Clothing/Garment Company, a couple has generously donated to the Diocese several giant sewing machines and other accessories worth millions of naira. They prefer to remain anonymous. Their style of giving meets scriptural prescription. We pray that the Lord will bless them openly and abundantly too. On takeoff, the company will focus on the making of school uniforms, clerical vestments/Episcopal habits, company coveralls, embroidery etc, etc. We will need to move this company closer home from its present location at the Leventis

Building in Port Harcourt. It will require its own building. We call for assistance from you to provide this.

At this juncture, I would like to disabuse the minds of those who feel that venturing into investments amounts to the Church becoming materialistic, and we wasting resources of the Diocese. At our takeoff as a Diocese, it was the overwhelming decision of the Diocesan Board that we venture into some areas of investment as is now the trend in virtually all Dioceses and Christian denominations and groups. The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) encourages Dioceses to explore avenues for investment, and that is what we are doing. We are not being wasteful; rather we are working towards a time when sufficient revenue would accrue to the Diocese through investments and not from offerings alone, or remittances of some percentages of such offerings – a practice that is already agitating the minds of a few. We will not be comfortable to preside over a Diocese where individuals would prefer that we ‘mark time’ and engage in routines and empty talks and debates while others move forward. We should rather be encouraged than be misunderstood.

FINANCIAL/WELFARE GUIDELINES AND NEW SALARY STRUCTURE

As stated in our 2010 charge, we noticed some irregularities and inconsistencies in the payment of Church workers’ salaries, allowances and other welfare incentives. Some workers were collecting huge salaries they know they ought not to, because they have been able to use what they refer to as their “strong bargaining power” to achieve that. Others who do not possess such ‘bargaining power’ or whose churches are not so financially strong are left out.

Every church worker (particularly priests and clerks posted to churches by us) is a Diocesan staff. It is our duty as a Diocese to advise churches on what a worker should earn. In doing that, we are guided by a number of factors – the academic qualification, the year of ordination and employment/preferment as Archdeacon, the approved salary structure of the Joint Council of the Provinces of the East, and of course, the present realities of our time.

The Sir Collins Amadi Committee has since completed its assignment on this and submitted its report to the Diocesan Board. Careful deliberations have been held by the Board and necessary approvals made with clergymen fully represented.

While that was going on, the Joint Provincial Council of the Dioceses of East of the Niger approved a new 3-category (A, B, C) salary structure and asked Dioceses to choose the particular grade they are capable of implementing.

We have since chosen to implement the category ‘A’ in addition to enhanced local (parish) allowances/incentives as approved by the Diocesan Board with effect from 1st June, 2011. In doing this, we have considered that we are a church. We are not competing with government agencies, companies and other organizations. Some Dioceses are not even able to implement the category ‘C’ of the new structure. Those who doubt us should carry out a survey.

We do not therefore understand why there should be agitations and ‘pockets of meetings’ as a clergyman refers to them within the circle of church workers over salaries. We have challenged and we hereby throw that challenge again to any worker who feels short-changed to come out openly and prove his/her case. Our position is that no worker should be denied his/her entitlement and no worker should struggle to take home what is not due to him/her. Introduction/approval of local incentives is at the discretion of the Board of each Diocese. Workers who are busy comparing what we are doing here in Evo with what is happening in older and more financially stronger Dioceses should desist from this greedy practice and concentrate on their duties. On the other hand, they should explore the options of leaving the Diocese of Evo for such “better-paying” Dioceses. We will not close our eyes and watch anyone drain the churches. Church workers must not lose sight of the spiritual philosophy of service in the Vineyard that requires them to give much and take little and serve joyfully with the discipline of self-denial for the sake of Him who died for us.

We the Bishop are not collecting anything more than what is due to us. We make our honest sacrifices and do not intend to use our office as a platform for self enrichment. Therefore, all those who feel disgruntled now and are not prepared to sacrificially grow the Diocese with us are hereby advised in their own interest to humbly take the part of honour and resign instead of remaining behind and attempting to incite laymen against the Bishop because of remunerations.

Members of the Diocesan Board are advised to be consistent and stand by decisions they reach at meetings as unnecessary U-turns after decisions are capable of introducing confusion in the administration of the Diocese.

COMMENDABLE STRIDES/DONATIONS BY SOME OF OUR CHURCHES

We are particularly pleased with the efforts of some of our very new churches within a very short period of their existence.

We commend the **Chapel of Grace and knowledge, ACMGS, Elelenwo** for purchasing a brand new Toyota Hiace Bus for evangelism after their first anniversary celebration in October last year.

This same Church donated a single unit Public Address System to the office of the Bishop/chapel and renovated a modest 2-classroom Block with an office at ACMGS, Elelenwo.

The **Church of Advent, Rumuewhara** presently worshipping in a donated Private School Hall has paid the sum of Eight Million Naira (N8m) to acquire a new and permanent Church site/land. The sum of Three Million Naira (N3m) is still needed to complete the transaction. Support from other churches and individuals is welcome.

St. Andrew's Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery, for the donation of a refurbished L300 Bus to Bishop Crowther Memorial secondary school, Rumuobiokani;

Woji Archdeaconry under the Venerable F. N. Akah, JP renovated the Dining Hall of the ACMGS, Elelenwo and donated over 200 seats and 100 tables;

St. Mark's Elelenwo Deanery renovated the Computer Laboratory also at the ACMGS, Elelenwo. **The All Saints' Cathedral Church, Rumuokwurusi** is also renovating some laboratory blocks at the same school. We hope speedy completion will be achieved.

We thank these churches and commend their efforts. May the Lord strengthen them and prosper His work committed to their charge.

CHURCH OF NIGERIA NEWS

1. ANNIVERSARY OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA: ST. MATTHIAS' DAY SPECIAL OFFERING/REMITTANCE

Our Diocese joined the rest of the Church of Nigeria on Sunday, 27th February, 2011 in the commemoration of St. Matthias' Day (February, 24) which is the anniversary of the formal inauguration of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in 1979. We commend the sincerity exhibited by our Priests and Church finance officers in remitting to the Church of Nigeria 100% of the offerings raised on the occasion following the decision and directive of the Standing Committee through the Primate of All Nigeria, Most Rev. Nicholas D. Okoh. A total sum of **N4, 625, 701. 72m** was raised and paid into the coffers of the Church of Nigeria by all Churches in Evo. This performance ranks among the best ten Dioceses in the country. The purpose of this special remittance is to enable the National Church support the activities of the Missionary Dioceses across the country. The Standing Committee which met at Owerri from March 1-5, 2011 has further decided that this special 100% remittance of all offerings on St. Matthias' Day will now be an **annual event**.

2. Daily Devotional Book

We now have our own daily devotional material “*The Daily fountain*”. The first edition which is currently in use was distributed free to members across the Nation. The Devotional is packaged to equip our members spiritually through the study of God’s word and prayers and to promote our pure orthodox Anglican spirituality. Anglicans are encouraged to patronize the devotional and support future publications. From next year it will be sold.

3. PhD Scholarship

4. C.O.N. Emergency Relief fund

5. Creation of New Dioceses

6. New Bishops

7. Presentation of New Dean and New Archbishop of the Niger

8. Retirements

The following Archbishop and Bishops of the Church of Nigeria have retired from active ministry of the Church on attaining the retirement age of seventy for Bishops. They are the Most Rev. Maxwell S. C. Anikwenwa, former Dean of the Church of Nigeria, Archbishop of the Province of the Niger and Bishop of the Diocese of Awka; Rt. Rev. Gabriel H. Pepple, of Niger Delta Diocese; Rt. Rev. Vincent Muoghreh of Ugheli Diocese and Rt. Rev. Ken Okeke, former Bishop on the Niger.

At our local Diocesan level we announce the retirement of Mrs. Violet Ezimuo in April this year and Chief G. N. Chinda at the end of this month. These two have served the Anglican Church as clerks for over thirty years. We thank them for their years of service and wish them well in the years ahead.

CONGRATULATIONS!

On behalf of the Diocese we heartily congratulate:

1. St. Nicholas’ Church, Woji for their *Centenary Anniversary* (100 years) celebrations in December last year;
2. Church of The Holy Spirit, Elelenwo District on their *Decenary* (10 years) *Anniversary* celebrations in March, 2011;
3. Upper Room Church, Eliozi on the celebration of their *First Year Anniversary* in June this year.
4. His Excellence, The Rt. Hon. Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi and his Deputy, Engr. Tele Ikuru on their overwhelming victory at the Rivers State Governorship election held on Tuesday, 26th April, 2011;
5. His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan on his victory and emergence as the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at the Presidential election held on Saturday 16th April, 2011;
6. Hon. Martin Amaewhule, Hon. Solomon Eke, Hon. Timothy Nsirim on their victories at the State Assembly and local government elections.
7. All other political office holders at the State and National levels on either their election and/or appointments.
8. Sir, Chief, Dr. Emeka Ihunwo on his 50th birth day celebration on Easter Day, 2011.

OUR JOYS

We rejoice with the Bishop's Secretary, Mr. Benjamin Eyuche Peterson on his successful wedding with former Miss Chimenem Akani of Rumuola on Easter Monday.

We thank the Lord and rejoice with the following Church workers whose families were blessed with new babies: - Rev. & Mrs. Samuel Obialor, Rev. & Mrs. John Chinda, Rev. & Mrs. Ahamefule Ollour, Rev. & Mrs. C. J. Kemakolam, Rev. & Mrs. Favour Iroegbulem, Rev. & Mrs. Kingsley Ohajianya, Rev. & Mrs. Hosanna Naenwi, Rev. & Mrs. Gospel Onuchukwu, Rev. & Mrs. Samuel Fedigha, Mr. Christian Tasie, Mr. & Mrs. Frankincense Chukwuma, and many other families in the Diocese whom God blessed with the gift of new babies.

We give thanks to God for the restoration of the health of Lady Patience Wodi, one of our Diocesan clerks and wife of Sir Chief Barrister Mike Wodi after a successful surgery in India early this year.

OUR SORROWS

We commiserate with Mrs. Benedicta and Rev. Canon Godwin Ikechukwu Anene who lost their mother and mother-in-law, late Madam Beatrice Meka, the family of Eze Francis Amadi of Iriebe who died on 22nd January, 2011, the family of Dr. Kingsley Okechukwu Amadi, JP, former Rector of Rumuomasi Deanery on the death of the retired Venerable Archdeacon and former Clerical Synod Secretary of Niger Delta North Diocese on the 19th of March, 2011; the Adele family of Elioza who lost one of their own, Late Chief Roy Adele, JP, especially his widow, Mrs. E. C. Adele and children, the family of Chief God'spower Azonwu, Pastor's Warden of Atali Parish on his death in May this year, the family of Mr. Paul and Rev. Canon Chris Chukwumati who lost their step mother and mother, Madam Cordelia Awhuajua Chukwumati, the Venerable F. N. Akah, JP on the death of the step mother and the family of Engr. Odinigwe Mokelu who was shot dead recently by yet to be known assassins.

May the Lord comfort members of these bereaved families and grant to the dead peaceful repose of their souls.

We commend the clergy, Deanery Council and members of St. Michael's Rumuomasi Deanery and other members of this Diocese for the solidarity shown to the late Venerable K. O. Amadi's family and the sacrificial roles they played before and at the death/burial of the late servant of God.

The Diocesan Board has in addition to a condolence purse given to the family after the burial decided to award full secondary school scholarship to one of his daughters studying at the Archdeacon Crowther Memorial Girls' School, Elelenwo, Miss Uchechi Amadi with effect from this academic term.

St. Michael's Rumuomasi Deanery has also awarded scholarship to the first daughter, Miss Chitugaoka Amadi for the remaining years of her HND Programme at Rivers State Polytechnic, Bori.

These steps have been taken in recognition and appreciation of the commitment and quality services rendered by the late Venerable while in the earthly service of God and the Church in Niger Delta North and Evo Dioceses.

APPOINTMENTS

The following Diocesan Committee appointments were made by us within the year.

PROTOCOLS COMMITTEE:

1. Rev. Canon Chris Chukwumati – Bishop's Protocol/Admin. Assistant-**Chairman**
2. Rev. Chukwumeka Okonkwo – Chaplain, Diocesan Guild of Stewards

3. Prince Greatman Ikeani	All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi
4. Mr. Bright Chuku	Rumuomasi Deanery
5. Mr. Tobias Nzerem	Rumuobiokani Deanery
6. Mr. Fortune D. R. N. Chinda	Elelenwo Deanery
7. Mr. Promise Minimah	Woji Archdeaconry
8. Mr. Stanley Chinda	Oginigba Deanery
9. Mr. Innocent Amadi	Okporo Deanery
10. Mrs. Edith Dibia	Evo South-East Archdeaconry
11. Mr. Paul Chukwumati	Oro-Igwe/Eliogbolo Archdeaconry
12. Miss Ruth Otuonye	Diocesan Youth Fellowship.

DIOCESAN HARVEST COMMITTEE

1. Sir Silas Nnodi – **Chairman**
2. Rev. Canon Godwin Chinda
3. Barr. Theophilus Owzor
4. Dame Akudo Nnadozie
5. Mr. Chika Chinda
6. Dame Fustina Aririsuku
7. Sir Prince Christian A. Elewa
8. Barr. Dennis Echeonwu
9. Mr. Solomon Ogor
10. Lady Prisca Worlu
11. Chief G. Azonwu (now late)
12. Rev. Reginald Chinweze
13. Lady Uzo Onweluzor
14. Sir Chief Ken Utchay
15. Ven. S. C. Opara
16. Mrs. Regina Madu

DIOCESAN INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

1. Ven. F. N. Akah, JP – **Chairman**
2. Rev. Canon Charles Mordi
3. Mr. Babs Abinusewa
4. Lady Bridget Dania
5. Lady Ahunna Imoni
6. Mr. Woji Weli
7. Mr. Clifford Amadi
8. Mr. Rex Yakpogoro
9. Mr. Emeka Awanye
10. Mrs. Edna Adagogo-Brown
11. Sir Ben Emeka
12. Lady Mercy Ezekiel, Hart
13. Mr. Chine Dibiazue
14. Mr. Seyi Alabi
15. Chief G. N. Chinda JP (Chairman, PTA, BCMSS, Rumuobiokani)
16. Barr. G. O Dike
17. Mr. Okey Ogelle

The tenure of these committees is now to expire at the end of 2012.

In our determined effort at giving closer and more effective attention to our Diocesan investments, we hereby make the following appointments:

DIOCESAN PRINTING PRESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

1. Rev. Hosanna Naenwi
2. Mr. Chukwudi Theophilus
3. Mrs. Emma-Wopara
4. Rep of GEM Consultants

DIOCESAN CLOTHING/VESTMENT COMPANY

1. Mrs. Florence Edeki
2. Mrs. Priscilla Usifoh
3. Rev. Kingsley Ohajianya
4. Rev. C. J. Kemakolam
5. Mrs. Emmanuela Welekwe
6. Mrs. Beatrice Ene-Obong

These investment outfits are set up to make profits and generate needed revenue to the Diocese. Members of the respective management committees should bear this in mind as they assume responsibility. We charge them to go about this assignment selflessly, sacrificially and with determination to succeed. They are to render monthly stewardship account to the Bishop and quarterly report to the Diocesan Board.

We thank Sir F. I. Mbeledogu, Adviser to the Bishop on investment matters and Chairman of the Diocesan Investment Committee for sacrificially managing the Printing Press since its take off.

By this arrangement, the Investment Committee will now concentrate on the business of generating investment ideas and periodic monitoring of the performances of the various management teams of Diocesan Investment outfits.

CRUCIAL POLICY MATTERS

1. OUR VERSION OF THE ST. MATTHIAS' DAY OFFERING/REMITTANCE

The Diocese of Edo has continued to be sustained through the remittance of 15% total weekly offerings from the Cathedral, Deanery and Archdeaconry Headquarter-churches and 10% from other parishes and stations. This is in addition to some other sources already known to us. We commend the performances of the clergy, Treasurers and clerks in faithfully remitting what is due to the Diocese even though not everyone has fared well.

The need for our Diocese to give occasional support to some other financially distressed Dioceses which are seeking assistance from us has continued to arise. Within the Diocese we also have quite a number of critical welfare needs to attend to.

In the light of these enormous demands, we presented to the Diocesan Board at its meeting held at Church of the Holy Spirit, Eliozu Parish on **Wednesday, 30th March, 2011** a proposal that churches in our Diocese should on **every Diocesan Anniversary Sunday** remit to the Diocese **50% of their total income** to enable us attend to matters of local welfare and support indigent missionary Dioceses within Nigeria, especially those looking up to us for such assistance. The Diocesan Board did give approval to the proposal **with effect from last Sunday, 10th July, 2011**, being our **Second Anniversary Sunday**. Consequently, this has become an **annual practice** following the pattern of the Church of Nigeria. ***Churches are hereby directed to remit to the Diocesan Finance Office 50% of their total income***

generated for the week, July 4th -10th. Every Church should please show understanding in this regard and give usual cooperation.

2. INCENTIVES FOR PERFORMING CHURCHES/PRIESTS

The Diocesan Board has also approved our proposal that awards be given to churches with their priests who excel above others in the remittance of the approved percentage of their weekly income to the Diocese. The incentives which will take effect from the end of this financial year will be given as follows:

3. PATRONAGE OF PRINTING PRESS & DIOCESAN INVESTMENTS

It is now mandatory for clergy, churches and individuals doing anything with the Bishop, and for or with our churches to patronize the relevant Diocesan investment outfit(s) without excuse. Failure to comply with this will attract severe penalties. We must assist them to grow and bring out their best.

4. DIOCESAN ANTHEM: henceforth programme brochures, bulletins of all Diocesan, Cathedral, Archdeaconry, Deanery and Parish Services involving the Bishop must contain all stanzas of the Diocesan Anthem and must be **sung by all** at the Marching in of the Brigade colours and before the withdrawal.

5. HOSTING OF DIOCESAN SERVICES: From now on Cathedral/Archdeaconries/Churches appointed by us to host major Diocesan events such as Synod Thanksgiving, Anniversary Thanksgiving, Ordination, Rededication, Central Licensing of Lay-Readers, Confirmation, Admission/Induction into MCA/MU-WG/Investiture, Preferment, Night Vigils, Revival Conference Services are to bear the cost of printing of such service programmes (which must be of very high quality) in addition to providing a conducive venue and hospitality – if desired. Diocesan activity groups, chaplaincies and units' end-of-events service programmes are not included in this policy on printing cost bearing. Rectors and Vicars of Churches are to endeavour to send in advance (2weeks) to his office draft programmes involving the Bishop for vetting before taking it to the press.

6. UNIFORM DIRECTIONAL SIGN BOARDS/POSTS

The Diocesan Board has approved our proposal that all churches in our Diocese should have a uniform directional sign boards/posts. The clergy had earlier welcomed it. Consequently, Archdeacons, Rectors, Vicars and all church Councils should ensure that the new design is reflected on their Boards latest 30th September 2011. Please see appendix...for details.

7. HOME FELLOWSHIPS IN CHURCHES

We hereby direct all clergy and Church Councils. Where this is yet to apply to ensure the immediate establishment of Home Fellowship groups in their parishes/stations. We have listened to so many teachings and talks on this and the positive impact it stands to make in the growth of the local church. Having heard enough, it is now time to act.

8. USE OF DIOCESAN PUBLICATIONS

We charge the clergy to ensure that every literature published by the Diocese of Edo and the Church of Nigeria is put into effective use as and when required. These include our Annual Sunday School Manual, Discipleship Manual, Children's Ministry Manual, preparatory manuals for confirmation and Marriage Counselling, Church of Nigeria Bible Study Manual and so on. Time, energy and resources have been put into the production of these discipleship and teaching tools. The clergy and other teachers should see them as helpful tools provided to aid their ministry, and not to ignore them for other materials of questionable theological content.

9. CHURCH OF NIGERIA AND EDO DIOCESAN ENDOWMENT FUNDS.

Payment of the Church of Nigeria Endowment Fund of Five Thousand Naira is still very much on going. Every Anglican in our Diocese who is yet to endow is encouraged to do so and obtain payment receipts. This is to support the programmes and projects of the national church. Similarly, the voluntary Evo Diocesan Endowment Fund was instituted to encourage sacrificial support of members to our young Diocese. If every parishioner makes a commitment towards any preferred area, the present financial burden weighing on the Diocese will be largely reduced. The clergy are directed to enforce the payment of both the Church of Nigeria and Evo Diocesan Endowment Funds by all those being presented to the Bishop for special services.

10. SECURITY COMMITTEES IN CHURCHES.

****DIOCESAN CONSTITUTION****

****RECORD KEEPING****

****STATE AND NATIONAL ISSUES****

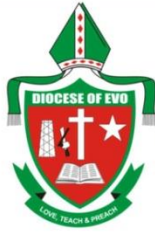
****APPEAL FOR SUPPORT****

****CONCLUSION****

****APPENDIX****

Appendix one

New Diocesan Directional/church sign posts



CHURCH OF NIGERIA (*Anglican Communion*)
PROVINCE OF NIGER DELTA
DIOCESE OF EVO

ST. XYZ
XYZ

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

WEDNESDAY	MID-WEEK SERVICE	6:00 pm
FRIDAY	SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDIES	6:00 pm
SUNDAY	MATTINS (DIVINE SERVICE)	8:00 am

... To Love, Teach and Preach Christ



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REVD. NICHOLAS D. OKOH
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

January 9, 2011

My Dear People of God,

PASTORAL LETTER

Praise and thanks be to our Eternal God for sparing our lives to see this New Year 2011. May His grace enable us to be fruitful as we serve Him in holiness and righteousness all our days.

The annual Bishops' Retreat came up at our usual venue, Trinity Foundation's Retreat Centre, Agbarha Otor from January 3-9, 2011 with a focus on the theme, A LIVING SACRIFICE (Rom 12:1).

The theme was addressed in various ways, including a series of Bible studies led by our guest speaker, Rt Rev Dr Zac Niringiye from the Church of Uganda. There were also sermons, discussions and presentations by other resource persons from our own Bishops of the Church of Nigeria. We re-examined our attitude as a church to the use of spiritual gifts for the growth of God's Church committed to our charge. We have found our times of fellowship quite refreshing and soul searching as they have brought treasured insights and reminders about the enormous challenges and dimensions of our ministry as shepherd of God's people. We have surrendered ourselves afresh to excellence in this calling for which we have been consecrated.

We are thankful to the Ibru family for their continued hospitality during our times of retreat here.

We discussed and prayed about the recent bomb blasts in Jos and Abuja as well as the religious killings in Maiduguri – all at a time of celebration for the Christian world. We share the pains and heartbreak brought upon innocent citizens (including little children, pregnant women, people going about their legitimate pursuits) by sadists who chose this bizarre medium of making whatever point they think they should make. We totally denounce this, and have called on our national leadership to do everything to arrest this dangerous trend which is capable of blowing our nation apart. Whether these bombings are politically or religiously motivated, those behind them should be dealt with under the appropriate laws: Ecclesiastes 8:11, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"

We give thanks to God for the testimonies of growth through the creation of the missionary dioceses. We thank God for those whom God has used to support and sustain His work in these new frontiers. Yet we are concerned about the missionary dioceses that are breaking new grounds and yet cannot afford the associated expenses to sustain the growth. This is why the Standing Committee of our Church decided at

the September 2010 meeting in Lagos that we should henceforth observe St Matthias' Day (usually February 24, being the birthday of the Church of Nigeria) as a day to raise financial support for missionary dioceses. A letter has gone out from the Primate's Office that ***all offerings*** (tithes, Sunday Collection, offertory, churching, any special thanksgiving, building collection, or any other income under any description) taken on Sunday, February 27, 2011 (being the Sunday nearest to St Matthias Day this year), be remitted to the Church of Nigeria national headquarters (through the diocesan headquarters) for the purpose of assisting the ongoing work of the missionary dioceses. If we faithfully do this, we will indeed be able to conserve the great harvest the Lord is giving to us. We urge you to set aside generous offerings for this purpose.

The registration of voters is a critical stage in the march towards the next political dispensation. We strongly encourage our members to fulfil this important civic responsibility as a first step of ensuring credible election results. We urge that earnest prayers should be made before the days of election and not so close to the election dates. We do not advise that vigils precede general election dates, as this will affect the involvement of those who have kept those prayer vigils. May the Lord be pleased to raise up God-fearing leaders who will ensure peaceful atmosphere, social welfare, development, and above all, freedom of worship.

We are glad to introduce the maiden edition of the Church of Nigeria devotional, *The Daily Fountain* and commend it for your patronage. It is prepared with the Anglican Church in mind. The days in which we live are becoming more and more evil. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 24:12, "Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold" We must therefore heed Apostle Peter's counsel in 1 Peter 4:7-8: "The end of all things is near. Therefore be clear minded and self-controlled so that you can pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy— to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Yours in His Service,



The Most Rev Dr. Nicholas D. Okoh
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REVD. NICHOLAS D. OKOH
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

COMMUNIQUE

From the House of Bishops
Of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)
Meeting at the Ibru Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State
January 3rd -9th, 2011

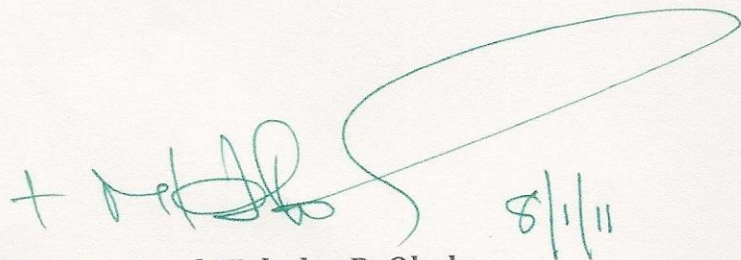
1. The House of Bishops of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Most Rev. Nicholas D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria for our annual retreat at the Ibru Centre, Agbarha-Otor, Delta State, from January 3rd-9th, 2011. 158 bishops were present. We were blessed by the opportunity to spend time together for prayer, worship and teaching at this beginning of a New Year filled with opportunities and challenges.
2. The theme of our retreat was 'A Living Sacrifice' (Romans 12:1). The Bible studies, led by Bishop Zac Niringiye from the Anglican Church of Uganda, and the various teaching sessions all emphasized the critical importance of surrendering ourselves fully to God's will and purpose if we are to show the world the power of transformed and dedicated men and women of God. We were challenged to see that so often our failure to live a sacrificial life robs the world of the witness and presence of a church that is able to offer genuine hope to people who are desperately in need of such a testimony. We were reminded again that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a total commitment and affects every aspect of our daily lives including our marriages and families, our stewardship of the resources entrusted to us, and our attitude towards those in authority and those who are in need.
3. Meeting together as bishops of the Church of Nigeria in Delta State during the rerun of the contested election for Governor of the State we were very conscious of living at a time of great tension in our nation. The ability to conduct a free and fair election, an essential and necessary condition for the future of democracy in our nation, has been seriously compromised by the breakdown in basic security on the roads and in our communities. We are concerned that those who have no credible or hopeful project for our beloved nation may have engineered this breakdown and we urge Federal and State officials to be on 'red alert' and be in firm control to ensure a peaceful transition.
4. The Christmas time bombings in Jos and Abuja and the recent killings in Maiduguri are yet further examples that we are in the middle of a deadly struggle for the soul and survival of our nation. We condemn these terrible acts of violence. We grieve with all those who lost loved ones and we pray for those who were injured or terrorized by these calculated acts of violence. We commend the Federal Government's

first moves to offer comfort and assistance to those who were hurt and we urge that all steps be taken to ensure that everything be done to bring the culprits to book immediately to forestall further deterioration of our security situation.

5. Meeting in Delta State also reminded us that the inequities and abuses that have led to the rise of disaffected groups in this region that have committed numerous militant acts remain a present reality. We are grateful for the National initiatives that have sought to bring reconciliation and peace but are concerned that many of these programs are not reaching the people for whom the help was planned. Too often local government structures fail to utilize the resources as intended and instead redirect the funds to other purposes. We urge all local officials to be true to their responsibilities and transparent in their dealings.
6. We remind the Federal Government of its repeated promises to improve the power sector and road network since these are the bedrock of industrialization and an essential component of Vision 2020. Now is the time to match words with actions. We commend the steps taken by the Central Bank of Nigeria to restore investor confidence with their bank reform policies and urge all concerned to implement the budget transparently so that hope can be restored for ordinary citizens.
7. We are disappointed and worried over the protracted closure of the South East State Universities following the industrial action by University staff. We appeal to the Governors to ensure that the differences with the staff are resolved quickly to enable the students resume their studies. Further delay could be dangerous.
8. We note with interest the expedited decision and action by the Federal Government of Nigeria to educate the Almajiri children in the country. This is a laudable project to address the education needs of the underprivileged sections of society. However, we believe that instead of an entirely new school structure, the Almajiris could be accommodated in an already existing structure, the UBE. The main reason for this view: the Almajiris need to reintegrate into society and socialize with other children of different backgrounds, in order to acquire a broader view of life, and appreciate the interdependency we enjoy in a multi-cultural and religiously plural society such as ours. Besides, the Government will have to pay attention to the special needs of other religious bodies. Is there still any justification for forbidding the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge in public schools in some parts of the country? What about the vex issue of return of schools to the mission?

9. As the date for national elections rapidly approaches we are also concerned that preparations are far from adequate. We call on INEC (Independent National Electoral Commission) to redouble their efforts and also communicate more fully their plans for this crucial event in our national life. We urge all politicians to bring an end to political assassinations and violence and demonstrate Godly restraint in their electioneering.
10. The recent disclosure by the Governor of the Central Bank that twenty five percent of our National Overhead Expenditures is currently spent on the National Assembly is an outrage. At a time when all aspects of our national infrastructure cry out for adequate funding and many of our people live in abject poverty the news that government officials are swelling their own accounts is unconscionable. We call on our political leaders to seek the common good instead of their own comfort and be sacrificial in their service to this nation.
11. This catalogue of concerns reflects not only our love for our nation and all its people but also our conviction that strong, honest, visionary leadership is vital if we are to give our people the hope that they deserve. We are a gifted and blessed nation with enormous potential. We have amazing God-given resources and talented people capable of exercising not only national leadership but also taking their rightful place on the global stage. We continue to trust in the God who has promised that He will lead us into glorious future.

Now ... to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy — to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.



The Most Revd Nicholas D. Okoh
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REVD. NICHOLAS D. OKOH
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD 1 – 5 MARCH, 2011 AT THE CATHEDRAL OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD (CATOL), OWERRI

Our Dear People of God:

We send you greetings in the name of Jesus Christ who alone is our crucified, risen, ascended and glorified Lord and Saviour. We thank God for each one of you as we journey together in the Way of the Cross, which is the only assurance of true freedom and abiding joy.

The Bishops, Clergy and Lay delegates from all 165 dioceses of our Church gathered at the Cathedral Church of the Transfiguration of Our Lord, in the Diocese of Owerri for our Standing Committee meeting.

His Excellency Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by Elder Godsdan Orubebe, Minister of Niger Delta Affairs; His Excellency Ikedi Ohakim, the Executive Governor of Imo State; His Excellency Chief (Dr.) Ernest Shonekan, a former Head of Government, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, Deputy Senate President and Most Revd. Dr. Pater J. Akinola, our former Primate brought goodwill messages and gave us an enthusiastic welcome.

The theme of our meeting was "These Dry Bones Shall Live Again..." (Ezekiel 37:4-6) and we were blessed by inspiring Bible studies, sermons and plenary addresses that reminded us that, while these prophetic passages speak directly to the crisis endured by the chosen people of God during the Babylonian captivity almost five hundred years before the birth of Christ, they also speak to the issues that we confront today. They reflect the character of our God who takes us in the depth of dryness and death and breathes new life and new hope into every aspect of our being. This is also a theme that offers challenge and blessed assurance for our Church and Nation. The God whom we serve breathes life into the dead and driest corners of the world and this provides hope in all circumstances.

We have every reason to rejoice in God's abundant faithfulness these past twelve months as we have served among you as Primate. We thank all of you, God's people, for the prayers and encouragement that my family has received. We also call on everyone to renewed prayer for the Nation as we stand at the threshold of general elections. In particular we must pray for:

- Orderly elections free from manipulation, dishonesty and violence
- Strong participation from all Nigerians and results that reflect their choices
- Peace, progress, stability and unity for our Nation as we move forward

We urge every member of the Church to participate fully in the election and vote responsibly.

We are pleased to present to you the Revised Vision for our Church that has now been published in booklet form. We urge you to ensure its wide distribution and earnest implementation.

As we look to the future, it is vital that we redouble efforts to engage all of our young people in the life and ministry of the Church. It has been estimated that more than a half of our

by many African and Middle Eastern nations. We call on every congregation to address this challenge and ensure that we are training our children well in the way of the Lord.

We are again confronted by further steps at Islamizing Nigeria through the recent machinations to compel Islamic Banking by the Central Bank of Nigeria as well as merging Area Courts with Sharia Courts in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). We call upon all our members and all other church denominations to be united and vigilant, and resist these discriminatory policies.

We have renewed our call for thorough theological education for our bishops and clergy as well as specialized training for all sections of the laity. We encourage our theological colleges to revise their curricula and their study programmes in line with the resolution passed by the Standing Committee in Lagos 2010. We have commissioned a group to develop a plan for the implementation of the sponsorship programme by the Primate's office for members of the clergy pursuing doctoral study programmes in theology and related fields. We ask for the prayers and support of our congregations for this important initiative. We congratulate the Crowther Graduate Theological Seminary, Abeokuta, for the graduation of the first set of fifty-three MTh and MDiv students. We also call on all of our dioceses to give their full support to this vital Provincial institution.

We are grateful for the continued ministry of CANA under the supervision of Bishop Martyn Minns and his wife. This work continues to prosper despite enormous challenges of geographic scope, limited manpower, funds and the continuing legal challenges. CANA remains a vital missionary initiative of the Church of Nigeria and in close partnership with the Anglican Church in North America is giving hope and encouragement to Anglicans throughout North America.

In our meeting in Lagos we were mandated to visit the UK to look into the situation of Nigerian Anglicans resident there. We were able to go and meet in various cities with Nigerian Anglicans and interacted with them. We heard some of the reasons for the exodus from traditional Church of England parishes. We believe that an important need is for Nigerian Anglicans to worship "the Nigerian Way" and we are looking into practical ways in which this can be addressed in partnership with local churches.

We are delighted by the enthusiastic response by our dioceses to the St Matthias Day Offering established by the Standing Committee Resolution in September 2010. This is a commendable attitude to the partnership we desire in our efforts to consolidate the achievements of the missionary dioceses and overcome some of the attendant challenges.

Confident of our Lord's declaration that He will build his church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it, we call you to unceasing prayer.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Thus says the Lord God unto these bones; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you and you shall live... So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army (Ezekiel 37:5,10).



The Most Revd Nicholas D. Okoh
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REVD NICHOLAS D. OKOH
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

COMMUNIQUE FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM 1 – 5 MARCH, 2011 AT THE CATHEDRAL OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD (CATOL), OWERRI

1. INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the leadership of the Most Rev. Nicholas D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria with his wife Mrs. Nkasiobi Okoh, President of the Mothers' Union and Women's Guild, met at the Cathedral of the Transfiguration of Our Lord (CATOL), Diocese of Owerri, from March 1-5, 2011. One hundred and sixty bishops, one hundred and forty-eight clergymen and ninety-five members of the house of laity were present. The Most Reverend Bennett Okoro, Archbishop of the Ecclesiastical Province of Owerri and the Rt. Rev'd Cyril Okorochoa, Bishop of the Diocese of Owerri welcomed the delegates. Goodwill messages were given by His Excellency Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by Elder Godsdag Orubebe, Minister of Niger Delta Affairs; His Excellency Ikedi Ohakim, the Executive Governor of Imo State; His Excellency Chief (Dr.) Ernest Shonekan, former Head of Government; Senator Ike Ekweremadu, the Deputy Senate President, and Rt. Revd Emmanuel Adekunle on behalf of Most Revd. Dr. Peter J. Akinola, former Primate of The Church of Nigeria.

The theme of the meeting was 'These Dry Bones shall live Again' (Ezekiel 37:4-6), and at the conclusion, the Standing Committee issued this Communiqué:

2. THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

Prophet Ezekiel's vision of 'The Valley of Dry Bones' (Ezekiel 37: 4-6) describes the concern and sovereignty of God over the affairs of His seemingly 'dead' and hopeless people. This provides hope for Nigeria because to God, no situation is hopeless. Though basic infrastructure, education, healthcare, and security are virtually collapsing, God can restore all of these and bring new life to the nation. We call all Nigerians to prayer, righteous living, and a heartfelt love for one another and so put themselves in a position to be revived by God.

3. LEADERSHIP IN NATION BUILDING

The Standing Committee calls for credible leadership which is the critical issue of the Nigerian nation at every level. Nigeria has immense human and natural endowments and a great passion for God, and yet we often fall far short of our potential. The Standing Committee enjoins all politicians to work for the biblical concept of servant leadership which requires core values such as humility, personal responsibility, transparency, integrity, accountability and hard work.

4. VOTERS REGISTRATION AND THE FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS

The Standing Committee notes the commitment of Nigerian people to free, fair and credible elections in 2011. This was demonstrated by the large turnout and resilience shown during the recently concluded voters registration exercise despite its various inadequacies.

As we prepare for the crucial forthcoming elections, the political class must stop their wanton display of impunity to matters of security, unity of Nigeria, poverty, unemployment and corruption. Issues, not personalities must inform their agenda and manifestoes. The Nigerian electorate is charged not to sell its votes nor compromise its conscience in any way, but vote for credible political candidates. In particular, we call on the young people of our nation not to mortgage their future by allowing themselves to be used as thugs or pawns in the hands of desperate politicians.

5. RELIGIOUS / ETHNIC / POLITICAL CRISES

Religious, ethnic and political crises persist in the nation despite repeated efforts to curb them. A situation where the security of lives and property cannot be guaranteed by the state, and where a citizen is not safe to live anywhere in the country is unacceptable. Governments in all parts of Nigeria are called upon to respect the constitutional and fundamental human rights of every person. They must make maximum use of security forces to protect every Nigerian and to bring to book, all perpetrators and sponsors of organized and serial killings for religious, ethnic and political reasons. Nigeria must not be allowed to slide into anarchy. We are a multi-religious and multi-ethnic nation where all citizens' rights must be protected without compromise.

6. MERGING OF AREA AND *SHARIA* COURTS

The Standing Committee observed with dismay the recent merging of the administration of the Area Courts and the *Sharia* Courts of Appeal in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja. The implication of which is to make *Sharia* law applicable to non-Moslems. This is not only unconstitutional but also contrary to public policy. We call on the administration of the Federal Capital Territory to rescind the policy as this is likely to undermine the relative peace that exists in the centre of unity of Nigeria. We must all work together across religious and ethnic divides to build a peaceful and progressive nation.

7. EMERGENCE OF ISLAMIC BANKING

The Church expresses profound concern over current changes in the banking sector which promote Islamic Banking. Based on the Central Bank of Nigeria's circular dated March 4, 2009 (with ref. No. BSD/Dir/Gen/Nib/01/008) to sensitize stakeholders on the merits of institutions offering non-interest financial services in Nigeria, and following the perceived "favourable response from stakeholders", the CBN released the framework for the Regulation and Supervision of the Institutions offering Non-Interest Financial services in Nigeria, which must be "*Sharia* compliant" and excludes non Muslims from the emerging non-interest banking business. The *sharia* banking has inbuilt mechanism of collecting interest in the form of various *zakat* that the borrowers are subjected to pay.

Also by the proposed plan to establish the CBN *Sharia* Council, which would obviously comprise only Muslims, (as the members must have skills in the philosophy of Islamic law, good knowledge of written Arabic and exposure in the areas of business or finance especially in Islam) the CBN governor unmasked the agenda that non-interest banking is nothing but Islamic banking system. This is definitely unconstitutional as it is contrary to the spirit and letter of the Banking and Other Financial Institutions Act (BOFAI) as well as section 10 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The CBN Governor should be mindful of the fact that Nigeria is a secular state.

The Church calls on the Federal Government and our law makers seriously to consider the explosive implications of the Islamic/*Sharia* Banking; what it portends for the future and the appropriate steps to be taken to protect the fundamental rights of all faith communities in this Country.

8. ALMAJIRI EDUCATION

Standing Committee notes with concern the recent educational policy in respect of the *Almajiris* in the Northern part of the country. While we are not against solving the social problems created by the *Almajiri* phenomenon, we reject the creation of a special educational system for the *Almajiris* especially in a secular state such as Nigeria. Moreover, the benefit of educating the *Almajiri* can only come if they are reintegrated into the larger Nigerian pluralistic society, through an already existing public educational structure where they can realise the benefit of interdependency, of both North and south, Christian and Muslim.


We call for the integration of the *Almajiri* education into the already existing Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme from primary to junior secondary school. The government should implement the UBE to the letter. Equals must be treated equally.

It is a duty that we owe one another to administer the country on the basis of equality of opportunity, rights and privileges.

CONCLUSION

The Church of Nigeria is fervent in prayer for the peace, unity and progress of our nation. It is convinced that if we will turn to God and follow God's guidelines, the fortunes of Nigeria shall be revived unto a better tomorrow where our 'dry bones' shall live again.

Thus says the Lord God unto these bones; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you and you shall live... So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army (Ezekiel 37:5,10).



The Most Revd Nicholas D. Okoh
Primate of All Nigeria

LIST OF BISHOP'S NOMINEES TO THE FIRST SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF EVO

THE RT. REV'D INNOCENT ORDU
Bishop, DIOCESE OF EVO